

Jesus' Instruction on the Height Near Thabor, in Sunem

The lord of the place, he whom Jesus had healed of leprosy, came to Him and renewed his acts of gratitude. He pleaded for several other lepers for whom he had caused a tent to be erected on the road by which Jesus was to pass, and he likewise made overtures for applying a part of his fortune to defraying the expenses of Jesus' apostolic journeys.

It was still dawn when Jesus left the house and went out on the road where were awaiting

Him about five men and women. From a retired spot, a little off from the road, they cried to Him for assistance. Jesus stepped to them, and they cast themselves at His feet. One of the women addressed Him: "Lord, we are from Tiberias, and until now we have hesitated to implore Thy help. The Pharisees told us that Thou art hard and pitiless toward sinners. But we have heard of Thy merciful compassion to Magdalen whom Thou didst free from her miseries, and whose sins Thou didst also forgive. All this gave us courage, and we have followed Thee thither. Lord, have mercy on us! Thou canst heal us and purify us. Thou canst likewise forgive us our sins." The men and women were standing apart from one another. They were afflicted with leprosy and other maladies. One woman was possessed by a wicked spirit who threw her into convulsions.

Jesus took them aside, one by one, to hear the particulars of their confession, inasmuch as the detailed account would serve to increase their sorrow and repentance. He did not exact this from all, unless it was necessary. He cured those of whom we are now speaking, and forgave them their sins. They melted into tears of gratitude, and begged Him to say what they should henceforth do. In reply, Jesus commanded them not to return to Tiberias, but to go to another place. I understood at that moment that Jesus Himself would not go to Tiberias, and indeed I never saw Him there. These people now went to the mountain to hear His instructions.

Jesus, however, turned off to the tent of the lepers, about four or five in number. He cured them, addressed to them words of admonition, commanded them to go to Nazareth and show themselves to the priests.



Jesus never lingered long over such cures, though there was never anything like precipitation in His manner. All was done with dignity and moderation, and especially without a superfluity of words. All was striking and appropriate whether He consoled or exhorted, whether He was gentle or severe. His manner was overflowing with patience and love. He went straight on with His work, but without the least hurry. Many of those that needed His help, Jesus went to meet; yes, even turning out of His way, He hastened to them, like a loving friend of men who sought to save them. From others, again, He turned away, permitting them to follow Him, to sigh after Him, a long time.

The spot upon which Jesus now taught was a beautiful plateau where, from the stone chair, the Prophets of bygone days had taught. From it one could see across the valley of Esdrelon and into the country around Mageddo. Crowds were gathered from the surrounding cities, and there were very many sick from Nazareth also, whom Jesus had not cured there, but who now were restored to health. There were some possessed, who testified to Him as usual and whom He delivered. He again taught upon the first four of the Eight Beatitudes, and related some parables referring to penance and the coming of the Kingdom. Then in most touching terms, He begged His hearers to profit by the grace offered them while still they had time. The Apostles listened attentively, because each in his own peculiar way was to repeat this instruction on his next mission.

Toward noon I saw Jesus gathering the Apostles and disciples around Him in a sequestered spot at the foot of the mountain. He sent them all out, two and two, with the exception of Peter, John, and some of the disciples who were to remain with Him. They were to go in three different directions: one set into the valley of the Jordan, another into that near Dothan, and a third to the west, into the country around Jerusalem. It was on this occasion that I heard Jesus telling the Apostles that they should go without purse, without scrip, girded with one garment only, and a staff in their hand. They were not to go to the heathens nor to the Samaritans, but to the lost sheep of Israel.

He indicated to them how they might be received, told them where to shake the dust from their feet, and commanded them to preach penance.¹ Jesus thus particularized because He was sending the Apostles into a hostile part of the country, and because persecution threatened Himself after the death of John, which was now drawing nigh. Many of the private inns had been established in this part of the Holy Land, therefore it was that the Apostles had no need of money. But they that were sent to Upper Galilee and beyond

the Jordan, had received some, though very little, money. And now began a new era in their apostolic career, and new regions were visited by them. Jesus blessed them before their departure, and gave them some further instructions upon curing the sick and driving out demons. He blessed the oil also that was to be used for the sick. He notified some where they should again meet Him.

After healing many more sick, Jesus bade farewell to the multitude, and accompanied by Peter, John and the disciples, journeyed southward about three hours to Sunem. Many of the people followed Him, among others a man who, the last time that Jesus went from Samaria to Galilee, had entreated Him to visit his sick children who were at an inn not far from Endor. This man again proffered his request to Jesus, and now it was granted.

The two demoniacal women of Gathopher had followed Jesus to the instruction given on the mount, and had been delivered by the imposition of His hands. When He reached the brook Cison, before crossing He healed a poor leper whose condition was truly forlorn and despised. He had for twenty years been reduced to this pitiable state, and someone had built him a tent hut here on the roadside. Jesus hastened to him, healed him, and told him to join the others that were going to Jerusalem to show themselves to the priests.

It was dusk when Jesus arrived in Sunem. With Peter and John, He put up at the house of the man that had invited Him to visit his sick children, all of whom were in a most miserable state. One son, sixteen years old and very tall for his age, was deaf and dumb. He lay flat on the ground in convulsions with contortions of the body so frightful that his head and heels met. He was perfectly lame and unable to walk. Another son was a poor idiot afraid of everything, and his two daughters also were timorous and simple. Jesus cured the deaf mute that evening. Peter and John had gone into the city.

Jesus with the parents went alone into the sick boy's chamber, knelt by his bed, prayed, and supporting Himself on His hands, inclined over the boy's face. He did this either to breathe into or to say something into his mouth. Then He took the boy by the hand and raised him up. The boy stood upright on his feet, and Jesus led him a few steps backward and forward. Then He took him alone into another room, made a salve out of His saliva and a little earth, took some upon His fingers and anointed his ears, and ran the first two

fingers of His right hand under his tongue. Then began the boy in an unwonted, lively voice to cry: "I hear! I can speak!" The parents and servants rushed in at the sound and embraced him, weeping and shouting for joy. They cast themselves with their child on the ground before Jesus, sobbing and rocking to and fro for joy. During the evening Jesus had a private interview with the father, upon whom a great crime committed by father was still resting. The man asked Jesus whether the chastisement was to fall even to the fourth generation. Jesus answered that if he did penance and atoned for the crime, he might blot out its consequences.

In the morning Jesus cured the other son and the two daughters of their idiocy. He performed the cure by the imposition of hands. When restored to sense, the children appeared to be perfectly amazed, and as if awaking from a dream. They had always thought that people wanted to kill them, and had in particular a great dread of fire. When on the day before Jesus healed the elder boy, He told (very unusual for Him) the father to go out and relate to all what had taken place. The consequence was a great concourse of people, among them numbers of sick, and that morning I saw Jesus instructing the people on the street, and curing and blessing many of the children.

After that I saw Him with Peter and John journeying rapidly the whole day and night through the plain of Esdrelon in the direction of Ginny. They seldom paused to rest. I heard Jesus saying on the way that John's end was approaching, and after that, His enemies would begin their pursuit of Himself. But it was not lawful to expose one's self to one's enemies. I think I understood that they were going to Hebron, to console John's relatives and prevent any imprudent manifestation.

The holy women, Mary, Veronica, Susanna, Magdalen, and Mary the Suphanite, were now in Dothan near Samaria. They were stopping with Issachar, the sick husband, whom Jesus had lately healed. The holy women never went to the public inns. Martha, Dina, Johanna Chusa, Susanna Alpheus, Anna Cleophas, Mary Johanna Marcus, and Maroni went, two by two, to look after the inns and supply what was wanting. There were about twelve of these women.

Early the next morning, I saw Jesus and the two Apostles to the south of Samaria, where He met the two Egyptian disciples and the son of Johanna

Chusa coming to Him from the East. These Egyptian disciples had already been over a year in Hebron, where they were studying. They had also been a long time in Bethlehem with Lazarus and other disciples that were on intimate terms with Jesus. They were in consequence very well instructed. Jesus and His companions some time afterward arrived at the shepherd houses where the holy women had met Him after His conversation with the Samaritan at Jacob's well, and where He had cured the landlord's sick son. They here partook of some refreshment and rested a little.

Some time after I had a vision of Jesus' instructing, near a well, the laborers gathered together from the neighboring fields. He was relating to them the parable of the treasure hidden in a field, also that of the lost drachma found again. Some of His hearers laughed at the latter, saying that they had often lost more than one drachma, but they had never taken the trouble to sweep the whole house on that account. But when Jesus reproached them for their levity, and explained to them what the drachma signified and the virtue implied by that general sweeping, they became confused and laughed no more.

These laborers were occupied in threshing the grain which was lying in heaps in the fields. This they did with wooden mallets which rose and fell by means of a cylinder. Several men were employed in pushing the grain under the mallets and in sweeping it away again. The operation was carried on in a pure rocky basin hewn out of solid stone, streaked with colored veining. A large tree shaded the spot. Jesus continued to teach here and there in the fields, and accompanied some of the laborers to their home in Thanath-Silo, which was not far off. The inhabitants received Him very cordially outside the city, presented refreshments, and washed His feet. They wanted to give Him also a change of raiment, but He declined. He related in their synagogue the parable of the king who made a great feast.