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THE LESSON FOR SUNDAY

JESUS ANOINTED IN BETHANY

The Lord's Greatest Miracle Accepted as a Challenge and Steps at Once Taken to Compass His Death—Mary's Deed and the Master's Royal Defense of Her—The Seal of Divine Approval—The Teacher's Lantern—Key and Analysis.

Fourth Quarter Lesson IV.

Mat. xvi. 6-16.

Jesus had worked His greatest miracle under the very eaves of the ecclesiastical establishment. It was accepted as a challenge, and steps were immediately taken to compass His death. His hour not yet having come, the Master retired to Ephraim, twenty miles away, near to the wilderness or sparsely populated country. There, in company with His disciples, He passed the time in physical and spiritual recuperation. A price was practically set upon His head, for the chief priests and Pharisees had given notice that if anyone knew where He was he should give information in order that the arrest might be made. With mingled motives of curiosity, admiration and opposition the people who had come to Jerusalem in large numbers to attend the Passover, made quest for Jesus. For the time He withdrew both temple and ceremony. As the days passed they began to say to each other in their disappointment, "Is it possible He is not coming to the feast at all? But when the time was fully come, the Master resolutely set His face toward that slaughter-house of the prophets—Jerusalem. He was fully cognizant of all the peril of going to the city at this juncture.

It was in this instance that one significant incident like a shaft of light fell across the inky blackness in which His life closed. It was that high and loving courtesy shown Him in the home in Bethany. They banqueted Jesus. They made a supper in His honor, and in grateful recognition of His merciful deeds. In the noblest villa of the suburb of Jerusalem, the table with its damask coverings, was set in hollow alcove, as the custom was. It was surrounded by richly upholstered couches. Shaded lamps cast their full radiance upon the goody scene. Eye, nostril, ear and palate were delighted. Color, fragrance, music and viands matched these several organs of sense. According to Oriental custom, the house was open and the interested villagers hung like an animated fringe around the table, sharing with the invited guests a part of the cheer and gladness. On either side of Jesus reclined the trophies of His power—Simon whom He had healed of leprosy, and Lazarus whom He had revived from death. Noble and beautiful women graced and adorned the scene and hour.

One significant and timely deed lifted this feast to the level of a sacrament. Out of her boudoir Mary brought the most precious thing it contained—an Oriental cruse of alabaster, filled with genuine liquid perfume, very precious, the seal of which had never been broken. Her unspoken gratitude would find expression itself in a deed of reverence and love. Unstintedly she poured the costly liquid upon Jesus' head and feet, using her luxuriant tresses for a towel. In a moment every recess of the house was filled with the subtle and delicious fragrance.

But as may be expected in every human gathering, which of necessity must contain some whose ethical evolution is retarded or stunted, a ripple of discord was thrown into this feast of love. It came from the very hand that was flinging from the common purse of the apostles. Judas stole the livery of charity in which to serve his own cupidity. He affected benevolence that he might cover his own grasping spirit. Some of the apostles were evidently infected with his carping spirit, and at least joined mildly in the specious protest.

Right royally did Jesus come to defense of Mary and her deed. He interpreted her action and put the seal of His Divine approval upon it. If she gave Him momentary and passing embalming, He embalmed her forever in the inebriate increase of His praise: "She hath wrought a good work. She hath done what she could. Whosoever this gospel shall be preached there shall also this that this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her." A practical principle of life is irradiated in connection with this incident. Jesus affirms that deeds which can be done any time must give place to those which can only be done just now. "The poor are always with you; not so I."

The banquet intended for His honor really set the seal of Jesus' doom and hastened it. The banquet couch proved a pedestal to lift Him not only in sight of the admiring people, but also of His implacable enemies. The end of it was that not only "such people knew that He was there and came," but immediately also "the chief priests consulted."

THE TEACHER'S LANTERN.

A lesson in sacred aesthetics is

here. Money spent to adorn and beautify religion is never to be begrudged. A cathedral, for example, is a monument to the divine. It teaches and inspires. So wealth expended in awakening the sentiment of worship is never lost. It is always justifiable. Proportionate expenditures upon the artistic and tasteful are to be commended. They are definite contributions to ethical and spiritual evolution.

Much has been said of the "loneliness" of Jesus. But it must also be remembered that He was also much in society. The references are numerous enough to affirm a habit. He adorned and beautified many a supper and wedding. His social side was not atrophied.

Judas, by reason of the enormity of his crime, is almost excluded in the average thought from the role of human beings. But it admits of question whether there are not men now living who under similar circumstances, would not do exactly as Judas did. He was a man, not a devil from the nether world.

Martha did not sulk. Jesus had on a previous visit criticized her for being troubled with much serving. She did not on that account fly moodily to the other extreme and refuse to serve at all. It is very significant then (although it might be overlooked), when the record says, "Martha served." Taking criticism in a fine art as well as giving it.

Judas' proposition cannot be disputed. It was a great sum—100 in perfume! The wages of a laborer for a whole year! But no higher use of that money could have been made than was made of it. It was a sacramental act. It was an expression of gratitude and reverence. While it did not preclude deeds of charity the latter could not be any substitute for it.

That home at Bethany was ideal.

The meshes of the domestic net were soft as silk, but firm as steel. No wonder Jesus loved to be there. An adult Bible class is said to have spent the entire hour in discussing the shape of the alabaster box. It is to be feared that many are busy over husks and shells, pure technique—geography, archaeology and the like, but never reach the subtle fragrance of the ethical and spiritual meaning.

KEY AND ANALYSIS.

1. Jesus in His retreat. Awaits His hour at Ephraim. Recuperation, Physical and Spiritual.
2. Popular Quest of Jesus. Ecipies Temple and Ceremony.
3. His hour come. Jesus goes. Cognizant of Peril.
4. Jesus banqueted. High and loving courtesy. Recognition of merciful deeds.
5. Mary's anointing. Raises feast to sacrament.
6. Apple of Discard. Thrown by hand that sipped the common purse. Judas in livery of charity serves his own cupidity.
7. Jesus' defense of Mary. Interprets Her action. Seals it with approval.
8. Banquet couch a pedestal. Raises Him to view of His enemies. Seals His doom.

A CARD. This is to certify that all druggists are authorized to refund your money if Foley's Kidney and Urinary Pills fail to cure your cough or cold. It stops the cough, heals the lungs and prevents serious results from a cold. Cures la grippe cough and prevents pneumonia and consumption. Contains no opiates. The genuine is in a yellow package. Refuse substitutes. R. H. Jordan.

EVIL ASSOCIATIONS DID IT.

Reflections on Seeing a Young Boy of Good Family, Whose Parents Had Neglected Him, Walking Shamefaced With a Gang of Careless Chain-Gang Convicts.

To The Editor of The Observer. I saw this morning a flock of jail-birds being carried off to another county, to work out in hard labor the remission of their sins. A hard, harsh word is jail-bird, with an ugly sound, but properly descriptive of some of the gang. They were chained together by two—for the most a laughing, careless lot. They joked with passing hack-drivers, and flying negro boys carrying bundles, just as if the stripes of justice were not marked on their ill-kempt bodies. But there was one, who took no part in the jesting, whose tattered cap was pulled low over a pair of bright black eyes, and whose black jauntily curls covered a one-time handsome head. Once or twice along the way he raised furtive, pain-filled eyes, but for the most paid no attention to anything.

What visions of other days filled that boy's brain, few, if any, knew. But I knew, for I had seen him grow up from a wee tottler. A bright and happy home had been his, but the most fatal of all mistakes had been made by his parents. Every license was allowed him and, night after night, the lad could be seen on the street corners, mingling with an indiscriminate crowd of idle brains, verily the devil's work-shop. There were instigated into his thoughts suggestions that degrade and lower. Little by little the spell was woven about him. His moral compass vice had him in its clutches. The rest was easy—worse became his associations, baser his thoughts, till finally the cancer of crime spread over his soul, and ate up every white spot. But as the boy shuffles along with the other jail-birds, these things are forgotten, and the memory of clean, wholesome days is before him. His tattered cap is pulled low over his handsome eyes, and God only knows how that boy's heart is seared.

ONE WHO SAW. Washington, N. C., Oct. 24, 1906.

Advocates of Compulsory Education in Buncombe Disappointed.

Special to The Observer. Asheville, Oct. 24.—The advocates of compulsory education in Asheville will not permit the blunder of the city administration in failing to provide a special registration, deter them from holding an election on the question at the earliest opportunity. When it was found that the election could not be held at the time of the general election on November 4th because of the absence of a special city registration, it was thought that the matter would be deferred until the May municipal election. At a meeting of representatives of the labor unions, the Junior O. U. A. M. and others in city hall last night it was decided that an election should be held as soon after the general election as the law would permit.

D. A. H's. to Meet at Yorkville.

Special to The Observer. Yorkville, S. C., Oct. 24.—The annual conference of the Daughters of the American Revolution will be in session here for three days next week, Oct. 31 to Nov. 1. The local chapter, the King's Mountain, is making extensive preparations for the entertainment of the visitors and the occasion will, no doubt, be a most pleasant one.

Many a man of humane impulses, who would not willingly harm a kitten, is guilty of cruelty where his own stomach is concerned. Overdriven, overworked when what it needs is something that will digest the food eaten and help the stomach to recuperate. Something like Kodol for Dyspepsia that is sold by Hawley's Pharmacy.

Heavy Repairs

1st Cotton Mill Man: "We ought to have a machine shop in the South to do our heavy repairs."
2nd Cotton Mill Man: "What do you call heavy repairs?"
1st C. M. M.: "My Corliss engine isn't working right. I hate to spend the money to bring a man all the way from Providence, R. I., to overhaul it."
2nd C. M. M.: "You don't have to. The D. A. Tompkins Co. has been overhauling Corliss engines for a long time, and they do it well. They've got all the tools and small engines to drive the boring bars and everything."
1st C. M. M.: "Is that so? If the Tompkins Co. are doing such work I'll have them send a man to the mill at once to look the engine over and see what it needs and make a price on doing the job." And so a knowledge of our shop gradually extends. That's the one trouble we have in building up a machine building and repairing business here in the South. The mill men have got their minds fixed on Providence and other distant places and don't look up the facilities here at home.
There are many economies in dealing at home. There is saving of freight and of time. When there is a break down the wheels can be put turning again quicker through a home shop than through a distant one.
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