

Luke 21:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

Analysis

And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. Jesus makes His evaluation explicit with the solemn formula *alēthōs legō hymin* (ἀληθῶς λέγω ὑμῖν, 'truly I say to you')—this is authoritative revelation, not opinion. His assessment contradicts all visible evidence. The widow gave less than anyone economically, yet Jesus declares she gave *pleion pantōn* (πλεῖον πάντων, 'more than all').

This reveals **God's radically different accounting system**. Human calculation measures output; God measures proportion and sacrifice. The wealthy gave thousands while retaining millions; the widow gave pennies but retained nothing. By heaven's mathematics, she out-gave them all. Jesus' statement challenges every economic and religious assumption—God doesn't evaluate gifts by their size, utility, or visible impact but by the giver's heart and sacrifice. This woman's pennies counted for more in heaven's ledger than the temple's wealthiest donations.

Historical Context

Jesus spoke these words to His disciples, using the widow as an object lesson in kingdom values. This teaching occurred during Passion Week, days before His crucifixion, in the context of escalating conflict with religious authorities. The temple He was observing would be destroyed within forty years (AD 70), making the widow's sacrifice historically poignant—she gave everything to an institution

Jesus knew was doomed. Yet He commends her gift because it reflected genuine devotion, not because the institution deserved it. The principle transcends the historical moment: God values the heart behind the gift regardless of the recipient's worthiness.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' declaration that the widow gave 'more than they all' revolutionize your understanding of giving?
2. What does this passage teach about God's evaluation criteria versus human measures of success and generosity?
3. If God measures gifts by proportion and sacrifice rather than amount, how should this reshape your giving habits?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	εἶπεν	Ἀληθῶς	λέγω	ὑμῖν	ὅτι	ἡ	χήρα	ἡ	πτωχὴ
And	he said	Of a truth	I say	unto you	that	G3588	widow	G3588	poor
G2532	G2036	G230	G3004	G5213	G3754		G5503		G4434

αὕτη	πλεῖον	πάντων	ἔβαλεν·
this	in more than	they all	hath cast
G3778	G4119	G3956	G906

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 8:12 (Parallel theme): For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

Acts 10:34 (Truth): Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

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