

Lesson 21

Confrontations in the Temple

Luke 20

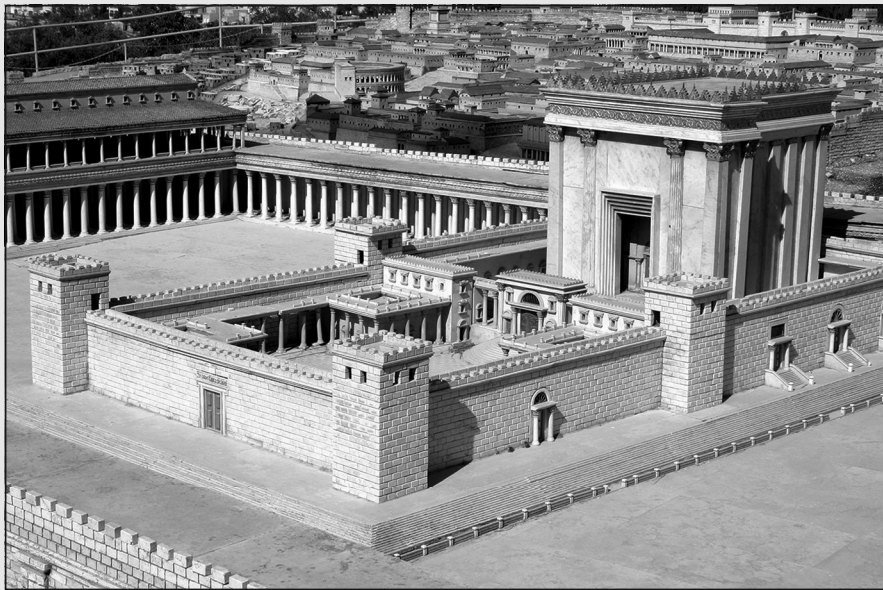
On the Tuesday before Jesus' crucifixion on Friday, the Jews organized to confront Him. They had decided that He must be removed from among them (19:47) and began searching for charges to bring against Him.

by promising to answer their question if they would answer His. He asked, "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" (20:4). The rulers reasoned that if they said it was from heaven He would ask why they did not receive it and if they said it was from

husbandmen, and went away into a far country. After a period of time, he sent his servant to receive some of the fruit of the vineyard. The husbandmen beat him and sent him away empty. He sent a second and they treated him the same way. The third servant he sent was wounded and cast out. Finally, the lord of the vineyard sent his son, thinking the husbandmen would reverence him. Instead, the husbandmen killed the son hoping to take the vineyard for themselves. Jesus then asked rhetorically, "What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?" (20:15). He said, "He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and give the vineyard to others" (20:16).

The lord of the vineyard was God, the husbandmen were the Jewish leaders, the servants were the Old Testament prophets, and the son was Jesus. The vineyard represents the Jewish nation or God's covenant. The parable graphically displays the Jewish rejection of God's claims on the nation and of the crucifixion of His Son.

When Jesus said that the nation would be taken from these Jews and given to others, the Jewish leaders replied, "God forbid" (20:16). He responded, "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (20:17-18). Jesus was the stone rejected by the Jewish leaders whom God made Head of the corner. The man who rejects Jesus will be doomed forever.



This model of Herod's Temple gives one an idea of what the Temple area looked like in Jesus' day.

Challenging Jesus' Authority (20:1-8)

The chief priests, scribes, and elders approached Jesus and asked Him, "Tell us, by what authority doest Thou these things? Or who is he that gave Thee this authority?" (20:2). The "things" which they had in mind were His teaching in and cleansing of the temple (19:45-47). Jesus responded

men the crowd who thought John was a prophet would stone them. So they replied that they were unable to tell. When they refused to answer Jesus' question, He refused to answer theirs.

Jesus' Parable of the Vineyard (20:9-18)

He told a parable of a man who planted a vineyard, rented it out to

Question about Paying Taxes (20:19-26)

When the Jews perceived that the parable was directed towards them, they began looking for an opportunity to trap Jesus in His words and arrest Him. They sent out spies

to ensnare Him. The first group asked Him about paying taxes. Feigning respect for Jesus as a teacher, they inquired, “Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?” (20:22). If Jesus answered “yes” the Jews who were opposed to Roman rule would be alienated; if He answered “no” the Roman government could bring charges against Him for treason.

Perceiving their craftiness in tempting Him, Jesus said, “Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it?” They answered, “Caesar’s.” Jesus responded, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s” (20:25). Jesus’ enemies were unable to trap Him in His words so they held their peace.

Question about the Resurrection (20:27-38)

Witnessing the failure of the first group, the Sadducees who denied the resurrection asked Jesus a question. They told of a man with seven brothers who was married to a woman; he died without having offspring. The Law of Moses commanded a brother to take the woman to be his wife and to raise up children to his brother (Deut. 25:5). The second brother took the woman as wife and died without children. So did the rest of the seven brothers. The Sadducees then asked, “Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? For seven had her to wife” (20:33).

Jesus responded by telling them that there was no need of marriage in heaven (since there is no death and need for reproduction). However, the law of Moses demonstrated that the dead are raised by the incident which happened when God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and called God the “God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

“Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s” (20:25). Jesus’ enemies were unable to take hold of His words so they held their peace.

For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him” (20:38-39). Hence, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were alive when God spoke to Moses at the burning bush, in spite of the fact that their bodies had died hundreds of years earlier.

Having been answered so convincingly, His critics kept silence (20:39-40).

Jesus Questioned His Critics (20:41-44)

Jesus then asked the Jewish leaders a question regarding the nature of the Messiah. He asked, “How say they that Christ is David’s son?” (20:41) Then He quoted Psalm 110, a psalm of David in which King David said, “The Lord said unto my Lord. . .” (20:42). Jesus asked how the Messiah could be both David’s

son and his Lord. This question pinpoints the Jewish problem with identifying Jesus as the Messiah. The Messiah was both human (the son of David) and divine (David’s Lord). Because the Jews could not understand this, they accused Jesus of blasphemy.

Jesus’ Criticism of the Jewish Leaders (20:45-47)

Though given in greater detail in Matthew 23, Luke 20:45-47 record Jesus’ criticism of the hypocrisy of the Jews. He exposed them as a group who loved the preeminence among men, seeking to be identified as the spiritual leaders of the nation. Nevertheless these were the very men who devoured widows’ houses and led long prayers for a show. Jesus said, “The same shall receive greater damnation” (20:47).



The wailing wall is the retaining wall for the Temple Mount. That is all that is left of the Herodian Temple which was destroyed in AD 70.

Questions

1. What kind of authority did the Jews want Jesus to display (20:2)? _____

2. What authority did He have? _____
3. What do the following mean:
 - a. From heaven (20:4): _____
 - b. From men (20:4): _____
4. What shows the insincerity of those requesting authority from Jesus (20:5-7)? _____

5. Identify the following in the parable of the vineyard:
 - a. Man who planted the vineyard: _____
 - b. Husbandmen: _____
 - c. Servants: _____
 - d. Son: _____
6. To what did Jesus refer in 20:16? _____

7. Explain 20:17-18. _____

8. Why did the Jews ask Jesus questions in this chapter (20:20)? _____

9. What was Jesus' answer to whether or not a man should pay taxes? _____

10. How does Jesus' answer harmonize with Acts 5:29? _____

11. What Bible doctrine did the Sadducees deny? _____

12. Why is marriage not maintained in heaven (20:34-36)? _____

13. How did the statement of God to Moses at the burning bush prove the resurrection (20:37)? _____

14. What facts did Jesus tell us about Psalm 110 (20:41-42)? _____

15. To what did the Psalm apply (20:42-43)? _____

16. How could the Messiah be both David's son and his Lord? _____

17. What sins characterized the scribes (20:45-47)? _____

Answering Denominational Error

1. Many denominations require that a man be ordained in order for him to administer baptism, serve the Lord's supper, or perform a wedding. What kind of authority is required for a man to preach? _____

2. Are the following "from heaven" or "of men"?

a. Infant baptism: _____

b. The papacy: _____

c. Divorce and remarriage for any reason: _____

d. Instrumental music in the worship of the church: _____

e. Church supported hospitals and colleges: _____

f. Denominations: _____