

The next three stories that we encounter (in 20:41–21:4) show that the way of the leaders of Israel has absolutely nothing in common with the way of God.

20:41 Then He said to them, "How is it that they say the Christ is David's son?"

20:42 "For David himself says in the book of Psalms, 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

20:43 UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'"

20:44 "Therefore David calls Him 'Lord,' and how is He his son?"

The crowds were eagerly listening to Jesus, still excited over His entrance into Jerusalem two days earlier. Their hopes were high that Jesus was the Son of David (the Messiah) who would deliver Israel. The leaders were also listening eagerly; they were hoping to find a reason to convict and execute Him.

Jesus had silenced the questions of His critics; He now asks a question of His own: "How is it that they say the Christ is David's son?" He then quotes Psalm 110:1 where David says, "The Lord (God) said to my Lord (the Messiah, who was David's descendant) 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.'"

Jesus' question is based on the assumption that He and the leaders of Israel held some common beliefs about the Messiah. They agreed that the Messiah would be David's son; that is, they believed He would be of the Davidic line (2 Sam. 7; Psa. 89:29–37; Isa. 9:6–7; 11:1–10; Jer. 23:5–8; 33:14–26; Mic. 5:2; Ezek. 34:23–24; references to Jesus as David's descendant are in Luke 1:27, 32, 69; 2:4, 11; 3:31; 6:3; 18:38–39; Acts 2:25–27). They also believed that Psalm 110 was a messianic psalm (France, NICNT, Matthew, 852, n. 14; Carson, EBC, Matthew, 467). In that psalm David called the Messiah his Lord. Jesus' point is that although the Messiah is David's descendant, the title, "Son of David," does not adequately convey all that the Messiah is. He is more than that; He is Lord.

Three things are essential to Jesus' argument: (1) David is the one speaking in the psalm (if anyone else were speaking then David would not be calling the Messiah his Lord); (2) the person he is speaking about is the Messiah; (3) the Messiah is superior to David for David called Him Lord.

In a patriarchal society a son was always under his father in terms of honor. The fact that the Son of David is called "Lord" by David means that His authority and honor transcends that of His ancestor.

Not only does David call Him Lord, YHWH (the Lord) said to Him, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." To sit at someone's right hand is a figure of speech, referring to a place of power and authority. In Luke 26:64, Jesus quotes this psalm again to refer to His future glory seated at the Father's right hand. This also appears in Acts 2:30–36 and Hebrews 1:13.

In Luke 20:44, Jesus restates the question: "Therefore David calls Him 'Lord,' and how is He his son?" To paraphrase, Jesus appears to be saying, "Is the title, 'Son of David,' conceptually adequate to explain the Messiah?" (Edwards, 582).

Jesus leaves the question unanswered. He does not develop the thought in terms of Himself nor does He explain it. The answer and rationale for the dilemma is not developed until Luke 22:69.

In the historical context, Jesus was setting the stage for His identity after the resurrection.

In Acts 2:34-35, after the resurrection and ascension, Peter gives the fuller understanding of Psalm 110:1. There he says, "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'"

Peter's aim is to show that Jesus is not only the Messiah, but that He is also Lord. He reasons that David never ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father; therefore, the words must point to someone greater than him. Peter concludes that David prophesied of Jesus (cf. Mk. 12:35 ff.; Matt. 22:41 ff.; Lk. 20:41 ff.).

Peter then states in Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified."

In functional contexts, the Greek word "made" has the idea of "appointed" (cf. I Sam. 12:6 LXX; I Ki. 12:31 LXX; Mk. 3:14; Heb. 3:2), and this is the way it is used here. In Jewish thought no one could claim the title of Messiah until He had done the work of Messiah. Because Jesus had accomplished His messianic mission, had risen from the dead, and had been exalted by the Father, the titles of Christ (Greek for the Hebrew "Messiah") and Lord were rightfully His (This theme of having a basis to claim a title is also found in Ro. 1:4; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 2:14; I Jn. 5:6; Longenecker, 280). In other words, the resurrection of Jesus demonstrated that the messianic work was done and He has full right to these titles (Longenecker, 280-281).

The resurrection and exaltation lifts the veil of a great mystery. How can the Messiah be both David's son and David's Lord? He can be David's son, because He is of the Davidic line; He can be David's Lord because He is the God-appointed redeemer who, through the incarnation, has come from heaven into the line of David.

***20:45 And while all the people were listening, He said to the disciples,
20:46 "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets,
20:47 who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."***

Mark clarifies the connection between Luke 20:44 and 45 by stating that a great crowd heard Jesus' question about Psalm 110 and they enjoyed listening to Him (Mk. 12:37). Matthew also notes that Jesus spoke to the disciples knowing that the crowd was listening.

The warning about the scribes is primarily directed toward the disciples, exhorting them not to imitate the scribes' love for popularity. In verse 46, Jesus lists a number of characteristics that demonstrate this attitude:

1) They like to walk around in long robes.

Long robes were typically part of an expensive wardrobe. The scribes' robes had a mantle reaching to the feet and were decorated with long fringe. The prestige attached to a robe like this is illustrated in passages like Luke 15:22, where the prodigal son received such a robe from his father to picture the great blessing bestowed upon him. Likewise, in Revelation 6:11, glorified believers are described as wearing such robes.

2) Secondly, Jesus said that they loved greetings of respect while in the market places. Extra-biblical material tells us that people of importance, such as a rabbi or other religious authorities, would receive special greetings from others. This set them apart, honored them, and elevated them.

3) Thirdly, they enjoyed sitting in the chief seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. In Luke 14:7–14 at the house of a Pharisee, Jesus commented on those who like to enter a house and immediately take the place of honor next to the host at the table.

4) There was a lot of self-aggrandizement, but little love for others.

“In the Old Testament widows are considered to be under the special care of Yahweh (Ps 68:5; 146:9; Prov. 15:25). Sympathetic regard for them comes to be viewed as a mark of true religion (Job 31:16; Jas 1:27)” (ISBE). James says, “This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (Ja. 1:27). The scribes had failed on every count to practice pure and undefiled religion. They failed to have any concern toward those whom God was concerned for; instead, they exploited those who were vulnerable. When Jesus says that they “devour widows' houses,” He is portraying them as the lowlives in society.

What Jesus exactly means by “devour widows' houses” is unknown. Four possibilities have been suggested (Bock, 1643) but each is just a guess.

- a) The temple authorities managed the property of widows dedicated to the temple in a way that took advantage of them.
- b) The scribes took advantage of the widows' hospitality.
- c) The scribes took homes as pledges for debts they knew could not be repaid.
- d) They took fees for legal advice.

5) Lastly, Jesus mentions the scribes' long prayers that were offered for the sake of appearing pious.

Because the scribes used their position to their personal advantage, they would be judged more harshly.

By contrast, disciples should serve God with a pure heart and genuine love and concern for others.

21:1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury.

21:2 And He saw a poor widow putting in two small copper coins.

21:3 And He said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them;

21:4 for they all out of their surplus put into the offering; but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on."

There were thirteen receptacles in the temple's Court of the Women where people could give freewill offerings to support the temple's activities. These receptacles were called shofar-chests (a shofar was a ram's horn that was made into a musical horn. The shofar was blown during special occasions, such as new moons [Num. 10:10] and many holy days. Shofar-chests were containers made with a tapered top, like a ram's horn; with the tapered end up, the box's configuration prevented theft – Edwards, 588). From Jesus' position in the temple He was able to observe a number of rich people giving their gifts. He also noticed a very poor (πενιχρός *penichros* is an intensive form of "poor;" Hauck, TDNT, vol 6, 40) widow. She gave two lepta (λεπτά) which due to their small size were probably easily recognizable even from a distance. Lepta were copper coins that were the smallest currency available; they were valued at about one eighth of a penny. Some say this is about one hundredth of a denarius (δηνάριον) which was an average day's wage.

In purely financial terms the rich had contributed the most; however, the size of the gift does not equate to the value of the offering. The rich had given out of their surplus, so their giving didn't affect them personally; they still had plenty left to buy food and meet whatever other needs they had. Jesus was not condemning their contributions, but He wanted to make it clear that God looks at the heart, and in the woman's heart He saw true piety for she had given all she had.

The word "and" connects 21:1 with the previous section. The story is placed here to contrast the leaders of Israel with the widow; they devoured widows' houses to get richer; the widow gave all she had, leaving her future completely in the hands of God. In other words, the story is not about giving; it is about the condemnation of wicked spiritual leaders and a corrupt religious system.

21:5 And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said,

21:6 "As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down."

21:5-38 is a single unit. It is Luke's version of the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24:1-46; Mk. 13:1-37), although the Mount of Olives is not mentioned. It is still Tuesday.

The temple's prototype was the tabernacle that existed from the time of the exodus until the beginning of the monarchy. When David became king, he felt that it wasn't fitting for God to dwell in a tent while he lived in a cedar-lined house. Since the dwelling of Yahweh no longer needed to be moved, it could be a permanent building, situated at the center of the nation's life. However, God did not allow David to build the temple; instead it was built by his son, Solomon, who completed it in the 4th year of his reign (1 Ki 6:1).

As Israel's history continued, the temple was plundered numerous times. Finally, during the reign of Jehoiachin, Nebuchadnezzar came and led the king, his household and the chief part of the population into captivity (2 Ki 24:1-17). Eleven years later (586 BC) "the Babylonian army completed the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Only a few lesser utensils of value, and the brazen (bronze) pillars, bases and sea remained; these were now taken away, the larger objects being broken up (2 Ki 25:13-16). The temple itself, with its connected buildings, and the houses in Jerusalem generally, were set on fire (2 Ki

25:9). The ark doubtless perished in the conflagration, and is no more heard of. The residue of the population--all but the poorest--were carried away captive (2 Ki 25:11, 12). Thus ended the first temple, after about 400 years of checkered existence" (ISBE).

"Forty-eight years after Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the first temple, the Babylonian empire came to an end (538 BC), and Persia became dominant under Cyrus. In the year following, Cyrus made a decree sanctioning the return of the Jews, and ordering the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem (2 Chron. 36:23; Ezra 1:1-4). He not only caused the sacred vessels of the old Temple to be restored, but levied a tax upon his western provinces to provide materials for the building, besides what was offered willingly (Ezra 1:6-11; 6:3 ff)" (ISBE). At that time, the second temple was built by Zerubbabel. This temple was later refurbished by Herod the Great. Herod began by leveling Zerubbabel's temple down to the bedrock. He then used white marble stones up to 67 feet long, 12 feet high, and 18 feet wide as the foundation stones - some of which are still there and visible today. His work began in 19 BC and continued for over 80 years; the temple wasn't completed until 63-64 AD (about 30 years after Christ was crucified). When it was finished, the original size of the temple area had been doubled making the entire temple complex the largest in the world at 1.5 million square feet (Stein, SBJT 16.3 (2012): 18). About six years after its completion the Romans razed the temple to the ground.

Those who were commenting about the beauty of the temple (the disciples – Matt. 24:1) noticed the beautiful stones and ornaments associated with it. A votive gift is a gift associated with a vow. If someone made a vow to God, it was typical to consecrate that vow with a gift, as a symbol of that vow. "Votive gifts" in the temple included gold and silver-plated gates and gold-plated doors. Josephus noted that the building's gold plates flashed in the sun "as a snowclad mountain." The entrance of the temple had Babylonian tapestries of fine linen, colored with the blue, scarlet, and purple (Bock, 1661).

Jesus makes it clear that no one should be overly impressed with the grandeur of the temple, for it is only temporary and soon it would be rubble.

The expression, "there will not be one stone upon another which will not be torn down" is not to be taken literally, but is a figure of speech referring to the temple's complete destruction. The fact that none of the gospels recorded the destruction of the temple shows that it was a yet future event from the time they were written.

Jesus' prophecy of the temple's coming destruction, and by implication the city of Jerusalem as well, must have been surprising (and sacrilegious) to many. The huge size of the stones involved in the temple complex and the massive walls of the city gave a sense of security. Jerusalem was a mighty fortress. The steep Kidron Valley to the east and the Hinnom Valley to the south and west made only the northern side of the city vulnerable to attack, and the mighty towers located in the walls made an attack extremely difficult. Added to this was the false sense that God would not let his holy place be destroyed by the pagan Romans. Of course, this is exactly what God permitted the pagan Babylonians to do in 587 B.C.! Jesus was not awed by the "stones and offerings" of the temple. He saw beneath the surface and realized that underneath the cosmetic beauty of the temple lay all kinds of uncleanness (Matt 23:27-28). The previous

account of the widow's mites (21:1-4) reveals that Jesus judged the inner, spiritual reality of an act, not its external appearance. Thus the widow's two copper coins were a greater gift than the large gifts given by others. We find a similar situation in the life of Paul when he saw the beauty of the Athenian acropolis and the magnificence of the Parthenon. Instead of delighting in their architectural glory, he was appalled at the idolatry (Acts 17:16, 23) and ignorance (17:23, 29-31) they represented. (Stein, SBJT 16.3 (2012): 18)

On August 29, 70 A.D. Jesus' words came to pass. After a long siege, Titus Vespasian, the great Roman general, came into the temple area and began burning the colonnades that surrounded the outer courtyards. Then, against his wishes, one of his soldiers took a torch and threw it into the Holy Place. They tried to put the fire out but couldn't, and so the Holy Place and Holy of Holies burned to the ground. Josephus says about 6,000 people who were trying to seek refuge in the temple were consumed by the fires, and tens of thousands more were massacred by the Romans throughout the city of Jerusalem. He also tells us that in a feeble way the priests tried to defend their temple. They got up on the highest parapet where there were spikes driven to keep the birds from perching, and began pulling the spikes out, throwing them at the Romans. It was a useless effort to stop the horrible destruction.

The destruction of the temple is significant for a number of reasons. First, all of the official genealogical records were kept within the temple. Jesus was the last person who claimed to be the Messiah who had genealogical records that could actually trace His lineage to David. Secondly, the destruction of the temple meant that sacrifices could no longer be offered. If Jesus was not the sacrifice for sin, there is no means to atone for sin. Lastly, the destruction of the temple pointed to the end of the Old Testament system. The presence of God could no longer be identified with a building, rather His presence would be found in Jesus (Jn. 2:19) and God's people (1 Cor. 3:16).