

Lesson 23- Luke 20:1 - 21:4 Jesus' Authority is Questioned, Parable of Wicked Tenants, Taxes, Questions about the Resurrection and about David's Son, The Widow's Offering

Our last lesson ended with Jesus cleansing the Temple of money changers and merchants. In this lesson we see Jesus preaching and teaching in the Temple. He has drawn the attention of the priests, scribes and elders.

1. Which story or verse in this lesson do you find the most enlightening, inspiring or surprising?

2. Read Luke 20:1-8 and footnotes. Reflection: What do you believe the priests, elders and scribes *really* thought of John the Baptist? What did the people listening to Jesus believe?

Luke 20:1-8 One day as he was teaching the people in the temple area and proclaiming the good news, the chief priests and scribes, together with the elders, approached him ² and said to him, "Tell us, by what authority are you doing these things? Or who is the one who gave you this authority?" ³ He said to them in reply, "I shall ask you a question. Tell me, ⁴ was John's baptism of heavenly or of human origin?" ⁵ They discussed this among themselves, and said, "If we say, 'Of heavenly origin,' he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' ⁶ But if we say, 'Of human origin,' then all the people will stone us, for they are convinced that John was a prophet." ⁷ So they answered that they did not know from where it came. ⁸ Then Jesus said to them, "Neither shall I tell you by what authority I do these things."

3. Read Luke 20:9-18 in your Bible and footnotes, and read Isaiah 5:1-7, below. This is an allegory. See if you can figure out who or what is suggested by each of the following in Luke 20: 9-18.

Who is the owner of the vineyard?

What does the vineyard represent?

Who do the tenant farmers represent in this parable?

Who are the servants of the owner?

Who is the son/heir of the owner?

Isaiah 5:1-7 I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside.² He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.³ "Now, you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard."⁴ What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? ⁵ Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled.⁶ I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briars and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it."⁷ The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the nation of Israel, and the people of Judah are the vines he delighted in. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

4. Read Luke 20:17-19 in your Bible, and any footnotes on these verses. Share what you have found in the footnotes with your group. Read also, 1 Peter 2:4-8, below.

What does the stone represent? In 1 Peter 4-8, what is the meaning of verse 5?

1 Peter 2:4-8⁴ Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God,⁵ *and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*⁶ For it says in scripture: "Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and whoever believes in it shall not be put to shame."⁷ Therefore, its value is for you who have faith, but for those without faith: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,"⁸ and "A stone that will make people stumble, and a rock that will make them fall."

5. Read Luke 20:20-26. How were the spies or agents of the Temple authorities trying to trap Jesus?

Luke 20:20-26 They watched him closely and sent agents pretending to be righteous who were to trap him in speech, in order to hand him over to the authority and power of the governor.²¹ They posed this question to him, "Teacher, we know that what you say and teach is correct, and you show no partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth."²² Is it lawful for us to pay tribute to Caesar or not?"²³ Recognizing their craftiness he said to them,²⁴ "Show me a denarius; whose image and name does it bear?" They replied, "Caesar's."²⁵ So he said to them, "Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God."²⁶ They were unable to trap him by something he might say before the people, and so amazed were they at his reply that they fell silent.

6. Read Luke 20:27-44 and footnotes in your Bible. Read also Deuteronomy 25:5-6 below, regarding the practice of levirate marriage. What feature of Jesus' teaching did the Sadducees not teach and believe? See verse 27 and footnotes.

How did Jesus' use YHWH's words to Moses at the burning bush to support resurrection, or life after death? See verses 37- 38.

Deuteronomy 25:5-6 If brothers are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her.⁶ The first son she bears shall carry on the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

7. Read Luke 20:34-36. Jesus says that marriage is something that is done in this material, earthly age. How does He describe the resurrected souls in the next age?

8. Read Luke 20:41-44 and footnotes. Share what you find in the footnotes for these verses. The question is, can a "Son of David" also be David's "lord"?

9. Read Luke 20:45-47 and Luke 21:1-4 and footnotes. Compare the attitude and actions of the scribes in 20:45-7 to the widow in Luke 21:1-4. In what ways does the widow give more?