

~ALABASTER (62)

[Hebrew, *sha'yish*, Greek, *a-la'ba-stron*]

- The name of small perfume vaselike vessels originally made of a stone found near **Alabastron**, Egypt. The stone itself, a form of calcium carbonate, also came to be known by the same name. David collected alabaster **Hebrew**, *sha'yish* stones in great quantity for the building of Yehowah's temple in Jerusalem.
- And according to all my power I have prepared for the house of my God the gold for the goldwork, and the silver for the silverwork, and the copper for the copperwork, the iron for the ironwork, and the timbers for the timberwork, onyx stones, and stones to be set with hard mortar, and mosaic pebbles, and every precious stone, and **alabaster** stones in great quantity. (1 **Chronicles** 29:2)
- This ancient or Oriental **alabaster** should not be confused with a modern **alabaster**, a hydrated calcium sulfate that is easily scratched. The original **alabaster** is usually white and, because it is a stalagmite formation, sometimes has streaks of various colors. It approaches the hardness of marble, but will not receive quite as high a polish. The solid alabaster was bored or drilled out to contain as much as a Roman pound (0.33 kilograms)(0.72 Pounds) of liquid.
- Mary, therefore, took a pound of perfumed oil, genuine nard, very costly, and she greased the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet dry with her hair. The house became filled with the scent of the perfumed oil. (**John** 12:3)
- The **alabaster** case **Greek**, *a-la'ba-stron* was usually fashioned with a narrow neck that could be effectively sealed to prevent the escape of the precious scent.
- When less costly materials such as gypsum were used to make such cases, these too were called **alabasters** simply because of the use to which they were put. However, cases made from genuine **alabaster** were used for the more costly ointments and perfumes, like those with which Jesus was anointed on two occasions once in the house of a Pharisee in Galilee,
- And, look! A woman who was known in the city to be a sinner

learned that he was reclining at a meal in the house of the Pharisee, and she brought an **alabaster** case of perfumed oil. (Luke 7:37)

- And once in the house of Simon the leper in Bethany.
- While Jesus happened to be in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper. (Matthew 26:6)
- A woman with an **alabaster** case of costly perfumed oil approached him, and she began pouring it upon his head as he was reclining at the table. (Matthew 26:7)
- And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at the meal, a woman came with an **alabaster** case of perfumed oil, genuine nard, very expensive. Breaking open the **alabaster** case she began to pour it upon his head. (Mark 14:3)