

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Taxes and the Humble King of kings

Last time...Jesus carries on His mission to do the Father's will: His exodus that must be accomplished in Jerusalem

The disciples must come to grips with a harsh reality concerning God's Messiah vs the Messiah of their expectations

They were greatly distressed by what Jesus said about His future

We too are greatly distressed by circumstance in our lives and in the world...

we do not know what God is doing (details)

we cannot know what God is doing

we do not need to know what God is doing

we need to know Him!

we need the joy and peace that comes with knowing Him

This time...an issue of taxes and patriotism (on this Sunday before the 4th of July)

We will be in Matt 17

Matt 17

v24-25a Capernaum...tribute money:

Having left the environs of Mount Hermon and passing through Galilee undetected, Jesus and His disciples arrive at their destination – Capernaum

Capernaum had been His ministry HQ but since the Pharisees attacked Him

- not keeping the tradition of the elders regarding hand-washing (Matt 15:1-9)

- demanding a sign from heaven to prove His Messianic claims (Matt 16:1-4)

Jesus left Capernaum (Matt 11:23 in parting), only to pass thru occasionally

Now, He's back in Capernaum...and the Pharisees attack again, this time thru the collectors of the temple tax

Ex 30:11-16

“Does your Master not pay the temple tax?”

Implied: Jesus has not ever paid or His tax payment is late/past due (since has not been in town for a while)

The real question being asked: “Is your Master a Law-breaker?”

Another attempt to find fault with and attack Jesus of Nazareth

Note: In this time of cruel Roman occupation, the Jews considered it a patriotic act/duty to pay the temple tax, the Temple being a very significant symbol of the Jewish national pride

Peter, always quick to speak before thinking, says, “Yes.” (Of course He pays)

v25b come into the house, Jesus prevented him:

Leaving the tax collectors with a hostile motive, Peter goes to or enters his home (which was the base of operations when Jesus was in Capernaum), presumably to scrounge up some money for the tax

But before he could look and before he could say anything to Jesus, Jesus spoke to Peter first...with a question for him

“What do you think, Simon?

Who do the kings of the kingdoms of the earth tax – their children or strangers/citizens/occupied people?”

A very interesting question, agreed?

Jesus was not with Peter when Peter was accosted by the Temple IRS agents

How did Jesus know, and obviously He knows because He speaks first?

This question is another demonstration of His Deity

v26 strangers...children free:

Peter gives the correct and obvious answer

Kings do not tax themselves, they tax citizens and the occupied peoples of their kingdoms

1 Sam 8...warning: it costs money to defend/expand a kingdom!

2 Chron 10...Solomon wore out the people with taxes, then Rehoboam...

Jesus replies to Peter by giving the rest of the answer, the complete truth

The King's children are free, tax-exempt

The King's children have a loving relationship with the King, their father, not a legal relationship as do the strangers/citizens/occupied

Letting Jesus' words sink into our ears...working backwards

Matt 17:5b

Matt 16:16-17

Matt 12:38-42

Matt 12:1-8

The Son of God (King) is tax-exempt as God (King) is...He is God

Therefore, Jesus is exempt from the temple tax and the Law,
above/greater than the Law (John 1:17),
above/greater than the Temple (the nation!),
the Lawgiver,
the Judge of Law-breakers,
the King of kings, Lord of all nations

Then...more amazing things

v27 lest we should offend...fish that first comes up:

Amazing thing #1: The tax-exempt Son of God humbles Himself, willingly
paying the tax in order to

- not offend/stumble anyone, even His enemies (whom He will die for)
- make His disciple's word good (v25, "Yes")

Amazing thing #2: In paying the tax, Jesus proves His Deity

"Go fishing. (but does not tell Peter where to go fishing)

Open the mouth of the first fish you catch and you will find a "stater"
(which "coincidentally" is the same value of 2 "didrachmas"/v24
and 2 half-shekels)

Take that coin to pay the tax for you and Me."

Who but the Creator God

- would dare say this?!
- could do this?!

What do you suppose Peter did?

Not staggering in faith, he went fishing!

And in the mouth of the first fish he caught was the silver coin,
just as Jesus said there would be!

Do you believe this actually happened?

I do!

This is a great miracle by the God and King of all the earth!

Luke 9:43a!

What is Jesus teaching Peter, and us by recording this in His Word?

- He is God! (know Who I AM)
- Trust Me! (another lesson in faith)

Application

Jesus Christ is the King of kings, the Lord of all nations

Dan 4:16-17, 25, 31-32, 34

Acts 17:26-27, 30-31

As every eye will see when He returns to earth (Rev 19)

As such, to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ is to be a patriot in our nation

Michael Medved's "The American Miracle, Divine Providence in the Rise of the Republic"

[read excerpts, pages 13-24]

It starts with the re-directed Mayflower and the start of a colony governed by...
The Geneva Bible of 1599, the first English translation of Scripture (TR)

As followers of Jesus Christ, to be a true patriot of our nation is to

- witness of the King to our fellow citizens
- speak the Truth in love
- resist the work of the devil
 - murder of innocent children
 - perverse sin and wicked acts declared by sinful man to be civil rights
 - proposal to declare a National holiday for LGBT abominations
(on par with 4th of July!!!)
 - Islamic invasion, abusing our freedom so boldly declared in the Constitution to conquer from within and replace the Constitution and Bill of Rights with Sharia Law, the devil's law
 - "Christians" denying God's revelation of Himself in His Word and telling Him what His nature is...daring to make God in their image... love but not holy Judge

Witnessing of the King of kings

Speaking the Truth in love

Being doers of the Word

Following Jesus

are acts of true patriotism because it is the faithful remnant that is withholding

1. the eruption of treason
2. the ultimate Traitor

2 Thes 2:1-7

falling away = apostasy, defection from the truth, forsaking the truth
(Word of God, John 8:32-33)
withhold: hold down, restrain
letteth: hold down (same Gr word as “withhold”)
that which restrains is removed

Who is withholding, letting, restraining lawlessness and the ultimate traitor?

Scripture interprets Scripture

Num 1:1-3, 47-53

no wrath/judgment of God upon Israel as long as the Levites were faithful

Num 8:13-19

that there be no plague among the children of Israel

Num 16:1-35

the rebellion of Korah against Moses and Aaron...

- earth swallowed up the rebels who went alive into the pit and the earth closed upon them
- fire from the Lord consumed 250 other rebels

Num 16:41-50

the next day, another rebellion

- a plague from the Lord began
- Aaron took his censor (incense, prayers) and stood between the living and the dead
- the plague was stayed/halted

Num 17:12 – 18:5

after those rebellions

Levites prevented the wrath of God (judgment of God) from coming upon Israel

Wrath/Judgment came when the Levites were reprobate/apostate

Ezk 44:5-16, 23

1 Cor 10:6 Now these things were our examples,

1 Cor 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Levites = Church (1 Cor 6:19-20, Rev 1:5)

Aaron = Jesus, HP of the order of Mel

Israel = world

2 Thes 2:3, 6-7

Levites prevented the wrath of God (judgment of God) from coming upon Israel
Wrath/Judgment came when the Levites were reprobate/apostate

As the Church is preventing the wrath of God/judgment of God upon the world...
until removed...by two different ways

- a. quit/traitors: remove themselves via apostasy, forsaking the truth,
holding the truth in unrighteousness (Thyatira, Sardis, Laodicea)
- b. retire/patriots: removed to the clouds when seized/snatched by Jesus
(Philadelphia)

When the Church is removed, by one way or the other, the Traitor will be revealed

Now: the falling away/apostasy is here!

Next: taking away of the faithful/patriots (Rapture)

Then: lawlessness erupts on the world and the ultimate traitor is revealed

The King of kings is calling all true patriots!

And patriots, it is always too soon to quit!