

Jesus Pays The Temple Tax - Matthew 17.24-27

Sunday AM 09/02/18

Introduction:

Through out His ministry Jesus was asked difficult questions. At times He simply asked what the scriptures said; on other occasions He pointed out their inconsistency. Each time I read of a question directed at Jesus I see Him confound the people. Much like shooting fish in a barrel. This passage is a little different because of who is asked the question and how it is answered.

It is unique for a number of reasons: 1. Involved money, 2. Had any persona; benefit for Himself, 3. Involved only one fish, 4. Results not recorded. Let us take a look.

I) Place - Capernaum

- A. The adopted city of Jesus, *Matthew 4.13*
- B. Jesus healed a centurion's servant here, *Matthew 8.5*
- C. Jesus cast out demons, *Mark 1.21-28* His fame spread throughout the region
- D. He raised Jarius' daughter, *Mark 5.22-24, 35-43*
- E. He healed the woman with blood, *Mark 5.25-34*
- F. Jesus healed a noble man's son, *John 4.46,54*
- G. Not particularly receptive to Jesus' teachings, *Matthew 11.23-24*

II) Temple Tax

- A. **Part of the Law of Moses, *Exodus 30.11-16***
 - 1. Same for every male over 20 years of age
 - 2. For a ransom or atonement
- B. ***Nehemiah 10.32* for the service of the house of God**
- C. **This was not a Roman tax but one imposed by God.**
 - 1. Jesus taught that we should pay taxes to governing authorities, *Matthew 22.21*
 - 2. Paul stated the same principle in *Romans 13*.
- D. **The tax itself**
 - 1. *Exodus 30.13* - was half a shekel
 - 2. *Nehemiah* - was one third of a shekel
 - 3. half of a shekel was equal to 2 Greek drachmae
 - 4. 2 Greek drachmae was equal to 1 denarius.
Therefore the tax was about 2 days wages

III) Method of collection

- A. **Month of Adar (March-April) an announcement was made in all the towns and villages of Palestine.**
- B. **From the 15th to the 25th booths were set up in the towns and villages to collect the tax**
- C. **Afterward a man had to go to Jerusalem to pay the tax.**

IV) Question-"Does your teacher not pay the temple tax?"

- A. Seems to imply that Jesus had not and would not pay the tax, therefore be in violation of God's law.**
- B. They did not ask Jesus but Peter. Peter was a known disciple of Jesus.**
- C. Peter answered without consulting Jesus which is pretty risky and presumptuous.**
- D. In one sense Jesus would not of had to pay the tax because He was sinless and did not need atonement. Also He was the son of God.**

V) Jesus asked Peter whether a king would tax his own household or strangers, *v. 26*

- A. Jesus did not have to pay the tax because He is the Son of God, *Matthew 16.16-18***
- B. Jesus called the temple the house of God, *John 2.16***

VI) Jesus pays the tax

- A. He did so as to not "offend" the tax collectors, or the people, or His enemies.**
- B. Perhaps meaning to not give them occasion to blaspheme, *Matthew 12.31***
- C. This theme is taken up in *Matthew 18* with causing offense**
- D. Jesus tells Peter to go to the sea and cast in a hook**

1. He would catch a fish
2. The fish would have a coin in its mouth
3. The coin would pay for Jesus and Peter's temple tax

VII) Lessons

A. **Jesus asserts His deity and proves it. This should not have been lost on Peter, *Matthew 16.16-18*.**

1. He was omniscient - He knew all things
2. Omnipotent - His power to either create a fish with a coin in its mouth or to know there would be a fish there with a coin in its mouth.

B. **Jesus made Himself subject to the Law. Philippians speaks of Jesus humbling Himself. *Phil. 2*.**

1. There are times we might refrain from doing something we could do because of others. The weak brother in Christ (think eating of meats in *1 Corinthians*), giving others a reason to reject the teaching of Christ, etc.

C. **Jesus was teaching Peter a lesson.**

1. They were asked a question about their teacher in *Matthew 9.11*
2. Jesus was their teacher, *Matthew 23.8,10*
3. Would people recognize us as being a disciple of Christ?

D. **Jesus paid the price for our atonement with His blood.**