

May 13, 2018

Matthew 21:23-32

- He had come to put an end to the stumbling block teachings of the leadership that prevented the people to worship God “in spirit and Truth” (John 4:20-24).

Mark 7:8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men... 9
You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition

- By their man-made traditions, these leaders were placing burdens upon the people that the Old Covenant did not place

Matt. 11:28 Come to Me all you who labor [under man-made burdens] and are heavy laden and I will give you rest...

Ez. 34:2-6 Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel...4 The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. 5 So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. 6 My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them...

- In the rest of ch.21 through ch. 22, Matthew records Jesus’ confrontation with the religious leaders in a series of 4 questions posed by the leaders to entrap Jesus and one question of Jesus to seal their fate.

1. The question about Jesus’ authority (21:23 - 22:14)
2. The question about Rome’s authority (v. 15-22)
3. The question about the authority of Scripture (v. 23-33)
4. The question about the Law (v. 34-40)
5. The question about the Messiah (v. 41-46)

The Question About Jesus' Authority (21:3 – 22:14)

- The High Priest had usurped the Divine authority by allowing the Court of the Gentiles to be used as a market place, thus creating a stumbling block for those who came to worship God.
- When Jesus entered the Temple, He exercised Divine authority to purge the Court of this corruption.
- Ever since the fall, the battle on earth has been between *who rules*.
- Rather than falling into their trap by answering directly, Jesus gave asked them a question about John's authority to baptize (v. 24-25).
- In reality, the priests were rejecting and resisting God's authority in John's ministry but were afraid to admit such for fear of the crowd (v. 25-27).
- Jesus refused to give them a direct answer but gave them three parables that illustrated their rejection of God's authority in His ministry.

The Two Sons (v. 28-30)

Matt 7:21-23 *Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness...*

- With this parable, Jesus was showing that the father's authority is recognized only on the ground of the son's obedience.
- The priests were like the second son who should have recognized and obeyed God's authority in John the Baptist but refused to do so.
- By rejecting John's baptism as from God, they were rejecting "the way of righteousness." As a result, the worst of humanity, prostitutes and tax collectors, will enter God's kingdom *ahead of them*.