

came to heal the *contrite*, or bruised, or broken in heart. In this respect the alabaster vase in Mary's hand, broken and pouring out in loving abundance and unsparing effusion the whole of its contents on Christ's head, is a beautiful emblem of the contrite and broken heart pouring out itself in penitential love on Christ and his members, and thinking nothing too costly for that holy and blessed service."—*Dr. Wordsworth*. Let us bring our offerings to the Master. Let them be full of true devotion and of humble faith and of deep repentance.

English Teacher's Notes.

This incident appears to be related by Matthew and Mark out of its proper place; for John distinctly states that the supper and the anointing occurred the night before Christ's public entry into Jerusalem, that is, on the Saturday evening. (These three evangelists clearly refer to the same event; but the anointing in Luke vii. was altogether different.) Probably the order of narration in Matthew and Mark may be thus accounted for: They both mention the consultation of the chief priests two days before the Passover; they both go on directly to relate the treachery of Judas; and, quite naturally, they both insert between the consultation and the treachery the incident of the anointing by Mary, which shows Judas Iscariot in his true character, and which very likely brought to a point his growing discontent with his Master.

But then the strange thing is that neither Matthew nor Mark name *Judas'* complaint against Mary at all, and we only know of it from St John's Gospel. Nevertheless, the connection may have been before their minds as they wrote, and they may have refrained from giving any names from prudential reasons. Neither of the first three evangelists mentions *Lazarus*; and his sisters' name only occurs in Luke, and that in another connection. It might be wiser not to give prominence to the family of Bethany during their lifetime. John, writing long after, could tell the whole story safely. I refer to this matter because it is just one of those points in the Gospel history which are so interesting to senior scholars.

In this course of lessons, certainly, the fact of this subject coming immediately before that of the betrayal, suggests that we dwell upon the hypocritical caviling of Judas at Mary's act of devotion, and its influence upon his after conduct.

We are apt to think of Judas as a backslider, yielding at the last moment to the temptation to sell his Master. But a year before this time Jesus had called him a "devil." (John vi. 70.) Why did such a man attach himself to Christ at all? Probably in hopes of the riches and honors which he expected would come on the followers of the King when the kingdom should (as he thought) be set up at Jerusalem. But why, in the face of the growing opposition of the chief men, and of Christ's forewarnings about his death, did Judas stay with him? Because he was making money by it already, putting some of the little common fund of which he was treasurer into his own pocket. Observe how skilful a thief he was: none of his comrades suspected him; when Jesus said "One of you shall betray me," no one said, "Is it Judas?" But must he not have been sometimes startled by Jesus' words, such as Luke xii. 33; xvi. 11?

What a prize would have been his had Mary sold the ointment and handed to him the forty-five dollars it would have fetched, "for the poor!" Why this sum is three times what he took in the following week to sell his Lord! No wonder he angrily complained of the "waste;" and, as always, when he boldly uttered the objection, the others—who perhaps would not have thought of it themselves—of course backed it up.

It will be well to trace all this out in the present lesson, as the narrative itself is a short one, and to do so will be a great help in the succeeding lesson. But the application to be drawn from Judas' conduct will not come till then, so that the practical teaching this time for the class should be based rather on Mary's example. What, then, is there in it to commend?

1. *She showed her Faith.* If she anointed Jesus "for his burying," she must have felt he was going to die, and yet that did not shake her faith in his being Messiah. Have we, who know so much more, as firm a faith?

2. *She showed her love.* She gave her best to honor Jesus. But was she robbing the poor? Not at all. We may be sure she was kind to the poor; and in devoting this ointment to Christ she was devoting what was meant, not for the poor, but for herself. She gave him not *their* portion, but *her own* portion. Some will not subscribe to Missions and other spiritual objects because the poor and the sick need so much; but after all it is not *they* who relieve those in need, but the very people who are *also* the most