

Luke 19 & 20 - Chapter Study

INTRO

VIII. The Judean Ministry 9:51-24:53

J. The Teaching of Jesus 12:1-19:27

32. A tax-collector repents 19:1-10

¹ Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

Jericho was the Eastern gateway to Jerusalem.

It was a large, important, & wealthy city because it served as a major stopping place on the caravan routes that connected Africa & Asia.

Its markets were extensive & filled with goods from all over the world.

Its climate & hot springs made it attractive as a resort for people from all over that area of the world.

Extensive date groves, balsam fields, & rose gardens filled the air with a scent that brought a delight to all.

Because of the huge amount of trade that passed through Jericho, it was a prime place for the collection of customs & taxes.

Josephus called it “a divine region,” “the fattest in Palestine.”^[1]

² Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

Zacchaeus is called a “chief tax-collector,” meaning he’d managed to out-bid competitors for the lucrative position of tax-collecting for the Romans.

He’d become the regional tax-officer, who had several employees who did the actual collecting of taxes and customs.

The Romans would determine a minimum tax duty for a given area, then they’d put out the job of collecting the tax to *bidders*.

Each would put in a bid of a certain amount of taxes they guaranteed to collect from the Romans.

Where the tax-collectors made their money was in adding a bit to the basic tax-rates set by the Roman officials.

It was understood that their services as tax-collectors would cost something, and the Romans allowed it.

If someone refused to pay their taxes, the tax-collector would go to

the Romans and ask for assistance.

The penalty for not paying taxes was pretty harsh.

What kept tax-collectors from being *ridiculous* in the extra fees they charged the people was the Roman officials who knew they couldn't let the tax-collectors just rip the people off.

If the taxes got too high, the people would rebel – & this was something the Romans avoided at all cost.

So, tax-collectors played a careful game of skimming as much from the people as they could without incurring the anger of the Romans for being too greedy in the fees they charged.

Zacchaeus had managed to win the bid for tax-collecting for an entire region.

It's possible his region was someplace *other* than Jericho & he was just living there because it's where a lot of rich people lived.

But more likely, Jericho *was* his region.

3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature.

3 years have passed since Jesus began His ministry, & His reputation has spread far & wide over Israel.

Things have heated up between Jesus & the religious leaders who oppose Him.

As Passover approaches, all the talk is that Jesus will surely go to Jerusalem where He will openly present Himself as the Messiah.

As Jesus enters Jericho, everyone knows He's on His way to the Capital, & they mass along the road, desiring to get a glimpse of this man everyone is talking about.

Zacchaeus was one of those who wanted a look, but he was a short guy & couldn't see through the crowd that lined the path Jesus was traveling.

4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.

We've seen people doing this kind of thing to catch a glimpse of a celebrity so this doesn't seem like all that big a deal to us.

They climb trees, hang out windows, sit on walls.

What we don't know is that in that culture, it was completely against the standards of dignity for a man to run.

Kids ran when they played. Servants ran to serve. But men did not run – ever!

And the greater the man, the higher his station in society, the more reserved he was.

A king would **NEVER** run because running implied haste to serve.

A man who ran was admitting he lacked position.

This is why the Father in the story of the prodigal son is so remarkable.

He didn't care about silly, social customs or how his running to his repentant son might look.

Love compelled him to rush to His son & embrace him with forgiveness.

Zacchaeus, a wealthy official, was more concerned to get a glimpse of Jesus than what his peers would think when they saw him running, then even worse, climbing a tree!

He threw all decorum aside in his desire to catch a view of this

One whose fame has spread far & wide -

This man named 'Jesus' who it was said, loved tax-collectors & sinners & who told stories about *repentant* tax-collectors who were accepted by God.

Zacchaeus knew his rep was trashed already because of his position.

He probably figured he couldn't hurt it any more by running & climbing trees.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

What a surprise this would be!

But it was precisely the kind of thing the people had heard about Jesus – that He tended to fellowship with these kinds of social rejects.

Jesus is making good on His reputation as one who loves sinners. The same haste Zacchaeus had shown in moving to *see* Jesus, Jesus now urges him to apply in getting ready for a more intimate encounter.

6 So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

Zacchaeus ran home & had his servants prepare the house to receive the august guests of Jesus and His disciples.

Following more slowly as He made his way through the crowds, Jesus finally arrived at Zacchaeus' door, where He was warmly welcomed.

7 But when they saw *it*, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."

Though Jesus had a well-known reputation for loving & accepting sinners like Zacchaeus, when He actually *did it* in front of the crowds, they were critical of Him.

Loving & restoring the down & out is a great for your reputation, but for heaven's sake, *don't actually do it* because it makes those around you uncomfortable!

Mother Teresa visited the United States some years ago.

She was invited to speak to the United Nations in New York & to address a joint session of Congress in Washington DC.

Everyone tried to treat her as a celebrity.

They made reservations for her at the finest hotels, & brought limousines to transport her.

She refused it all, & stayed with some nuns at their humble home.

Every minute of every day while in the States was all planned for her by the press, the UN, & the government.

She was going to be given a tour of historical landmarks & was set to eat at the finest of restaurants.

She shunned it all, & demanded to be taken to the slums of New York and DC where she visited the little relief works there.

She served in soup kitchens & attended to the fevered and dying in an AIDS hospice.

She *did* speak to the UN & Congress, but then went immediately to the poor & needy & touched them with the compassion of Christ.

The press was *furious* because she refused to follow their agenda.

Her handlers, who'd managed to secure meals & meetings for her with the elite of American society were irate because she declined almost all of them.

Her mission, her calling was not to hobnob with the rich; it was to offer a hand of love & practical help to the needy.

Mother Teresa was known & honored by the world press for

precisely this as she gave so selflessly *in the slums of Calcutta*.
When she came to the US, she was derided for doing it *here*.

We hear about people & ministries who reach out to gangs & we think how great that is.

Will we welcome those individuals & ministries right here?

We hear about the effective ministry being done by those reaching out to homosexuals & we rejoice!

How will we respond when that ministry takes place right here, in our midst?

Jesus loves sinners! But He doesn't love them from afar. He goes to them & invites them to fellowship with Him.

Where ever there is repentance, Jesus moves with forgiveness & restoration.

Let's make sure we're not like the people of Jericho who just give *lip service* to Jesus' *reputation* as a Friend of sinners.

When He befriends them, let's make sure we're at His side, not chiding Him.

⁸ Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." ⁹ And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰ for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

What Zacchaeus did was evidence of genuine repentance.

His wealth was so great he could give half of it away.

He'd spent his life thinking satisfaction was found in the accumulation of things.

But in the light of Jesus' love, he realized things could never satisfy.

So he determined to get rid of that which he'd at one time defined himself by.

Then he promised to return his ill-gotten wealth to those he'd taken it from.

What's interesting is the *penalty* he places on himself.

In Exodus 22, Moses had given fines that were to be assessed on theft.

If a thief *voluntarily confessed* & restored the stolen item, he was to pay it back, plus *one-fifth* of its value to the victim. [2]

If the thief was *caught*, he was to pay it back at *double* its value. [3]

The only time there was to be a *four-fold* restitution is if the theft included *deliberate violence*. [4]

Zacchaeus is admitting he'd abused his authority & used the threat of violence as a way to get rich.

He will now repay those he's taken from, & quadruple the excess he'd taken.

One of the marks of true repentance is the *refusal* to lessen or excuse sin.

Repentance sees sin for what it is and doesn't seek to lessen or justify it.

Repentance is brokenness that doesn't try to heal itself.

It casts itself on the mercy of another.

Zacchaeus could easily have promised to just return the excess taxes he'd unfairly taken.

He could have rationalized that all he *needed* to do was restore what he'd taken.

That would have been a *fair* thing to do – but Zacchaeus wasn't thinking about hanging on to his wealth.

He wasn't concerned with returning just *what he owed to man*.

He was consumed with *repenting of His sin before God*, & the law was clear – a 4-fold restitution!

I've talked to lots of people who've gotten caught in sin, & they deeply regret what's happened.

But as I talk with them, it's obvious they aren't really repentant.

They're just bummed out they got caught.

They blame their sin on others.

They cheated on their spouse because they were such a poor mate.

Yeah, they stole the item, but the merchant shouldn't have put it there.

They gossiped about that person, but that person ought not have done what they did so they could be gossiped about!

All of this justification of sin shows a lack of true repentance.

Genuine repentance is a brokenness consumed with its own failure to lay blame at anyone else's feet.

AND – genuine repentance is always accompanied by a determination to change & make things right.

Because Zacchaeus repented – Jesus calls him a son of Abraham.

As a collaborator with the Romans, Zacchaeus had been officially stripped of his Jewishness & considered *even worse* than a Gentile.

Jesus gives him back his dignity as a man & his place in the covenant of God.

Then Jesus reminds everyone that his reputation as a friend of sinners isn't just an empty thing – It's His mission!

33. Parable of the mina 19:11-27

We covered this on Sunday.

This brings us to the end of Luke's long section giving us little snippets of the teaching Jesus gave while working His way through Judea on this way to Jerusalem & the end.

K. The Triumphal Entry 19:28-48

1. Coming to Jerusalem 19:28-40

28 When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

Jericho is located at 750 ft. *below* sea level.

Jerusalem is 2500 ft. above, so the climb is over 3,000 ft over a distance of 17 miles.

29 And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples,

These were 2 small villages just over the summit of the Mt. of Olives, which lies east of the City.

They were just shy of 2 miles away from Jerusalem & were the final stopping points for pilgrims who were traveling to Jerusalem from Jericho.

Bethany was the home of Jesus' friends, Mary, Martha, & Lazarus.

Now, before we read on, it's important to realize that as they arrived at Bethany, it's 1 week to Passover, & the City of Jerusalem is in

an uproar, as it was every year at this time.

Jews from all over the world flooded into the City for the Passover, raising the total population of the City to some 2½ million!!

Every inn was filled, every room taken, & the entire hillside of the Mt. of Olives facing Jerusalem was covered by pilgrims who were camped out there.

The crowds would have reached all the way to Bethany.

As they arrive, Jesus gives some instructions to 2 of the disciples -

30 saying, “Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. 31 And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’ ”

Once in Bethany, Jesus pointed down the road to Bethphage & told them to head over there & secure a young colt.

32 So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. 33 But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?” 34 And they said, “The Lord has need of him.”

Whether Jesus had made previous arrangements with the owner of this colt or the answer was enough to satisfy him the need was legit, we’re not told.

35 Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. 36 And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road. 37 Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, 38 saying: “ ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

It’s crucial we remember that the popular expectation was that Jesus would use *this* Passover to finally take His throne.

As the disciples see Jesus taking this form of conveyance into the City, they assume He’s begun to meet their over-ripe

expectations.

After all, this is how kings travel – in style, on a donkey.
The donkey is an animal of humility for us – not so in the ancient world.

The only time a king rode on a horse was into battle.

When he was simply making the rounds of his kingdom, he rode on a donkey, as a sign he was coming in peace.

If people saw the king coming on a horse, it was not good news – it meant he was coming with war.

On a donkey meant he was coming in peace to bring blessing.

In Zechariah 9:9, it was foretold the King would come to Jerusalem riding on a donkey colt.

Jesus was making an unmistakable claim to being Israel's King by this act.

The disciples recognized it as such & began to shout the words of the Messianic Psalm 118.

39 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

When the Pharisees heard the disciples shouting out the words of Messianic expectation & welcome, they urged Jesus to tell them to be silent.

Why this concern?

2 reasons –

1) They were concerned about the Roman reaction when word got out someone was claiming to be the Messiah.

There'd been others who'd used the Passover to make a bid at starting a revolution against the Romans.

They'd always been put ruthlessly down, but only after much bloodshed and trouble.

In order to forestall any further disturbances at Passover, the Romans always brought more troops from their chief base at Caesarea.

They were set on a hair trigger & would be deployed at the slightest hint of trouble with orders to ruthlessly put down *any* disturbance.

2) The Pharisees believed the Messiah would be God-incarnate & they refused to accept Jesus as God!

They considered what the disciples were saying as

blasphemous & held that if Jesus were the godly man He pretended to be, He would shush the disciples for their grievous error of calling Him the Messiah.

Interesting – the Pharisees’ doctrine said that the Messiah would be divine, that He would be God-incarnate; that was their doctrine!

But when Jesus came and claimed to be the fulfillment of their doctrine they refused to believe it!

What’s the lesson?

Many people think they believe in something when in fact, they don’t.

They say they believe in the love, power, & wisdom of God, but when it comes down to it, they *refuse* to entrust themselves to Him.

40 But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

This seems like an awfully cryptic remark for Jesus to make; what’s He talking about?

The only way to make sense of this is to realize that there’d been some specific prophecies that identified, not just the *form* Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem would take, but the *time* of it.

Zechariah 9:9 tells us He would come riding on a donkey’s colt.

But Daniel 9 gives us the very day he would come.

Daniel was told it would be 173,880 days from when the order was given to rebuild Jerusalem.

That order was given in March 14th of 445 BC by Artaxerxes.

173,880 days later brings us to April 6th, 32 AD, Palm Sunday &

the Triumphal Entry we read about here. [\[5\]](#)

Psalm 118 made it clear that the Messiah would be welcomed by the praises of the people – so, if they were to be silent as the Pharisees demanded, God would turn the rocks into obedient servants to sing the praises of the Messiah.

God’s word **CANNOT** fail.

2. Jesus weeps over the City 19:41-44

41 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,

42 saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make for your peace!* But now they are hidden from your eyes. **43** For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, **44** and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

Jesus knew what atrocities lay in store for Jerusalem just 40 years hence.

The ferocity the Romans unleashed on the City has gone down as some of the most heinous in all history.

Jesus wept as He considered what was about to come.

And it was all avoidable if they would just turn to Him.

Jesus points to Daniel’s prophecy & how they *ought to have known* this was the day when the Messiah would come.

Because they *refused to see*, they would *become blind* – in a literal fulfillment of what Jesus had said in the parable of the minas in v. 26 – to Him who has, He will be given more, but to him who doesn’t have, even what he does have will be taken away.

3. He clears the Temple 19:45-48

45 Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, **46** saying to them, “It is written, ‘*My house is a house of prayer,*’ but you have made it a ‘*den of thieves.*’”

We’re told in John 2 that Jesus began His ministry by clearing the temple of the money-changers and those who sold animals.

The reform hadn’t lasted. As soon as He left, the priests had allowed the wicked trade to resume.

So Jesus goes through the court & clears it once again.

As He does, He quotes from the prophets Isaiah & Jeremiah. ^[6]

The temple was unique and cannot be equated with the local church.

Actually, local churches are based more on the model of the Jewish synagogue.

When the Jews were in exile and the temple was in ruins, they kept their faith vibrant and alive by setting aside special places to meet for worship and instruction.

Even after the temple was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, the Jews continued to use the synagogue as a place to meet for the study of the Law.

The temple was unique – it was the place where God chose to manifest His presence in a visible way.

It was the only place sacrifices could be made.

Because it was the place where God and man could meet, it was the prime place for prayer.

Jesus was furious over the way the priests, the very men who were charged with the task of safeguarding God's glory, had allowed such crass marketing & merchandising to go on in temple.

For all intents and purposes, it looked to the uninformed as though the God of Israel was nothing more than a greedy, scheming huckster.

Jesus would not tolerate this misrepresentation of God and waded through the courts removing all traces of that which defamed God.

While the local church isn't a modern day equivalent of the temple – the principle Jesus cleared the temple by is the same.

The Church stands as God's Earthly representative, and the local church is the place where His people meet.

We must be very careful for how we represent God.

When unbelievers visit – what do they see & hear about God?

Is it worship? Is it His Word, His Counsel?

Or is it slick marketing & crass merchandising?

47 And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him, ⁴⁸ and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.

Now that Jesus has arrived in Jerusalem, He stays.

There's just one week until He's betrayed, condemned and crucified.

As Luke says, the rulers were determined to be rid of Him, but Jesus is surrounded by such a large & admiring throng each day as He teaches in the temple, they don't dare arrest Him.

It would inflame the crowds against them & might very well lead to a riot – the very thing they do **NOT** want to incite. If there *is* a riot, the Romans will hold them responsible for failing to keep the peace.

L. Teaching In The Temple 20-21

This chapter describes what is called *the Day of Questions*.

Different sects of the Jewish authorities came with questions designed to trap Jesus.

But he answered them in such a way that they went away looking foolish. [7]

1. Jesus' authority is challenged 20:1-8

¹ Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him ² and spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?"

The first question comes from the rulers; the chief priests, their legal assistants, & the elders of the people.

These are the men who comprised the Jewish Sanhedrin, the highest governing body in Israel.

Their question was about Jesus' *authority*.

They hadn't commissioned him to do & say the things He was doing & saying so where did He get the right, the authority?

What they wanted Him to do was to make the claim to being the Messiah & the Son of God so they could slap Him with the ready-made charge of *blasphemy*.

But Jesus was hip to their jive & refused to fall into their trap. It wasn't time yet for the cross.

³ But He answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me:

Jesus offers up a counter-challenge, a perfectly legitimate one.

In order for them to verify that they have the authority to question Him about His authority, they must first establish their own.

So Jesus gives them an opportunity for them to reveal their credentials to ask Him anything.

4 The baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?”

All they have to do to establish their basis for demanding an answer from Jesus is to prove their authority by answering a simple question – was John a real or false prophet?

5 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ⁶ But if we say, ‘From men,’ all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet.”

⁷ So they answered that they did not know where *it* was from.

These guys were dishonest weasels!

They didn’t accept John, but knew if they admitted it, they’d be in danger of the people’s wrath because the common folk accepted John as the real deal he was!

These rulers were not only unbelievers, they were *cowards*.

They were political animals who cared about only one thing – staying in power.

Truth, righteousness, goodness, were all subject to sacrifice if they got in the way of their political ambitions.

8 And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

Since the rulers had failed to validate & verify the basis for challenging Him, Jesus wasn’t under any obligation to answer them.

2. Parable of the evil renters 20:9-19

Jesus then tells a parable about how the rulers have abused their position.

9 Then He began to tell the people this parable: “A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. ¹⁰ Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed.

¹¹ Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty-handed.

¹² And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also

and cast *him* out.

The vineyard represented Israel, and the owner was God.

The vinedressers who'd rented it were the Jewish leaders.

The servants the owner sent were the prophets who repeatedly came to Israel to call her to repentance when they had turned away from the Lord.

Time & again, the prophets of Israel were opposed & abused by the kings & rulers of Israel.

13 “Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect *him* when they see him.’ 14 But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.’ 15 So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed *him*. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others.” And when they heard *it* they said, “Certainly not!”

There He stood, the Son of God, & the rulers were doing that very thing – plotting how to get rid of Him.

At Jesus' remark that the owner of the vineyard would deal with the renters then turn the land over to others drew forth a vehement denial on the part of those who heard Him.

They well understood what this parable was about, & the thought that the land of Israel would once again be given to the Gentiles as it had been during the Babylonian exile, was a thought *so atrocious*, so *unthinkable* they, they give the highest form of denial they have.

But their denials won't stop the inevitable.

God's word foretold what was about to come.

17 Then He looked at them and said, “What then is this that is written: ‘The stone which the builders rejected *Has become the chief cornerstone*’ ? 18 Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22, the same Messianic Psalm the disciples had been shouting just a short time before as Jesus approached

Jerusalem on the back of the colt.

Jesus was the stone the rulers rejected – but He was the chief cornerstone of the work and plan of God.

Anyone who comes to Jesus will be broken of their pride & self-will.

Those who refuse to come will be crushed in judgment *by* Christ.

[8]

Jesus is often likened unto a stone or a rock in the Bible.

- He is the chief cornerstone (Psa. 118:22-28)
- He is the rock of provision that followed Israel in the desert (1 Cor. 10:4)
- He is the stone of stumbling (1 Pet. 2:8)
- He is the stone cut without hands that crushes the kingdoms of this world (Dan. 2:45)

19 And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.

Up till this point, they knew they **OUGHT** to get rid of Jesus. Now they know they **HAVE** to.

The only thing that keeps them from arresting Him is the fact that they can't get to Him without incurring the fury of the crowd.

Just like John the Baptist, the people respect Jesus as a mighty prophet.

3. The Pharisees' test 20:20-26

4. The Sadducees' test 20:27-40

We're going to cover these two sections Sunday.

5. Jesus' test 20:41-44

Jesus has now been put to the test by 3 of the most powerful sects of the day – the rulers, the Pharisees, & the Sadducees.

His answers have totally shut them down.

Then He turns the tables & poses them a question -

41 And He said to them, "How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? 42 Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: 'The LORD [Yahweh] said to my Lord [Adonai – master], " Sit at My right hand, 43 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." 44 Therefore David calls Him 'Lord'; how

is He then his Son?"

In the ancient way of thinking, the *ancestor* is always far greater than the *descendant*.

Everyone knew that the scriptures said the Messiah was to be the *descendant* of David.

So how is it then that David could speak *prophetically* of the Messiah in Psalm 110:1 and refer to the Messiah as “my Adonai / Master” ?

Of course, the answer lay in the fact that the Messiah would indeed be divine.

He was the descendant of David and so the son of Man. but He was also the OSN of God.

But this was a conundrum the most brilliant minds of ancient Judaism could not solve.

Matthew tells us that after Jesus posed this question no one dared challenge Him any more.

6. A warning 20:45-47

⁴⁵ Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, ⁴⁶ “Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, ⁴⁷ who devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.”

After Jesus answered the Sadducees’ question in vs. 27-40, v. 39 tells us –

Then some of the scribes answered and said, “Teacher, You have spoken well.”

Scribes were the lawyers of the day.

They often fell into one of the sects of either Pharisees or Sadducees but that label came way behind their title as a scribe.

These guys had the entire Bible, as well as a good amount of the teaching of the rabbis, memorized.

They were the ones who copied the Scriptures into new scrolls.

They were well educated and proud of it!

They saw how it was going with Jesus, how the rulers, then the Pharisees and finally the Sadducees had been made to look like

fools, and they determined not to be included.

So they stood back, and when Jesus turned aside the cynicism of the Sadducees, they applauded. “Bravo!” they said; “Well done!”

Jesus knew they were trying to draw some of the people’s admiration for Him to themselves.

As Matthew, Mark & Luke make clear, the scribes were usually side by side with the Pharisees when there was opposition to Jesus.

Now they act as though they’re siding with Jesus. It was all a charade.

More than anything, what the scribes lusted for was honor and to be thought of as learned and wise.

When they heard the unmatched wisdom of Jesus’ answers, they quietly snapped their fingers and said among themselves, “Why didn’t we think of that?”

Publicly, they praised Jesus and gave Him a loud *attaboy*.

Jesus knew their motive and warned the people to not be fooled by their charade of respect for Jesus.

They were men who **USED** religion as a means of pushing their own agenda.

[Elaborate on making political cause of the Christian faith.]

[1] *The Gospel of Luke*. 2000, c1975 (W. Barclay, lecturer in the University of Glasgow, Ed.). The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

2 Leviticus 6:5; Numbers 5:7

[3] Exodus 22:4, 7

[4] Exodus 22:1

[5] In Nehemiah 2:1-8 we learn that the command to rebuild Jerusalem came on the first of Nisan in the 20th year of Artaxerxes.

That’s March 14th, 445 BC. 483 years later brings us to April 6, 32 AD Here’s how we calculate the 483 years - These are *prophetic*, not *solar* years! A prophetic year consists of 360 days. [This is based on calculations determined from several sources. Genesis 7:11, 24, Genesis 8:4, Revelation 11:2-3, 12:6, and 13:5. It appears that the original calendar used by the ancients was based on a 360 day year but that something has occurred to the earth’s orbit of the sun to alter this to a 365¼ day year. Consider the 360 degrees of a circle and the figuring of time into 60 minutes. Some suggest the near pass of Mars or cataclysmic upheavals during the flood which altered our calendars.] 483 years X

360 days = 173,880 days. 173,880 days from March 14th, 445 BC brings us to April 6, 32 AD.

[6] Isa 56:7 Jer. 7:11

[7] *The Gospel of Luke*. 2000, c1975 (W. Barclay, lecturer in the University of Glasgow, Ed.). The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

[8] Guzik, David, *On-Line Commentary on Luke 20*