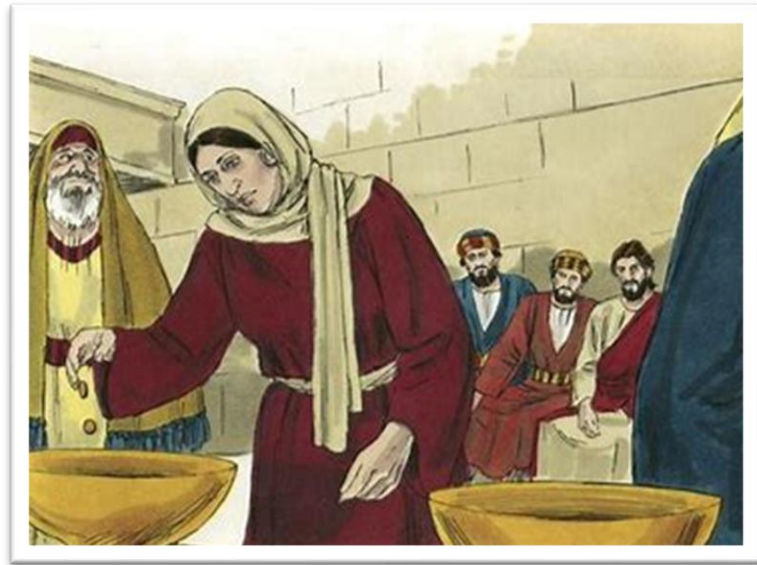


The Widow's Mite

Very early the next morning Jesus repaired to the Temple—not, however, to the common lecture hall, but to another in which Mary had made her offering. In the center of the hall, or rather, nearer to the entrance, stood the money box, an angular pillar, about half the height of a man, in which were three funnel-shaped openings to receive the money offerings, and at its foot was a little door. The box was



covered with a red cloth over which hung a white transparent one. To the left was the seat for the priest who maintained order, and a table upon which could be laid doves and other objects brought as offerings. To the right and left of the entrance stood the seats for the women and the men, respectively. The rear of the hall was cut off by a grating, behind which the altar had been put up when Mary presented the Child Jesus in the Temple. Jesus today took the seat by the money box. It was an offering day for all that desired to purify themselves for the Paschal feast. The Pharisees, on coming later, were greatly put out at finding Jesus there, but they declined His offer to yield to them His place. The Apostles stood near Him, two and two. The men came first to the money box, then the women, and after making their offering, they went out by another door to the left. The crowd stood without awaiting their turn, only five being allowed to enter at a time. Jesus sat there three hours. Toward midday, as a general thing, the offerings ended, but Jesus remained much longer, to the discontent of the Pharisees. This was the hall in which He had acquitted the woman taken in adultery. The Temple was like three churches, one behind the other, each standing under an immense arch. In the first was the circular lecture hall. The place of offering in which Jesus was, lay to the right of this hall, a little toward the Sanctuary. A long corridor led to it. The last offering was made by a poor, timid widow. No one could see how much the offering was, but Jesus knew what she had given and He told His disciples that she had given more than all the rest, for she had put into the money box all that she had left to buy herself food for that day. He sent her word to wait for Him near the house of John Mark.

In the afternoon, Jesus taught again in the customary place, that is, in the

portico of the Temple. The circular lecture hall was just opposite the door, and right and left were steps leading to the Sanctuary, from which again another flight conducted to the Holy of Holies. As the Pharisees approached Jesus, He alluded to their not daring to arrest Him the day before as they had intended, although He had given them a chance to do so. But His hour had not yet come, and it was not in their power to advance it; still, it would come in its own time. The Pharisees, He went on to say, should not hope to celebrate as peaceful a Pasch as in former years, for they would not know where to hide themselves; the blood of the Prophets whom they had murdered should fall upon their heads. The Prophets themselves would rise from their graves, and the earth would be moved. In spite of these signs, however, the Pharisees would remain obstinate. Then He mentioned the poor widow's offering. When toward evening He left the Temple, He spoke to her on the way and told her that her son would follow Him. His words greatly rejoiced the poor mother. Her son joined the disciples even before the Crucifixion. The widow was very devout and strongly attached to the Jewish observances, though simpleminded and upright.

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of the Temple

As Jesus was walking along with His disciples, one of them pointed to the Temple and made some remark on its beauty. Jesus replied that one stone of it would not remain upon another. They were going to Mount Olivet, upon one side of which was a kind of pleasure garden containing a chair for instruction and seats cut in the mossy banks. The priests were accustomed to come hither to rest at evening after a long day's work. Jesus seated Himself in the chair, and some of the Apostles asked when the destruction of the Temple would take place. It was then that Jesus recounted the evils that were to fall upon the city, and ended with the words: "But he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved." 10:22). He remained scarcely a quarter of an hour in this place.

From this point of view the Temple looked indescribably beautiful. It glistened so brightly under the rays of the setting sun that one could scarcely fix his eyes upon it. The walls were tessellated and built of beautiful sparkling stones, dark red and yellow. Solomon's Temple had more gold in it, but this one abounded in glittering stones.

The Pharisees were very greatly exasperated on Jesus' account. They held a council in the night and dispatched spies to watch Him. They said, if Judas would only come to them again, otherwise they did not well know how to proceed in the affair. Judas had not been with them since that first evening. Early on the following day Jesus returned to the resting place on Mount Olivet, and again spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem, illustrating with the

similitude of a fig tree that was there standing. He said that He had already been betrayed, though the traitor had not yet mentioned His name, and had merely made the offer to betray Him. The Pharisees desired to see the traitor again, but He, Jesus, wanted him to be converted, to repent, and not to despair. Jesus said all this in vague, general terms, to which Judas listened with a smile.

Jesus exhorted the Apostles not to give way to their natural fears upon what He had said to them, namely, that they would all be dispersed; they should not forget their neighbor and should not allow one sentiment to veil, to stifle another; and here He made use of the similitude of a mantle. In general terms He reproached some of them for murmuring at Magdalen's anointing. Jesus probably said this in reference to Judas' first definitive step toward His betrayal, which had been taken just after that action of hers—also, as a gentle warning to him for the future, since it would be after Magdalen's last anointing that he would carry out his treacherous design. That some others were scandalized at Magdalen's prodigal expression of love, arose from their erroneous severity and parsimony. They regarded this anointing as a luxury so often abused at worldly feasts, while overlooking the fact that such an action performed on the Holy of Holies was worthy of the highest praise. Jesus told them, moreover, that He would only twice again teach in public. Then speaking of the end of the world and the destruction of Jerusalem, He gave them the signs by which they should know that the hour of His departure was near. There would be, He said, a strife among them as to which should be the greatest, and that would be a sign that He was about to leave them. He signified to them also that one of them would deny Him, and He told them that He said all these things to them that they might be humble and watch over themselves. He spoke with extraordinary love and patience. About noon Jesus taught in the Temple, His subject being the ten virgins, the talents entrusted, and He again inveighed severely against the Pharisees. He repeated the words of the murdered Prophets, and several times upbraided the Pharisees for their wicked designs. He afterward told the Apostles and disciples that even where there was no longer hope of improvement, words of warning must not be withheld.

When Jesus left the Temple, a great number of pagans from distant parts approached Him. They had not, indeed, heard His teaching in the Temple, since they had not dared to set foot therein; but through the sight of His miracles, His triumphal entrance on Palm Sunday, and all the other wonders that they had heard of Him, they wanted to be converted. Among them were some Greeks. Jesus directed them to the disciples, a few of whom He took with Him to the Mount of Olives where, in a public inn formerly used by

strangers only, they lodged for the night.

Next morning, when the rest of the Apostles and disciples came thither, Jesus instructed them upon many points. He said that He would be with them at two meals more, that He was longing to celebrate with them the last Love Feast in which He would bestow upon them all that humanly He could give. After that He went with them to the Temple, where He spoke of His return to His Father and said that He was the Father's Will, but this last expression I did not understand. He called Himself in plain terms the Salvation of mankind, said that it was He who was to put an end to the power of sin over the human race, and explained why the fallen angels were not redeemed, as well as man. The Pharisees took turns, two at a time, to spy. Jesus said that He had come to put an end to the domination of sin over man. Sin began in a garden, and in a garden it should end, for it would be in a garden that His enemies would seize Him. He reproached His hearers with the fact of their already wanting to kill Him after the raising of Lazarus, and said that He had kept Himself at a distance, that all things might be fulfilled. He divided His journey into three parts, but I no longer recollect whether it was into thrice four, or five, or six weeks. He told them also how they would treat Him and put Him to death with assassins, and yet they would not be satisfied, they would not be able to effect anything against Him after His death. He once more made mention of the murdered just who would arise again; yes, He even pointed out the spot in which their resurrection would take place. But as for the Pharisees, He continued, in fear and anguish they would see their designs against Him frustrated.

Jesus spoke likewise of Eve, through whom sin had come upon the earth; therefore it was that woman was condemned to suffer and that she dared not enter into the Sanctuary. But it was also through a woman that the cure of sin had come into the world, consequently she was freed from slavery, though not from dependence.

Jesus again took up quarters in the inn at the foot of Mount Olivet. A lamp was lighted, and the Sabbath exercises were performed.