

# Luke 12:59

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

## Analysis

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**I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite** (λέγω σοι, οὐ μὴ ἐξέλθῃς ἐκεῖθεν, ἕως καὶ τὸ ἔσχατον λεπτὸν ἀποδῷς)—Jesus concludes the legal parable with finality. The double negative *ou mē* (not...not, absolutely will not) emphasizes impossibility of escape. *Heos* (until, till) sets the condition: payment of to *eschaton lepton* (the very last mite). The *lepton* was the smallest Jewish coin (the widow's mite, Luke 21:2). Complete payment required before release.

This terrifying conclusion depicts eternal judgment's finality. Those entering God's tribunal without Christ's righteousness face impossible debt. The 'last mite' suggests a debt that can never be fully paid—eternal condemnation. The parable's urgency: settle accounts through Christ before reaching judgment, because after, escape is impossible. This anticipates Jesus's teaching on eternal punishment (Luke 16:26—unbridgeable gulf).

## Historical Context

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Debtors' prison was common in Roman legal system—creditors could imprison debtors until full restitution. For those unable to pay, this meant indefinite imprisonment. Jesus uses this familiar reality to illustrate eternal judgment's inescapability. The 'last mite' (smallest coin) emphasizes absolute completeness—no debt overlooked, no penalty reduced.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does the impossibility of 'paying the last mite' drive you to Christ's substitutionary payment rather than religious self-effort?
2. What does this parable teach about the urgency of accepting God's offer of reconciliation through Christ?
3. How should awareness of inescapable future judgment affect present priorities and eternal preparation?

## Interlinear Text

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λέγω	σοι	οὐ	μὴ	ἐξέλθῃς	ἐκεῖθεν	ἕως	οὐ	καὶ	τὸ
<b>I tell</b>	<b>thee</b>	G3756	G3361	<b>depart</b>	<b>thence</b>	<b>till</b>	G3739	G2532	G3588
G3004	G4671			G1831	G1564	G2193			

ἔσχατον	λεπτὸν	ἀποδῶς
<b>the very last</b>	<b>mite</b>	<b>thou hast paid</b>
G2078	G3016	G591

## Additional Cross-References

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**Mark 12:42** (Parallel theme): And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

**Matthew 18:34** (Parallel theme): And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.