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**SUNDAY SCHOOL.**

Lesson V.—Fourth Quarter, For Oct. 30, 1910.

**THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.**

Text of the Lesson, Matt. xxvii, 1-16. Memory Verse, 13—Golden Text, Mark xiv, 8—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

We are to have five lessons in this chapter, the greater portion of which is recorded by Mark and Luke also. The first five verses and the last three are in the regular order of events, two days before the Passover, and Jesus again announces that He is to be crucified (verse 2). The record says that not only had the chief priests, scribes and elders determined to kill Him, but they were actually consulting as to how they could do it in a quiet manner without an uproar, for they feared the people. "Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve, and he went his way and communed with the chief priests and captains how he might betray Him unto them," and for thirty pieces of silver he agreed to do it in the absence of the multitude (verse 15; Luke xxii, 3-6). Luke also tells us that during those last days He was in the daytime teaching in the temple, and at night He went out and abode in the mount that is called the Mount of Olives (xxi, 37). After such a record concerning Him whose witnesses we are and whose steps we are to follow shall we ever again complain if we are hated for His sake, if one who professed to be our friend joins the enemy against us.

The anointing by Mary is recorded by Mark and John also, but not by Luke. In Luke vii, 36-50, there is a record of an anointing which was also in the house of a man called Simon, but that Simon was no friend of Jesus, and the woman is unnamed and was confessedly a sinful woman.

The event of our lesson today was six days before the Passover, and it was at Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, and Martha and Mary and Lazarus were all present. They made Him a supper, and Martha served, and Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him (John xii, 1, 2). It was on that evening that Mary took the pound of very precious ointment of spikenard and brake the alabaster box and poured it both on His head and on His feet as He sat at meat, and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Compare the three records. Mary, like the other women, wiped His feet with her hair, but the other wiped her own tears with which she had washed His feet, while Mary wiped them after she had anointed them with the ointment (Luke vii, 38; John xii, 3). In the one case it was the heartfelt gratitude of a truly penitent sinner, while in the other it was the devotion of true worship and an anointing beforehand for His burial, for He said so, and He knew her heart and her purpose. My own conviction is that Mary had received His words concerning His cruel death at the hands of His enemies and knew that it would therefore be impossible for His friends to show any kindness to His body then, as far as she could see, and she had made preparation and had watched for her opportunity, which has now come. Can any one say that He, knowing all things, had not arranged this stop at Bethany specially for her sake? The other women, who, like Peter and John and the rest of His disciples, had not received His sayings concerning His sufferings, bought spices after His death and burial to anoint His body when the Sabbath had passed, but they never used them for that purpose, so that Mary was the only woman who was privileged to anoint Him for burial.

Those who receive all His words have blessings beyond all others. Some one has suggested that in the three, Martha, Mary and Lazarus, taken together, we have what constitutes a well rounded Christian life—Lazarus, the power of a resurrection life, because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus (John xii, 11); Martha, restful service, because that here we do not read of her being lumbered, as on a former occasion; Mary, true devotion and worship, for such is always costly. David said, "Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing" (II Sam. xxiv, 24). Let us ponder, as in His sight, the cost of our worship of and devotion to Him. Financially how does it compare with our worship of self and the world? If we become as devoted to Him as Mary was not only will some Judas criticize us, but many professedly devoted ones will find fault also, for, while no one will, perhaps, condemn our love for self and this present world, many will protest against too much devotion to Jesus Christ. Well, let them. If only we can have His "She hath done what she could," "She hath wrought a good work on me" (Mark xiv, 6, 9). If fault finders with devotion to missions could by any means hear His voice they would doubtless hear a "Let alone," "Why trouble ye them" (verse 10; Mark xiv, 6). Think of the honor conferred upon Mary in that a testimony concerning her love and devotion is given in all the world wherever the gospel is preached. Oh, how real devotion to Him is needed by our day, when all the world is open to the gospel and the age of unparalleled opportunity is fast closing, and soon He will come again to take His church to Himself. May we abide according to I John ii, 28.

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