

# **Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Gospel of Luke, Session 30, Public Exchange with Authorities in Jerusalem, Luke 20:1-21:4**

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This is Dr. Daniel K. Darko in his teaching on the Gospel of Luke. This is session number 30, Public Exchange with Authorities in Jerusalem. Luke chapter 20, verse 1 through chapter 21, verse 4. Welcome back to the Biblical In-Langue Lecture series.

As you saw in the previous lecture, we began looking at Jesus entering Jerusalem. We saw a triumphant entry, and there I made a distinction between Luke's narrative and the narrative of the other Gospels. And I drew your attention to how Jesus, as the people cry out and praise him as the one who comes with peace and who comes in the name of the Lord, that he would overlook Jerusalem and weep for a city that would not know peace in the years ahead.

Given that Jesus was saying this in the 30s, and the city was going to be destroyed by 70 by the Romans and the Titus leadership. Now we see that when Jesus came into the city, he went straight to the temple, cleansed the temple, and began to make that place a place of teaching. If you recall from the previous lecture, I used the expression of the establishing his teaching hall in the temple.

That's exactly what is going on here. So, what we are going to find from this lecture is Jesus has established the temple as the place where he will be teaching. When he ends his day, he will go to the Mount and then return to the temple in the daytime to teach.

Everything we read about in chapter 20 that we'll be looking at will be events unfolding in the temple. I have called this particular one in chapter 20 from chapter 20, verse 1 to chapter 21, verse 4. I will probably end at chapter 20, given that the end of chapter 20 mentions widows in the critique of scribes. Then, in chapter 21, the first four verses go on to touch on a widow and a situation with a widow. So we will see how we tease that out.

But let's begin to focus on what is going on in the temple. I call it a public exchange with authorities in Jerusalem. Let's begin by reading chapter 20 from verse 1 to verse 8, and I read.

One day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priest and the scribes with the elders came up and said to him, tell us by what authority do you do these things or who is it that gave you the authority, this authority? He answered them. I will ask you a question. Now tell me, was the

baptism of John from heaven or from man? They discussed it with one another, saying, if we say from heaven, he will say, why did you not believe him? But if we say from man, all the people will stone us to death, for they were convinced that John was a prophet. So, they answered that they did not know where it came from, and Jesus said to them, neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

This is an interesting situation as we see the ministry of Jesus in the temple in the form of teaching and preaching about the kingdom of God taking a new form where both the temple leadership and Jesus have reached a point where there is no covert action anymore. They are not trying to play in the background in a covert way to try to destroy him, as we saw at the end of chapter 19, but now it's a direct exchange as they come to Jesus and ask him, please tell us by what authority you teach. Jesus takes on this rabbinic style of conversation; please pardon me a minute here to clarify that we are not using the Greek mode of reasoning here, where when he poses the question, you expect an answer.

In the rabbinic discourse, it is perfectly normal to follow up a question with a question and try to answer by teasing out question after question, and as you pose more and more questions, you begin to use rhetoric to clarify the substance of the question. So, they asked Jesus by what authority do you teach? Jesus said, oh yeah, but let me also ask you a question. Now, if it is in a courtroom with our modern system that is influenced by Greek and Latin legal reasoning framework, we will say, he asked you the question by what authority do you teach? Please answer the question.

Don't ask questions and answer a question. No, but that was very perfectly normal. You notice what Jesus is doing here because he asked for a second counter-question.

His counter-question now handicaps the leaders who are trying to entrap him. The question is by what authority do you teach? Tell us—a few things to observe in this passage.

I mentioned in the previous lecture that Jesus had assumed a place in the temple and had taken authority by turning the temple into a place of his teaching. Don't take that for granted because, as I mentioned in the previous lecture to you, the custodians of the temple are those who come to ask Jesus this question. By what authority and who gave you the authority? Is it not a perfect question? It should be.

If you are the senior pastor of a church and some person came and said, I am famous in my own place, but by the way, I turn your pulpit into my pulpit, and that is where I will come to teach every day. It must be a perfect question to ask, friend: who gave you the right to turn my church into your church, my pulpit into your pulpit? And worse, as we see at the end of chapter 19, the people are hanging on to every word this man says. It's almost like collapsing everything on you.

So, the question is legitimate, except when you begin to think through the follow-up question carefully. The counter question implies something here. It implies that the people listening to Jesus recognize his authority.

And those who come and listen to him think he's a legitimate, perfect person delivering the perfect message at the right place. But the custodians of the temple have a problem with that. He needs to clarify by what authority and who gave him the authority.

As custodians of the temple, the list of the people that are named here seems to suggest that they could be members of the Sanhedrin or they comprise groups of people that feature prominently on the Sanhedrin. By what authority comes with two implications. They could be asking him by what authority were you able to cleanse the temple and kick all the people out and take the place as your teaching platform.

Or they could also be asking who gave him the power to teach the content of the teaching and preaching that he's performing. Well, Jesus' counter-question goes in a very simple way. Let's talk about John.

By what authority? Now, as we are told, Luke mentions that they know that the people believe that John was a prophet. Don't underestimate that in Judaism. If the people knew that John was a prophet and the temple leaders denied God's hand, God's authority on John, that is blasphemy.

They should be stoned. That is the penalty they deserve. Now, in order to save themselves from that, they resorted to a very smart move.

Let's not answer the question. As my teenage daughter would say, the friends would typically say, never mind then, because your hands are tied behind your back.

So what Jesus is doing here, as you will see in chapter 20, is to take these leaders on and put them in the corner one after the other, establishing his credentials, his authority, and his place in the temple. Remember, he said, you have made this house, my father's house, a den of robbers. It's almost as if I came to take over.

And now that is his teaching spot. He will go on to tell a parable that should be disturbing. But notice how the parable will go.

The parable shows us that Jesus tends to the people who listen to him intensely. But pay attention as I read the parable to see what Jesus is doing here. And I read from verse 9. And he began to tell the people this parable.

A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants, and went into another country for a long while. When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

And he sent another servant, but they also beat and treated him shamefully and sent him away empty-handed. Verse 12. And he sent yet a third.

This one also wounded and cast out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, what shall I do? I will send my beloved son, and perhaps they will respect him. But when the tenants saw him, they said to themselves, this is the heir.

Let us kill him so that the inheritance may be ours. And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others.

When they heard this, they said, namely the people, surely not. But he looked directly at them and said, what then is this that is written? The stone that the builders rejected has become a cornerstone. Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces.

And when it falls on anyone, it will crush him. You know, before I go on to elaborate, a similar parable beyond the gospel writers also features in the Apocrypha Gospel of Thomas. That gives us a glimpse of what Jesus is about when the Gospel of Thomas in 65 to 66 writes, he said, a good man had a vineyard, he listed it to tenants that they might work in it.

He received the fruits from them, and he sent his servant so that the tenants might give him some fruit. They seized his servant, beat him all, but killed him. The servant went away and told his master; his mother said perhaps they did not know of him.

He sent another servant, and the tenants beat the other servant, just like the one in Luke that we read. Then the master sent his son, and he said, perhaps they would have respect for my son. Those tenants, since they knew that he was the heir of the vineyard, seized him and killed him.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Now I read the Gospel of Thomas account because the other Synoptic writers who write the same thing seem to be going where Luke is going, and you should observe what Luke is doing here and how Jesus' parable speaks to the authorities who came to ask Jesus, by what authority do you teach? Luke tells us that Jesus told this allegorical parable to the people, but do not make a mistake; at the end of Luke's parable, the leaders of the temple got it. They understood that the parable is all about them, and they were not very happy about that.

In other words, while the leaders were still present, Jesus directed his attention to the audience, who liked to listen to him intently, and then he told them about this vineyard in a context where we are told by Josephus and others that the economic condition in Palestine was the reason why sometimes some landowners may actually put their estate in the hands of others and go to another place, properties that they may have other places, and this is the economic pattern that they know. So, Jesus was using a known kind of scenario in the allegorical parable to be able to tell what God would do to these leaders who are eager to kill the son of the master who comes to the temple. The other thing you see here is the vineyard image as we gather from the Gospel of Thomas as well. The vineyard image seems to be referring to the house of Israel, and the tenants' role here seems to be like stewardship of what God would expect of his people. And we'll see that the master is delayed in the foreign land, and in this allegorical parable, we see the imagery of God's patience and tolerance unfolding.

While the leaders are not doing what they are doing, he begins to tell himself, perhaps I sent some prophets ahead and they mistreated them, they did not treat them well, they beat them, they kind of shunned them, they did all kinds of things to them, now I will send my son, and guess what is going on? Talking about killing the son, when in the parable, Jesus himself is the son in the story, the people said, oh no, if the master is going to come and destroy, that is not good news, but authorities had exactly what is going on here with Jesus. Jesus will tell them what they need to know. Day and night, they have become stumbling blocks for what God wants to do, and they have stood in the way of God's son doing his work.

Literally, as events unfolded, these leaders were going to be participating in killing the very son who was talking to them. Now Luke is writing in the 80s about events that were unfolding in the 30s, and Jesus will be killed by these same people, but Luke is trying to let you imagine yourself in the situation before Jesus will be arrested and killed. And he said the people heard this, and as if now Jesus said, now that you know what I am saying in the parable, let me speak to you directly.

The stone that the builders rejected will be the most important stone to keep the structure solid and uncompromised. It will become the cornerstone. It could be that which sustains and keeps all the structure standing.

But by the way, those who try to reject the stone will see the prominence of the stone, but those who actually make proactive and crash on the stone will be destroyed by the stone. So just be careful. In other words, anything about this stone in the parable, the end of the parable in Jesus' quotation is this.

That son will not be defeated. Those who reject him will suffer for it, and those who try to kill him will themselves be destroyed. One should make no mistake about that.

Now, as Jesus tells this parable, perhaps his last parable, we will hear him about this. Jesus is speaking about events that are unfolding, and unlike what Luke Timothy Johnson says, as he writes, they will be destroyed because of their objection of the heir, but the vineyard itself will remain and be given to the other elders and other leaders. In Luke's story, the present leadership over Israel of the chief priests, scribes, and elders will be replaced by that of the twelfth, namely, what we will see in the book of Acts.

We will observe a development in the narrative of Acts. By what authority do you teach? I teach in the authority of God. Paraphrasing, those who try to stand against what God is doing will be replaced if not destroyed.

Paraphrasing, all this is unfolding in the temple. Don't lose sight of what I said earlier on. Who's supposed to be in charge of the temple? The chief priests and the temple captains are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

Now, Jesus has hijacked the whole system, making everybody uncomfortable. Let's continue from verse 19. And see more of the exchange between Jesus and the people.

The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at the very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them. That is fair, isn't it? But they feared the people, so they watched him and sent spies who pretended to be sincere that they might catch him in something he said so as to deliver him up to the authorities and jurisdiction of the governor, the Gentiles.

So, they asked him, Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly and show no partiality. But truly teach the word of God. Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar or not? But he perceived their craftiness and said to them, show me a denarius.

Whose likeness and inscription does it have? They said 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. And they were not able, in the presence of all the people, to catch him in what he said.

But marveling at his answer, they became silent. Notice Luke's skill in crafting this particular account and the details he points out. What Luke is telling us from the beginning is this.

The leader said, oh, now we know. What he said in the parable is all about us. Of course, it was about them.

That they will kill the son and they will be crushed in the end. Yes, it's about them. Jesus is always smart in that he says the hard things in parables.

He knows how to deliver tough messages in stories. But now look at the skill they are going to put up. Now, they set up spies.

Notice the MO, the modus operandi of these leaders. This will be the first instance that they are going to try to find someone else to help them get Jesus into trouble. The next one is going to be Judas.

But here, they send spies. And the spies will pretend to be righteous. And when the spies come to Jesus, notice how they will address Jesus.

Let's take a look at that passage again. Because it doesn't, I mean, whenever I think about it. It marvels, it is mind-boggling how crafty these people were.

When they approached Jesus, verse 21, they said, Teacher, these are the spies, okay? These are the people who are pretending. They are working, trying to get Jesus into trouble. But look at how they approach Jesus.

Verse 21. Teacher. They call him a teacher.

We know that you speak and teach rightly. You show no partiality. And you really teach the word of God.

I mean, if it is a modern day, I can imagine some modern-day charismatic pastor who hears this from some people and says, Oh yeah, I always thought I am. Oh yes. No.

Jesus caught their craftiness. He knew that all these are vain words. He will tell them to do a few things.

If they are going to ask the question, Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar? What you should know is there are three readings that need to be noted, and then I will try to unpack a few things for you here. The first reading is what is called the two kingdom reading. And I am here following Joseph Fitzmyer's outline.

Fitzmyer reminds us of the three readings. The first is the two kingdom reading that says when Jesus talks about giving to Caesar what he seizes that Jesus is actually advocating for a proper attitude towards tribute and paying taxes and, of course, respecting the governing authorities while one maintains commitment in their standing with God. In other words, the two kingdoms Jesus is suggesting should remain side by side, and a Christian should try to maneuver to try to create that delicate balance to survive.

The other reading for that particular phrase is the reading that is normally referred to as irony. That says that Jesus is saying you must give to Caesar what he seizes. Of course, what Caesar has is nothing, and you know it.

What really counts is believing in the kingdom of God. So, give to Caesar what he seizes; he is saying, look, my friends, give that rubbish to the Caesar that it belongs to and come and follow me for the right stuff. Others have suggested what is known as the anti-zealot reading, which says Jesus is trying to resist political confrontation and try to point to the fact that by picking up the coin one should see what belongs to Caesar and one should also acknowledge what belongs to God and one should be careful that they don't endeavor to participate in political confrontation which is unhealthy for their standing in Christ.

But what is going on here? Whatever reading you choose, you must observe some details in this text. Notice that those who came to Jesus are not innocent people who came to Jesus to ask him about taxes and whether one should pay taxes or not. What is going on in this passage was particularly more than that.

Their intent was stated that they came in as a ploy, pretending to be righteous and trying to address Jesus as the teacher. They even tried to characterize him as a person of integrity so that they could entrap him to get him into trouble and the temple authorities would then seize on that to finish him. When they came in to ask Jesus about Roman taxes, they were playing on deeply contentious issues in Palestine at the moment where most Jews who are more conservative or devout Jews are very upset about the idea of Roman taxes and how much Romans impose taxes on them and how that should be something that people should not be happy about. You should know that lies in the background of public attitude towards tax collectors where they collect all these taxes for these Romans.

So, even putting Jesus in that space could put Jesus in a place where Jesus could give an answer that could infuriate his audience, the people, or give an answer that would incriminate him for the temple authorities to punish him. Jesus knew that when they referred to him as a teacher, they did not mean it. When they referred to him as one who teach rightly they did not mean it.

When they referred to him as the one who was impartial, they did not mean it. And when they referred to him as one who teaches the way of God, they did not mean it. They are all part of the ploy.

When he asked them if you are asking me this and you are asking what is lawful, do you really intend to get the answer? Jesus is going to drag this matter in this line of questioning to show something here. The ascription, as I point out here on the slide for you, is this notion of entrapment. They are not as interested in what the law says because if they are interested in what the law says, then maybe saying that he is a



right teacher who is impartial and who teaches the way of God presumes that he can command the respect of teaching what the law says.

But Jesus will ask if somebody has a coin around a denarius. Until you know what is going on, you may not understand the details well. When Jesus asks when somebody has a denarius Jesus is actually playing on some very cool stuff here.

Jesus is saying this, and you are asking me whether it is good to pay taxes to the Romans. By the way, I don't even have any of the Roman currency with me at the moment. You probably seem to have some of the Roman currency with you because of your loyalty to Rome.

Does anyone happen to have a currency of the Romans with you? He managed to draw them in, and they showed the currency. The denarius will have the inscription that is supposed to read in English translation as Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus. I put the image of the Roman coin in the time of Tiberius up on the slide for you as you would see.

Jesus is slowly getting these guys and catching them one by one into their own trap. He perceived what they were about when he asked them to show me a coin. He was actually incriminating them in the disclosure. If you don't have loyalty to Rome, why do you keep Roman currency for yourself? But if you have one to show me then I am here to show you something.

When Jesus tried to do this, he was eliciting admissions of their dependence on the imperial system. You see, Jesus was very specific in asking questions like whose image is on the currency and what inscription is on it. If the inscription says Caesar is divine, and you don't really like Caesar, why do you keep that currency with you? If the image of Caesar is on it, why are you even asking me questions about loyalty to Caesar? Rendering to Caesar what Caesar is and to God what belongs to God is the perfect answer Jesus could give.

Luke is indicating that Jesus will continue his public ministry, and here, what Jesus has done is that the entrapment has failed. The public attempt to put Jesus in the corner by using spies, pretense, and flattery has not worked. In the honor and shame society, what Jesus has done publicly in the temple courts is to put them to shame.

Now, in the first instance, the shame goes to the spies, but in the second instance, the authorities who were using these spies to entrap Jesus are also caught in the trap. Jesus has established himself a genius guy sent by God who is turning the house of God that had been turned to be a den of robbers to be a place where people can hear about the kingdom of God. If it's an issue of turning giving to Caesar what is Caesar's and what reading we adopt I will suggest to you that you can choose any of the three readings I pointed out but don't lose sight of Paul's theology here.

Paul, as we see elsewhere in the Gospels with Jesus will pay taxes to the authorities. When Jesus was even broke, he would get money out of the mouth of a fish so that they could pay their taxes. In other words, he would utilize Miller's intervention to bring the finances needed to pay taxes.

Paul, in Romans 13, talks about the fact that one needs to pay taxes and respect the authorities. In 1st Corinthians chapter 2 we should pray for the authorities. In other words the early Christians did not see themselves as anti-political system.

They understood that God put the political authorities there. They need to respect the authorities they need to pay their taxes, but their primary loyalty is not to those authorities. Their primary loyalty is to God. By all means, Jesus is not suggesting that render to Caesar what is Caesar's and render to God what God means. Caesar should have 50% of your loyalty, and God should have 50% of your loyalty. No.

He is suggesting that God should have your primary loyalty, but it's not due to the neglect of the other. In this particular instance, he is not in a regular didactic setting. He is answering this in response to a ploy that people were bringing to try to entrap him, and he answers their questions to actually corner them in the end. It is as if the conversation in the temple is not getting hot and is not putting the officials in an uncomfortable place enough.

Luke tells us more things will happen in verse 27. Here they were coming, trying to set Jesus up on another question. Luke chapter 20 verse 27, they came to him some Sadducees those who denied that there is a resurrection, and they asked him a question saying Teacher Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.

Now, there were seven brothers. The first took a wife and died with her children, and the second and the third took her, and likewise, all seven left no children and died. After the woman also died in the resurrection, therefore, whose wife would the woman be for the seven had her as wife. Wow! Jesus turned to them and said the sons of this age marry and are given in marriage but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage for they cannot die anymore because they are equal to angels and are sons of God being sons of the resurrection.

But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he's not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him. Then some of the scribes answered, Teacher, you have spoken well, for they no longer dare to ask him any question.

Now this is a very interesting occasion. They tried to resolve the issue of authority but were unsuccessful in the temple. Now they came in, they tried the other one, pretending to know all the taxes we should pay to Caesar, but that didn't work.

Now, Luke, for the first time, mentioned the Sadducees in his gospel. We heard about the Pharisees, but who is this group, the Sadducees? There were various parties in the Jewish second temple Judaism by the first century. The ones that will feature the most in the New Testament that we know about will be the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

The Pharisees like to go strict to the law, as I mentioned in an earlier lecture. The Pharisees will likely be the ones who teach in the synagogues. Most scribes will be Pharisees.

They believe in legalistic righteousness. They were more in the public arena, rural or urban areas, and they feature prominently in the synagogue worship as teachers. The Sadducees were more focused on the urban sector in Jerusalem.

The Sadducees are mostly around the temple. So let me draw your attention to some Pharisees because Luke wants us to know that when the question of resurrection came up, it was coming up from a Sadducee. Who are these Sadducees? The Sadducees got their name or are named after Zadok, the priest of David, mentioned in 2 Samuel 8. They are of the priestly class.

They are mostly aristocrats. They are quite wealthy. They live in the urban sector, and we know that they believe in the written law, the written Torah.

The Pharisees may believe in the law, the prophets, and even oral tradition. The Sadducees don't particularly like oral tradition, and the prophets emphasize the Torah, especially what we will have in our Christian test as the first five books of the Old Testament. They control the temple, and high priests are likely Sadducees.

They were the elite class that formed the majority of the Jewish council, otherwise referred to as the Sanhedrin, and they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. In fact, as Josephus writes, the Pharisees argued that the soul dies with the body. They were okay with having an affinity with Hellenistic culture, and so laying and negotiating and dealing and willing with the Romans or the Greeks were no problems at all for the Sadducees.

Pertinent to the passage and the question on the resurrection is the point that the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. The question is not about how interested they are in resurrection and a desire to know more about resurrection so that they would even envision the great things that could happen in the resurrection. No.

The question that is posed to Jesus in the temple, which is the altering, because the high priest will be a Sadducee, will be a question that is meant to trap Jesus and put him into trouble. But you know, something else you should know about the Sadducees is what the Jewish historian Josephus writes, and I really want to make sure that you are familiar with some of these passages from Josephus, the Jewish historian. He writes in the wars, but the Sadducees, Josephus says, are those that compose of the second order; first, he lists the Pharisees and takes away faith entirely and supposes that God is not concerned with our doing or not doing what is evil.

They say that acting what is good or what is evil is a man's own choice and that the one or the other belongs to everyone, that they may act as they please. In other words, people can do as they please. The Sadducees take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul and the punishment and rewards in hate.

I have often seen the faces of students in a classroom when I draw attention to the fact that the high priest in the temple did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. To convince the high priests that Jesus would die and rise again as a central thesis of Christianity is a hard call. But let's get back to the question that is unfolding here.

When they came to Jesus and asked the question, I mentioned to you that the Sadducees believed in the written Torah, so they were appealing to Deuteronomy 25 to make their case. When the text says in Moses' writing, when they say Moses said, what they were quoting or inferring is from Deuteronomy 25 verse 5 onwards, which says, If brothers dwell together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man should not be married outside the family to a stranger. The husband's brothers shall go into her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be plotted out of Israel. In other words, what the Mosaic law says is this. If you have brothers and one of them marry and the person dies without having a child with the wife, one of the brothers can take the wife and sleep with her, and when they have children, the first child should be named after the brother, and that first child should maintain or keep the dead brother's posterity.

The Sadducees who believed in the written Torah came in, as you notice in the Lukan passage, invoked Moses to say, Moses said so. Jesus, do you remember that? Can you clarify if seven brothers have to marry this woman and have no children, then after the resurrection, whose wife will that be? Before I go on to explain more about this, I am aware that some of our listeners to the Biblical e-learning series will be Westerners. What we are talking about here is what is known as levirate marriage.

As weird as that may sound to you, it is the culture of the time, and there are cultures today that practice these kinds of cultures where a dead brother's wife if they don't have children, a brother can actually sleep with her, have children and the children will be there for the dead brother. I know some cultures today where if the father dies, the older brother can take the young wife of the father as a wife so that the son can take care of the wife. And it's a culture that has no life insurance policy, so that is the way in which a father who has multiple wives has the younger wife catered for when he dies.

I was exposed to a particular cultural situation recently in which a woman shared with me about her particular culture in one of the remote cultures of East Africa. She told me that in her culture, even today when a woman marries in the leverage marriage system, they are accustomed, though slightly different from the Jews, the woman marries the man of the family. So, if you marry into a family, you are known as the wife of the family.

As a custom, your husband's father will be the first to sleep with you, and then the brothers may sleep with you, and then you get to be with your husband for the rest of your life. By leveraging the marriage system, the father and the brothers commit themselves to a covenant. They will be there for you, they will have your back, you are a member of their family, you are part of their blood and the covenant is secured intact.

They will take care of you in any way possible. That is not the path that we're talking about here. But understand that this leverage system, as Joseph Fitzmyer puts in his commentary on Luke, the custom of such marriage, a brother-in-law begetting children by intercourse with his brother's widow to continue the brother's house was widespread in the ancient Near East, being vogue among the Assyrians, Hittites, and Canaanites.

So, what the people were asking Jesus, you should know, was not something that was not making sense. In fact, according to Josephus, we are likely to believe that this kind of leveraged marriage system was still in practice in the first century by Jesus' time. I have said in this lecture series what sometimes has become controversial to my American students when I mentioned that by the first century, Roman laws did not allow for polygamy, and Greek laws did not allow for polygamy, but Jewish laws allowed for polygamy.

Josephus suggests to us that back in his homeland, there will still be people who will marry more than one wife. We know that the practice had been diminished significantly by the first century, but it was still in motion by the time of Jesus. Knowing that most men who will marry more than one wife will marry because the other wife is not giving birth to children for them.

Here, I introduce another part of a culture that was prevalent in which the leverage marriage system was still in place if we understood that correctly from Josephus, still in play by the time of Jesus. The Sadducees asked Jesus about this custom. Jesus goes in straight to address them, knowing that they do not need the answers, but they are there to try to entrap him.

Jesus' answer was this. Their question is rather a misguided question. It is a misguided question because there will not be marriage in the is that you marry for procreation, and Jesus says look, there will not be death in the afterlife, so that will not even count.

We don't need to marry to have death in place. You don't have to worry about that at all. The whole idea of who becomes his wife will not even come up in that contest.

There will be no citing a sexual activity for procreation, and Jesus will go on to indicate in this passage that the children of God will be, depending upon how you translate the Greek particle, like angels or will be as angels if you decide to translate the particle as comparative. There will be material differences between how human beings would be in heaven now and how they would not need to get married. Notice what Jesus does to the Sadducees.

I mentioned to you that they believe in the written Torah, so Jesus goes straight to the heart and quotes Moses. Hey, by the way, paraphrasing, guys, do you remember the account on the burning bush when Moses said he's a God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob? Do you know that he's actually surmising or suggesting that God is a God of the living and not God of the dead? That God is a God of the resurrected and not God of those who are dead and perish in the grave with no memory.

What he is doing is using the passage they believe to counter the kind of passage that they will pick from Moses and say if we find a way through his interpretation will not be something we will comment on or take seriously in today's terms. Jesus is telling the Sadducees that you can go to Moses and find out that, in fact, God is a God of the resurrection. Now you go back to the account and you see something that is very intriguing.

Those who were happy about Jesus' answer were scribes. Ask yourself why? Sadducees ask the question of whether scribes are happy because most scribes are Pharisees. Pharisees believe in the resurrection of the dead.

They're supposed to say ah yeah. I think Jesus, we always knew that. These guys didn't know that.

In other words, Jesus' answer makes the scribes go aha. This is cool. In the words of Howard Marshall the point is that in the new age such people are not involved in marriage relationships.

This can be understood to mean the abolition of earthly relationships. It is more likely, however, that the marriage relationship is transcended to a new level of personal relationships. A basic point being made is that marriage as a means of procreation is no longer necessary.

Jesus moved from that quickly, wrapping up that part of the conversation will continue to establish that they should understand that when David is referring to the son of man he is actually not referring to himself even though the psalm seemed to refer to God talking about David sits here at my right hand until I make your enemies your food stool. Jesus re-establishes that perhaps David is talking about the son of David, that would be him. This instruction in chapter 20 ends with a specific indictment or warning about the scribes from verse 45.

Luke writes, and in the hearing of all the people, he said to the disciples, beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes and love greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feast who devour widows and for praetors make long prayers they will receive the greater condemnation. I don't know if you notice what Jesus has just done. He answered a question on the resurrection, he made the Sadducees sad, he made the scribes happy, and now he says disciples don't be like these people because lest you think they are cool models for you.

This is what they like. They like to walk around, they like showmanship, when they come to the temple settings, they like to really want to be in the important place, they make long prayers and all that. They are not good models.

Don't follow them. When Jesus talks about the scribes not being good models, notice that he touches on the public image. They want to wear long robes, they want to be seen in places of honor.

He also warns disciples against the religious pretense of the scribes. They like to sit in the synagogues and like to make long prayers to impress. Jesus' indictment is this.

They will receive greater condemnation. Notice that when Jesus was talking about the scribes, he mentioned that they like to take advantage of widows. What does that mean? Quickly, let me try to end this part of the lecture by highlighting what is going on with the views of Jesus' reference to devouring widows.

Here, I take the outline of Joseph Fitzmyer, which is quite straight short to list the six ways the devouring of the widows is looked at. First, it is read that it means they

exploit the resources of the widows in exchange for legal aid. Two they took advantage of widows and robbed them of what is rightly theirs.

Third, they probably exploited widows through their hospitality and generosity. And four, they probably got themselves into a situation where widows who have dedicated themselves to services in God have brought their resources and these resources are being managed by the scribes. Or fifth, that they took money from widows so that they could make long prayers on their behalf as we find in some churches today, or that they took the houses of widows as pledges for their debts.

We are not sure what that refers to, but you see at the end of chapter 20, Jesus in the temple has answered crucial questions that are put forward to him. The temple leaders tried to ask questions of authority, and he answered them very well. The temple leaders have always also tried to come and use other people as spies to ask questions about taxes and tribute to Caesar.

He answered that, to their surprise and shame. And then the Sadducees showed up, and they asked questions about resurrection and yet rested on their own turf in the temple; he answered that question. If they appeal to Moses, Jesus also appealed to Moses in his explanation and replied that to their surprise.

He ends chapter 20; Luke ends chapter 20 by drawing our attention to the fact that even while the Sadducees were shamed by Jesus' answer to the resurrection, the scribes were pleased with that. But Jesus proceeds to warn that the disciples should abstain from the conduct and religious piety of the scribes. They like to be seen in public places.

They like showmanship and make long prayers. They like places of honor and assault. They are definitely not good models.

What is happening in Luke chapter 20 is this. Jesus established the temple as his place of teaching, and here in Luke chapter 20, he had a public debate with temple officials on one subject and another. As we go to chapter 21, notice that when he says that they should not model their lives after the scribes, he mentioned that they devour or take advantage of widows.

That is going to be a segue for Luke to tell us something about a widow. I hope that you are following events unfolding in Jerusalem. What is happening in Luke 20 is this.

Jesus is a prophet who predicted his coming into the city and now in the city. While he is in the temple, he is like a philosopher, as Luke will portray him. He provides discourse and public debate, and he did so brilliantly well.



His subject matter, though, was theological in nature, and when he was entrapped on social and political subjects, he answered prudently. Friends, as you follow this lecture series, perhaps there are a few things you can appreciate about what is going on here. Jesus is the Messiah coming to Jerusalem, the city of David, the religious center of the Jewish tradition.

He has come, and he has seized the sacred space, and he can speak, teach, and preach about the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is here, and God has sent his son to deliver this message to the world. Here in the exchange with the authorities, the plot to get rid of him is not going to cease.

No, imagine Jesus has taken custody, if you like, hostage of the temple and he is defying every authority that the leaders of the temple have to run the space. He has turned that into a massive classroom. How are things going to unfold? He may be in trouble, but he will not stop.

He is going to deliver to us in chapter 21, the most difficult chapter in Luke, the most complicated discourse in which he is going to predict so many things that will come, but he says so because the great teacher is nailing out in the final discourse, on a final public discourse, how the world will end before he is arrested. Jesus is in Jerusalem. We are getting close to the passion events unfolding, but Jesus has one more thing to do: to tell us about events in the last days.

Please, as you follow these lectures, pay close attention to what Luke is showing us. Jesus knows what is going to happen. Everything that is happening to him is not by accident.

He is walking in God's will. Thank you again for following this lecture series, and I hope that you continue this learning journey with us and you open your heart, especially in Passion Week, to embrace and receive why he came, why he will die, what the Kingdom of God is all about, and the need for salvation for you and I, if we would embrace it. God bless you.

This is Dr. Daniel K. Darko in his teaching on the Gospel of Luke. This is session number 30, Public Exchange with Authorities in Jerusalem. Luke 20.1-21.4.