

Second Sunday in Lent – 2024

Saturday, 2/24 at 4:00 & Sunday, 2/25 at 9:00



# Challenged Leaders Taxes

Based on the Booklet, Days 6-8

## The Holy Week Journey

Text: Mark 11:27 – 12:17 NAS-95

Lenten Wednesdays: Services 11 & 7; Meals 12 & 6

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: *Thanks for joining the journey!* We began on Palm Sunday with the **anointing** and **triumphal entry**, then, on Holy Monday, the **fig tree** and **cleansing of the temple**. *See those sermons to understand the great significance of each event!*

Holy Tuesday was a monumental day, which included 17 different events! The day began with Jesus teaching his disciples two key aspects of prayer: ♦fully trusting in God and ♦fully forgiving all who sin against us! Now, in part 3 of 14, we jump back into Holy Week on Tuesday morning.

**Day 6 (Tu, 2/20) – The Authority of Jesus Challenged: 11:27** [Jesus and His disciples] came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to Him, <sup>28</sup> and *began* saying to Him, “By what authority are You doing these things, or who gave You this authority to do these things?” <sup>29</sup> And Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one question, and you answer Me, and *then* I

will tell you by what authority I do these things. <sup>30</sup> Was the baptism of John from heaven, or from men? Answer Me.”

<sup>31</sup> They *began* reasoning among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’ <sup>32</sup> But shall we say, ‘From men?’” -- they were afraid of the people, for everyone considered John to have been a real prophet. <sup>33</sup> Answering Jesus, they said, “We do not know.” And Jesus said to them, “Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

- The BIG Picture: The Jewish leaders exercised authority over the temple complex. Then, *on Monday*, Jesus took radical action to drive the moneychangers and animal-sellers out of the Court of the Nations. Therefore, *on Tuesday*, they asked, “**who gave You this authority...?**”
- Food for Thought: Rather than answer them, Jesus asked them a question – *because He wanted them to admit and understand the significance of John’s ministry*. Let us follow Jesus’ example by sometimes responding to a question with a question – *to get people thinking!*
- The Source of Jesus’ Authority: *His Father in heaven!*

**Day 7 (We, 2/21)** – **The Parable of the Tenants: 12:1** And He began to speak to them [*the Jewish leaders*] in parables [*which are earthly stories with heavenly meanings*]: “A man PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT, AND DUG A VAT UNDER THE WINE PRESS AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. <sup>2</sup> At the *harvest* time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive *some* of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers. <sup>3</sup> They took him, and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. <sup>4</sup> Again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. <sup>5</sup> And

he sent another, and that one they killed; and so *with* many others, beating some and killing others. <sup>6</sup> He had one more to *send*, a beloved son; he sent him last *of all* to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' <sup>7</sup> But those vine-growers said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!' <sup>8</sup> They took him, and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard." // The **vineyard** is *the nation of Israel*, the **renters** are *the Jewish leaders*, the **servants** – who were beaten and killed – are *the prophets*, and the **son** – who the Jewish leaders were planning to kill – is *Jesus*.

<sup>9</sup> "What will [GOD] the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers [*the Jewish leaders*], and will give the vineyard to others [*like Jesus' apostles, who were repentant and trusting in Jesus as the Messiah*]. <sup>10</sup> Have you not even read this Scripture: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER *stone*'; <sup>11</sup> THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES?'" <sup>12</sup> And [the Jewish leaders] were seeking to seize Him, and yet they feared the people, for they understood that He spoke the parable against them. And so they left Him and went away. // Those leaders had certainly heard that the rejected stone would become the Chief Corner Stone. Then, at that moment, they may have begun to understand that **JESUS IS THE CHIEF CORNER STONE!** Nevertheless, their hatred toward Jesus was GREATER than ▶the truth of the Scriptures and ▶the very Messiah who stood in front of them! **Let us always ★love God's truth and ★be repentant!**

**Day 8 (Th, 2/22) – Paying Taxes to Caesar: 12:13** Then [the Jewish leaders] sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians [*supporters of Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great*] to Him in order to trap Him in a statement. <sup>14</sup> They came and said to

Him, “Teacher, we know that You are truthful and defer [give way] to no one; for You are not partial [unfair] to any, but teach the way of God in truth. [What they said was true, but their motives were underhanded, and Jesus knew it!] Is it lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not? [A poll-tax was an annual tax required by every adult.]<sup>15</sup> “Shall we pay or shall we not pay?” But He, knowing their hypocrisy [knowing every heart – even yours and mine], said to them, “Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius [the amount paid to a laborer for one day’s work] to look at.”<sup>16</sup> They brought one. And He said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” And they said to Him, “Caesar’s.”<sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to them, “Render [give] to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they were amazed at Him.

- What do we owe to our government? Paul wrote: “Render to all what is due them: **tax** to whom tax is due; **custom** to whom custom [like saying, “good morning” or shaking hands]; **fear** to whom fear [when we have a healthy fear of our laws, we will obey our laws]; **honor** to whom honor [like standing when a judge enters a courtroom] (Rom. 13:7).
- What do we owe to our God? Without God we would not exist, so we owe Him everything: **praise** – for who He is, **thanks** – for what He does, **love** – for His word of truth, **trust** – in His Son for eternal life, **obedience** – to His commands, **service** – with our God-given abilities, **offerings** – to support His kingdom, etc.

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Jesus, as we journey with You, help us to better understand You, and gladly honor You as our Lord!

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