

“Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins.” Mark 12:41-42 NLT

## lectio // Mark 12:41-44

The offering boxes, or “trumpets” were very interesting in New Testament times. The boxes were called “trumpets” or Shofars because of the funnel-shaped metal that sat on top of each box. It was thought that the noise of coins dropping would deter someone from stealing money from the box. Well, we know what those “trumpet” sounds ended up being... a way to bring A LOT of coinage and slowly pour it into the metal funnel so that it made a lot of noise. More noise, more mula! There were 13 boxes in the court of women because the treasury offices were on each side of that court area. Two trumpets were reserved for the temple tax—one for the current year and one for the past year. Trumpets 3 to 7 were for collecting funds for the appointed value of turtledoves, pigeons, wood, incense, and golden vessels respectively. Trumpet 8 was for money left over from sin offerings. Trumpets 9 through 12 held funds left over from guilt offerings, from the sacrificing of birds, from the offerings of Nazirites, and from the offerings of lepers. Trumpet 13 was for voluntary contributions. Jesus sat down near trumpet 13 and just watched people give! As the wealthy approached and slowly poured their coins in the funnel I’m sure they glanced over at Jesus and smiled with a little satisfaction of being a big giver. Maybe Jesus smiled back, maybe he didn’t? When the widow approached. I am almost positive that she put in her two coins (less than a penny each), one at a time and thanked God for each coin and also for God directing the money to those less fortunate than her. I am also positive that she didn’t even notice Jesus there watching. But I’m sure she smiled and I’m sure that Jesus smiled with her and at her. How can the poor give to those who are poorer? How can a poor person out give a wealthy person? It’s right here. Look inside box 13. What you’ll find is money given voluntarily - not for taxes, building programs, temple expenses or even sin. You’ll find a pile of gratitude and generosity. The widow wasn’t a bigger giver in amount, but in a bigger heart. She had a bigger heart for giving because she gave sacrificially, out of faith. Maybe Jesus smiled because he knew what his Father God was going to do to bless her. We are most like God when we give.

Dad,

I don’t mind being schooled by a widow. Widows are some of the most generous, wise people I know. I am more humbled by being schooled by the poor. Their generosity inspires me to see my life and my stuff completely different. I’m going to look for trumpet 13 from now on 😊.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root