

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD JESUS ON EARTH
IVb. Jesus' Final Day of Public Teaching (cont.)
Jesus Proclaims Truth (Part 2: early Morning)
Wednesday, 12th Nisán (April 1), A.D. 33 c. 7:30-9:00 A.M.
Mt. 21:23-32; Mk. 12:1-12; Lk. 20:9-11

Introduction:

On first day of the last week of His life on Earth Jesus was served dinner (a cooked meal) at **Baythah-néeah** (Bethany) in the dwelling (the building in which people are presently living) of Simon the leper. It was prepared and served by **Máhrthah** and eaten in second evening (sunset til dark) on Sunday, 9 Nisán (March 29), 'six days before Passover.' Passover that year occurred on Friday, 14 Nisán (April 3), A.D. 33. It was too late (after dark) to travel any distance (especially c. thirteen miles) to **Ehfrah-éem** (*Macmillan Bible Atlas*, map # 236). Therefore Jesus and His disciples must have retired to spend the night at **Baythah-néeah** (Bethany) and began the journey to Jerusalem in the next morning (Jn. 12:12), on Monday, 10 Nisán (March 30), and not on Sunday, 9 Nisán (March 29), which is the traditional day of observance of His Triumphal entry into Jerusalem. He returned to and passed Monday night at **Baythah-néeah** (Mt. 21:17; Mk. 11:11,12). On the next morning, Tuesday, 11 Nisán (March 31), on their journey to Jerusalem, He and the disciples came upon the Mount of Olives and a fig tree having leaves but no fruit. That day The Lord Jesus demonstrated and expressed four of His emotions: Cursing the Fig Tree, Crying over Jerusalem, Cleansing The Temple, and Compassion on the Helpless in the court of The Temple. They spent Tuesday night on the Mount of Olives (Mk. 11:19; Lk. 21:37,38).

On Wednesday, 12 Nisán (April 1) in the morning watch just before dawn (c. 6:00 A.M.) on their way to The Temple, Jesus and His twelve disciples beheld the fig tree completely dried up from the roots. Peter observed the remarkable condition of the tree (Mk. 11:21). This occurred on the early morning of Wednesday, the last day The Lord Jesus taught publicly to the crowds before His crucifixion. His teachings on this day are divided into three segments: **Lessons Taught on the Way to The Temple; His Ministry in The Temple; and His Ministry on the Mount of Olives.**

It is impossible to adequately expound all of the teachings by The Lord Jesus Christ on this one day in one Lesson. Most of his Teachings used parables to illustrate The Truth He intended to communicate. To properly interpret parables requires explanation and observance of specific guide-lines before undertaking to accurately understand them. Therefore we shall briefly study the parables to interpret them only by obtaining the particular reference and the prevailing principle. Then at a later date we shall study the parables with more involved teaching.

A. Lessons Taught on the Way to The Temple - c.5:45 A.M. (Mk.11:20-26).

1. The Lesson on Faith - persistent total commitment of personal trust.
2. The Lesson on Prayer - No one can pray to The Father successfully and be heard without being cleansed from and forgiven of sin and sins by means of repentance and confession of sin and without faith (persistent personal total commitment of trust first for Salvation and then that The Father God surely will answer this request,
3. The Lesson on Forgiveness.

B. His Ministry in The Temple - c. 7:30 A.M. to c. 9:00 P.M. (Mk. 11:27-12:44; Mt. 21:23-23:39; Lk. 21:1-21:4).

Shortly after Jesus entered The Temple early in the morning (c. 7:30-8:30 A.M.), and walked around in The Temple (perhaps to observe

if the merchants tried to return or to observe the improvement over the appearance the day before. The religious leaders (chief priests, scribes, and elders) approached Him (c. 8:30 A.M.) and inquired of Him about His authority to do the things that He did the day before in The Temple (purging The Temple of the merchants that had encamped there with their merchandise. Jesus challenged them by answering their question with a question about John the Baptizer (Mt. 21:23-27; Mk. 11:27-33; Lk. 20:1-8). After refusing to answer His question about John the Baptizer, about c. 9:00 A.M. Jesus told parables and began teaching lessons in eight categories: **Faithful Service, Fatal Wrath, Financial Responsibility, Future Living, False Religion, Fallible Recognition, Fatal Rebuke, and Faithful Giving**.

1. The Lesson on Faithful Service (c. 9:00 A.M.) (Mt. 21:23-32).

a. Religious Leaders of Israel Questioned Jesus' Authority - All claimed to be serving The God but were hypocritically doing so by strictly adhering to their own brand of religion (Mt. 21:23). Who were they?

(1) Scribes - are the men who copied The Law and the teachers thereof, who were among the seventy-one chosen to serve on the council that was the highest and final court in Israel under the Roman appointed Procurator. Only this council, the Sanhedrin had the authority to pronounce the sentence of death on a violator deserving the death penalty. Some of its members also served as priests or were chosen from among the the living priests to serve on the Sanhedrin.

(2) Saducees and priests - the religious leaders, who refused to believe in resurrection, called for His crucifixion and so do away with The Lord Jesus Christ forever (Mt. 16:21,15; Mk. 11:18; 14:1,53,55; Lk. 19:48).

(3) Elders - 71 older devout religious elder men, respected and selected to serve on the Sanhedrin, the tribunal or governing religious body of the nation of Jews consisting of a council (Lk. 22:66; Mt. 10:17; Mk. 14:55; Jn. 11:47).

These were the religious watchdogs for maintaining the sacrosanctity of The Temple.

b. Jesus offered to answer their question with a question of His own, to which, if they answered one way they would be required to commit trust to what John the Baptizer said, **or** if they answered the other way, it would cause an uproar and an uprising of the crowd (Mt. 21:24-27).

c. In response to their refusal to answer, by claiming that they were not aware. In answer to their question Jesus told them, "Neither am I telling you by what means of authority I am doing these things." But instead He taught them by asking their opinion about **Faithful Service** by means of putting forth The Parable of Two Children whose Father Asked them to Work in his Vineyard (Mt. 21:28-32).

There were two young adult endeared children, who were approached by the father and told to go and be working in his vineyard. There are two aspects to this parable: Blatant Resistant Disobedience and Bland Reserved Disobedience.

(1) Blatant Resistant Disobedience (Mt. 21:28,29).

The first blatantly declared, "I determinedly will not." But afterward repented and went .

(2) Bland Reserved Disobedience (vs. 39).

The second was asked likewise and responded, "Myself, O

lord,” as if to indicate that he heard his father’s order, but did not go. He did not verbally refuse, but indicated he understood without openly denying to go. He reservedly disobeyed. It was quiet disobedience, but absolute disobedience nevertheless.

- d. At the end of the parable Jesus asked the Jewish leaders, Which of the two did the determined will of the father? They answered, The first! (v. 31a-c).
- e. Then The Lord Jesus Christ applied the parable lest they misunderstood the implication to them (vs. 31d-32).

“31 . . . /Jesus says to them, Amen I am saying to you&, “The tax collectors[publicans] and /harlots^ pass on before you into The Kingdom of The God. 32For John came to^[the face of] you& in ^oway of righteousness and you& did not commit trust to him, but the tax collectors[publicans] and the harlots^ committed trust to him. Then when you& yourselves beheld ^{lit}, you& did not change^[to care for afterward, to be remorseful] the mind afterward in order to commit trust to him” (Mt. 21:31d-32 APT).

Tax collectors and harlots were considered sinners and outcasts by the Jewish leaders and the religious Jews. In their belief such sinful people are condemned to eternal judgment and could not enter into The Kingdom of The God. The application that Jesus made placed the Jewish leaders in a more demeaned category than the outcast condemned sinners because these outcast sinners committed trust in the message of John the Baptizer and the Jewish leaders in their hypocrisy did not commit trust in what John said, nor did they consider him a genuine prophet according to their own admission in their recent answer to Jesus’ question. Hypocrisy comes from the Greek verb which literally means ‘to act a part upon the stage, to assume a counterfeit character.’ Then it has come to mean religiously ‘hypocritically pretend, to live a lie contrary to belief.’ Many times these religious leaders were decryed by The Lord Jesus Christ as hypocrites (Mt. 6:2,5,16; 15:7; 16:3; Mk. 7:6; Lk. 11:44; 12:56; 13:15).

Therefore many today are living as religious hypocrites claiming to be and posing as Christians, but not regenerated! Do you know any that are like that? What about you? Religious hypocrites shall not enter The Kingdom of The God but shall be punished eternally by perishing in The Lake of Fire because they did not repent, turn to The Lord Jesus Christ, and persistently commit personal trust unto The Lord Jesus Christ and permit Him to Live His life in them through the Power of The Holy Spirit.

- f. After giving this application to The Parable of Two Children whose Father Asked them to Work in his Vineyard, Jesus presented another parable, The Parable of The Housemaster and His Vineyard, which we will consider next time.

Conclusion:

Today we continued our study of the third day of **The Last Week in The Life of The Lord Jesus Christ on Earth**, Wednesday, 12 Nisán (April 1), A.D. 33. The New Testament narrative jumps from The Lord Jesus walking along the highway on the Mt. of Olives, teaching the disciples the lessons on faith, prayer, and forgiveness. After entering and walking around in The Temple between c. 7:30-8:30 A.M, He was approached by the religious leaders (chief priests, scribes, and elders), who questioned the authority by which He did these things. He replied by raising a question

about John the Baptizer. When they refused to answer His question, Jesus refused to answer their question but posed another question by means of the parable of The Parable of Two Children whose Father Asked them to Work in his Vineyard. Then He drew an application from this parable that those Jewish religious leaders, who lived as hypocrites, understood. It was observed that hypocrites shall perish eternally in the Lake of Fire with all who do not repent, turn to The Lord Jesus Christ, and persistently commit personal trust unto The Lord Jesus Christ followed by persistent obedience to Him and permit Him to Live His life in them through the Power of The Holy Spirit.

Application:

What will you choose **today** to do concerning The Lord Jesus Christ's attitude, ultimate judgment, and condemnation of and grief over hypocrisy and/or failure to repent and properly respond to The Gospel and failure to bear fruit for Him by discipling others?

Dr. Fred Wittman

For next week: **Read and meditate upon: Jesus' Final Day of Public Teaching: Mt. 21:33-46; Mk. 12:1-12; Lk. 20:9-20).**