



SIEBENQUELL

Every great human gesture of love carries eternity within it.



SOURCE: [HTTPS://VITAJESU.WORDPRESS.COM/2009](https://vitajesu.wordpress.com/2009)

In all four Gospels we are told of a house filled with perfume, into which a woman with a big heart enters, holding a precious jar in her hands. But in Mark 14:3-9 we hear this story, with a detail that only Mark relates. »And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the jar and poured it over his head.« Only Mark tells us that the woman broke the alabaster jar.

This woman is carrying an alabaster jar of pure nard, a very expensive perfume. Here we learn something about this remarkable woman. (How do we know she is remarkable? Because the narrator, Mark, draws our attention to her). She comes with what she has, not empty-handed. She doesn't give a flowery speech, doesn't have pretty words ready, but she comes with passion and courage. Because using perfume is ambiguous and harbours dangers. Perfume is a symbol for the beloved, is seen as a fragrant caress of the other, and as a sign of tenderness and pleasure in the other. That, however, can easily be misunderstood.

As she stands before Jesus, she breaks the alabaster jar of nard. In doing so, she makes her gesture of love and gratitude irreversible. And the generosity also becomes irreversible, because now every drop is poured out, all this love is poured out, without calculation and without measure.

The perfume bearer does not speak a word. Her love is a silent love. She lets her hands, and her gestures speak for her. This is God's shortcut, from the gesture to the human heart, without words.

In the house of Simon the Leper, we experience this silence, while the room is filled with fragrance, as a sign for all houses that God enters. We do not have to explain or justify the love that we carry within us. However, we do need to live it out, to pour it out.

At the end, Jesus' words resound through the house, extraordinary words that he never speaks about anyone else. These words reach us and should touch us tenderly, like a blessing over our homes and all the tenderness of love that we live out in them: »And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her«.

We should not Jesus' choice of words: »in memory of her« and not »in memory of me«. Jesus does not place himself at the centre here but places the great gestures of this woman at the centre. He places her and her creative, unrestricted love in the foreground. It is his life lesson to us: every great human gesture of love carries eternity within it. Every such human action and gesture is the gospel. In the home, we experience the religiosity of life, the gospel of the home, of everyday life. And this gospel of life can again and again fill the rooms and encounters of our lives with the joy of fragrant perfume.

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The Feast of Mark, Evangelist and Storyteller