

LUKE Lesson 52

JESUS RESPONDS TO ANTAGONISTS IN JERUSALEM (20:1-47)

31 May 2019

1-8 The Lord Jesus had opponents from among the religious crowd who were constantly challenging Him with questions, hoping to expose Him as being a mere man. In Luke 20, they challenged His authority (verse 2). Jesus didn't answer their question, but rather, He asked them a question which would cause them to face the truth (verses 3-4). They had to face the truth (verses 5-6), but they wouldn't admit it (verse 7).

They didn't say, "*We don't know.*" They said, "*We cannot tell*" (Matt 21:27, Mk 11:33). They knew that admitting the truth that John was God's prophet meant that Jesus was the Messiah. They couldn't confess Christ and they couldn't deny Him. Either answer would cost them their place of authority in the Jewish religion. They weren't willing to pay that price, so they refused to answer.

9-18 Jesus began a parable about a vineyard. The fig tree is not a picture of Israel; it pictures self-righteousness and religion. The grapevine which grows in the vineyard pictures Israel. Several Bible passages speak of Israel as God's vineyard and their rejection of God.

Isaiah 5:1-7, 27:2-10

Jeremiah 2:21, 12:10

Psalms 80:8

Hosea 10:1, 14:5-7

Ezekiel 15:1-5 (see John 15:5-8, Gal 5:22-23). A vine is only good for bearing fruit.

Jesus' **parable of the vineyard** reminds the Jews of how God sent them many prophets to work in the vineyard (Israel) to try and get the vineyard ready to produce fruit. Israel pushed away God's prophets, so He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ into the vineyard and they killed Him. Jesus said God would destroy the husbandmen (Israel) and give the vineyard to others (Church). Their destruction came in 70 A. D. when God sent Titus to level Jerusalem.

The stone which the builders rejected (vss 17-18) is Jesus Christ. He is the head of the corner in the spiritual building called the church. Believers today are "lively stones" in that spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5). Jesus Christ is that Rock (1 Cor 10:4). He is the foundation stone (1 Cor 3:11), though He is the cornerstone. That is only possible if the building is a pyramid shape with Jesus at the top (from our point of view on Earth), but at the foundation (from God's point of view in Heaven). One day that stone will become the smiting stone (Daniel 2:34) and destroy all the nations of the world that reject Him and set up an everlasting kingdom.

Today, if you will cast yourself upon the Lord Jesus Christ, He'll break you (heart, will, pride, etc.) so that He can lift you up a new man. —If you don't fall upon Him, He'll fall upon you in judgment (vs 18).

19-25 The priests and scribes attempted to make Christ speak against the government. They used flattery (vs 21), but Jesus perceived their craftiness (vs 23).

He said, "**Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's.**" That is, if the government provides you with protection, public services, street maintenance, and other privileges, you ought to pay your part.

"**And unto God the things which be God's.**" He's not telling them to tithe their money to God. In Who's image are you made? (Gen 1:26). —If the money with Caesar's image belonged to Caesar, then you, with God's image, belong to God! (Rom 12:1, 1 Cor 6:20). Give yourself to God.

26-35 The Sadducees tried to prove to Jesus that there is no resurrection by describing a supposed conflict in the marriage relationship in Heaven. Jesus explained that marriage and families are only for this world, not the world to come. Note that this refutes the teachings of Mormonism and their "celestial marriages" resulting in "spirit babies."

36-40 Jesus proved that the dead are raised by reminding them that Moses called God the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exod 3:6). God is not a God of the dead, but of the living.

Notice that in every case, Jesus answered His opponents with scripture. He let the scriptures give a sharp rebuke to those who tried Him (see Titus 1:9-14).

41-44 If Christ is David's son, why did David call Him Lord? Because Christ is eternal; He existed before His incarnation in Bethlehem. (See Romans 1:3-4, 1 Timothy 3:16).

45-47 Warnings from Jesus.

Beware of a man who needs to put on a robe before he can teach you.

Beware of a man who loves to be praised by the people.

Beware of a man who places himself above other people.

Beware of a man who takes money from widows until they've got nothing left in this world.

Beware of a man who makes a show out of prayer.

Such a man shall receive greater damnation. There are different levels or degrees of Hell. (Matt. 11:24, Dan 3:19)
