

## **Jesus Condemns Herod's Adultery. The Journey of the Holy Women**

Next morning Jesus went to the school, where many were assembled. He spoke, as usual, of the baptism and of the nearness of the Messiah whom they would not acknowledge. He reproached them for their obstinate adherence to old, meaningless customs, on which point these people had a special failing. They were, on the whole, tolerably simple-minded and received His remonstrances well. Jesus requested the High Priest of the synagogue to conduct Him to the sick. He visited about ten,



but cured none; for, in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, He had told Eliud and His five disciples that He would perform no more cures until He had been to the baptism. The sick in this place were mostly dropsical, gouty, and infirm women. Jesus exhorted them and told them separately what religious acts they should perform, according as their infirmities were a part punishment of sin. Some He ordered to purify themselves and go to the baptism. There was a meal prepared for Him at the inn, at which many men of the place were present. Before the hour for it these men spoke of Herod, of his unlawful connection with his brother's wife, blaming him severely and inquiring into Jesus' opinion on the point in question. Jesus warmly censured Herod's conduct and denounced the sin of adultery, but He told them likewise that if they judged others, they would themselves be judged.

Now there were in this place many sinners. Jesus spoke with them privately and earnestly reproved them for living in adultery. He told many all their secret sins. Trembling with fear, they promised to do penance. Jesus went from here to Bethania, a distance of perhaps six miles, and again entered a mountainous region. It was the winter season, foggy and cloudy by day, and sometimes white frost by night. Jesus enveloped His head in a scarf, and journeyed straight on toward the east.

I saw Mary and four holy women leaving the house and wending their way through a field near Tiberias. They had with them two servants from the fishery. One went on ahead, the other followed, both laden with baggage

which they carried on a pole across the shoulder, a pack in front and another behind. The four women were Johanna Chusa, Mary Cleophas, Mary Salome, and one of the three widows. They, too, were going to Bethania by the usual route which ran by Sichem to the right. When Jesus passed it, it was on His left. The holy women walked generally in single file, a couple of steps apart.

They went in this way probably because most of the roads, excepting the broad highways, were narrow, intended for foot passengers, and led through the mountains. They walked quickly with a firm step, not swaying from side to side, as the country people do here. Very probably this is because from early youth the inhabitants of that country are accustomed to making long journeys on foot. They had their gowns tucked up to about the middle of the calf, their lower limbs bandaged tightly down to the ankle, and bound to the soles of their feet were thick, padded sandals. Over the head was a veil, the ends of which were fastened into the scarf wound round the neck. This scarf was crossed on the breast, thence carried behind and caught in the girdle; sometimes the wearers ran their hands into its folds and there let them rest.

The man, going on before the travelers, prepared the way for them. He opened the hedges, removed stones from the path, laid bridges, gave orders at the inns and, in fine, saw to everything. The one who followed put everything again into its first order.