

2025

5 JANUARY 2025

Matthew 22:15-22

I. The Background

It was still Wednesday of Passover week, and Jesus was teaching in the Temple, which He had violently cleansed the day before. He had just finished telling three parables against unbelieving Israel.

1. The Rebellion Of The Nation, The Two Sons Matthew 21:28-32
2. The Retribution Of The Nation, The Wicked Vinedressers Matthew 21:33-46
3. The Rejection Of The Nation, The Wedding Feast Matthew 22:1-14

After the second parable, the chief priest and Pharisees were so enraged they would have had Him arrested on the spot, had they not feared the multitudes. (21:46). Jesus had destroyed the physical domain of their concession booths in the Temple, now he exposed the phoniness of their religious domain as well. They resented Jesus because He exposed their pride and hypocrisy. They envied His popularity with the people because He was not "one of them"

They now confront Him with a series of three questions, designed to maneuver Him into condemning Himself either politically or religiously. Today we will look at the first question asked by the disciples of the Pharisees.

II. The Attack

Matthew 22:15-17

15 Then the Pharisees went and counseled together how they might trap Him in what He said.

16 And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any.

17 "Tell us therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?" (NASB)

The Pharisees were the harshest critics of Jesus. They opposed the Roman Government, and wanted Israel rid of them. They were the religious leaders of their day. They despised the Romans for their paganism. They gathered privately, and sent their disciples to pose a question to Jesus. The idea was to trap Jesus into

saying something that would incriminate Him, either with the Romans or with the Jews.

The Herodians supported the Roman government, as they were a political party. They were avid supporters of King Herod. This group of people were Edomites mostly, with perhaps a few Jews. They were ancient enemies of the Jews. They strongly disagreed with the Pharisees on political and religious issues.

One of the highest forms of praise is to ask a person for their opinion on an important issue.

The tax being spoken of here is the annual poll tax, the one that was charged to everyone on a yearly basis. This, of all Roman Taxes was the most despised. Since this tax went directly to Caesar, and since the Jews considered themselves belonging to God, this is why this tax was so offensive.

The answer Jesus gave to this question was most important. If He gave an answer favorable to the tax, the people would despise Him, in which case the Jewish leaders could have Jesus arrested without interference. If He gave an answer favoring not paying the tax, He would be defying Rome, which would be grounds for insurrection.

III. The Accusation

Matthew 22:18

18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? (NASB)

IV. The Analogy

Matthew 22:19-21

19 "Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius.

20 And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"

21 They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." (NASB)

The coin used for this poll tax was a denarius, it was the value of a day wages for a laborer in Israel. It was the only Roman coin that could be used to pay this poll tax. This coin was silver, and had an engraving of the emperor on one side.

The coin itself was offensive to the Jews for two reasons

1. The emperor picture was reminder of Roman oppression and

2. The Mosaic Law specifically forbade the making of images.

The particular coin Jesus was holding, bore the image of Tiberius on one side and the other, an engraving of him sitting on his throne in a priestly robe, with an inscription designating him as high priest! THIS WAS UNACCEPTABLE to the Jews.

V. The Answer

Matthew 22:21-22

21 They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's."

22 And hearing this, they marveled, and leaving Him, they went away. (NASB)

Render from the Greek *Apodidoni* means to pay or to give back, implying a debt to give, to do something in fulfillment of an obligation or expectation. It carries the idea of obligation and responsibility that is not optional.

Therefore, as a citizen yes, it is your duty to use this coin with the engraving of the emperor on it to pay taxes, to whatever government is "in charge."

VI. The Application

And to God the things that belong to God. Jesus understood the distinction between political and spiritual responsibility. Caesar should be given taxes and all rightful political obedience. God should be given worship obedience, service, and the dedication of one's whole life.

IF YOUR HABITS DO NOT CHANGE, YOU WILL NOT HAVE A NEW YEAR....YOU WILL JUST HAVE ANOTHER YEAR

Matthew 22:37-38

³⁷ And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

³⁸ This is the great and first commandment

Taken from Deuteronomy 6:4-5

4"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

5"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might

In practical terms: What does it mean to “love the Lord your God with **all** your heart and with **all** your soul and with **all** your mind?”

What does All mean? What is left out of All? **1** all, whole, completely.

What does this look like in our day to day life?

How you treat your spouse?

How you treat your Children?

How you treat your parents?

How you treat your co-workers?

How you treat your neighbors?

What you value?

Our activities?

What you read?

What you watch on TV?

What movies you watch?

What type of Music you listen to?

What do we need to clean up?

Where and what do we need to grow in?

What work does the Holy Spirit want to do in us?

Jude 24-25

24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. ¹

¹ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update.* (1995). (Jud 24–25). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.