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## **Luke 20**

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Luke 20.

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### Topics.

- Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?
- The parable of a man who planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants.
- The stone the builders rejected.
- Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?
- Those who are resurrected neither marry nor are given in marriage.
- God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.
- How can Christ be David's son?

**The Previous Chapter:** in the previous chapter Jesus had a meal in the home of Zacchaeus a chief tax collector, told a parable of the nobleman who went into a far country to receive a Kingdom for himself. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt and the people praising him thought he would be made King when he arrived in Jerusalem. Jesus drives out those who sold in the temple and weeps over the city of Jerusalem. While the chief priests were seeking to destroy him Jesus taught in the temple daily

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### LUKE 20:1-8

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#### Was the Baptism of John from Heaven or from Man?

- **Luke 20:1-8:** One day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came up <sup>2</sup>and said to him, "Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is that gave you this authority." <sup>3</sup>He answered them "I also will ask you a question. Now tell me, <sup>4</sup>Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?" <sup>5</sup>And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven (meaning from God) he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' <sup>6</sup>But if we say, 'From man,' all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John was a prophet." <sup>7</sup>So they answered that they did not know where it came from. <sup>8</sup>And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

While Jesus is teaching in the temple at Jerusalem the chief priests, scribes and the elders were seeking to destroy him (v47). Remember Jesus has not been sent by any human priest so to the chief priests and scribes he is just a self-appointed common man speaking in God's name which was totally against the Levitical Law. Jesus answer is fabulous the chief priests and scribes hoping to trap him ask Jesus by what authority does he do and say what he does. But Jesus being the brilliant master of conversation turns their question back on them fully aware that they will not be able to answer the question (Jesus the perfect politician). He asks the chief priests, scribes and elders, was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?

**NOTE:** from heaven carries the idea that a person is approved and ordained by God and that they are sent from or by God. It is the same with the phrase Jesus came from heaven it does not mean that he lived in heaven as a spiritual person and then became a foetus in Mary's womb, but rather that God was his Father by the power of the Holy Spirit and that he was sent and ordained by God. For further information see the title:

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity).
- In, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The chief priests, scribes and the elders are trapped, they could not answer the question, no matter what they said their answer would turn against them so they remained silent, so of course Jesus is set free from answering their question (the brilliance and wisdom of Christ).

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## LUKE 20:9-15

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### **The Parable of a Man who planted a Vineyard and let it out to Tenants.**

- **Luke 20:9-15:** 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. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>And he sent another servant. But they also beat and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. <sup>12</sup>And he sent yet a third. This one also they wounded and cast out. <sup>13</sup>Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.' <sup>14</sup>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.' <sup>15</sup>And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?"

**The vineyard:** is a symbol of the nation of Israel.

**The tenants:** are a firstly a symbol of the kings and religious leaders of Israel in the Old Testament and secondly the religious leaders of Jesus generation (the chief priests, the Pharisees, scribes and elders)

**The servants:** are symbols of the Old Testament prophets.

**The beloved son:** is a symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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## THE STORY

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Jesus is telling the parable to the people, but it is primarily against the chief priests and scribes (v19, 46). The beginning of the parable refers to the Old Testament. God is the one who planted the vineyard (the nation of Israel). The LORD gave them kings and religious leaders (the tenants) to shepherd and guide the people of Israel and then left them to grow and establish the nation in the laws and statutes of God, but the kings and religious leaders corrupted the nation so God sent prophets (the servants) to them.

The fruit the prophets should have found was worship and praise to the LORD their God and grace and mercy shown to the common people and toward the poor, but instead of listening to the prophets the kings and religious leaders rejected them, nevertheless God continued to send prophet after prophet to the kings and religious leaders, sadly they continued to reject them. Now the parable jumps to the New Testament, Israel has rejected all the prophets the LORD sent to them, but God has still not given up so He sends his beloved Son to the religious leaders of Jesus generation (the chief priests, the Pharisees, scribes and elders), but they fear the Son will take their kingdom so they plot to take the Son out of their kingdom and have him killed (this is exactly what they do in a few days' time).

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## LUKE 20:16-19

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### **The Stone the Builders Rejected.**

- **Luke 20:16-19:** He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others. When they heard this, they said, "Surely not!" <sup>17</sup>But he looked directly at them and said, "What then is this that is written: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone"? <sup>18</sup>Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him." <sup>19</sup>The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people.

The builders refer to the chief priests and scribes they were considered the builders because they were the religious leaders of Israel who should have been establishing the nation in the will of God, but instead had made it near impossible for people to find God because of their pride, selfish ambition, hypocrisy and legalism.

**NOTICE:** Jesus looks eyeball to eyeball at the chief priests and scribes when he said, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone"? And when it falls on anyone, it will crush them."

**The Stone that the Builders rejected has become the Cornerstone?**

Jesus words:

- The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone?

Is cited from the book of Psalms:

- This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it. I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it (the entire Psalm is about the steadfast love of the LORD) (Psalm 118:21-24).

Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, the gate and door to God's righteousness. Jesus words, "Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces," means everyone who accepts Christ will be convicted of their sin, and the words, "When the stone falls on anyone, it will crush them." Means they will be judged and condemned to eternal death.

**Jesus is the stone the builders rejected:** Peter when speaking to all the people of Israel and filled with the Holy Spirit, said:

- Jesus is the stone that was rejected by the builders which has become the cornerstone, there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:11-12).

In Peter's letters he says:

- As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." So the honour is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do, but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. (1 Peter 2:4-9).

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**LUKE 20:20-26**

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**Is it Lawful for us to Give Tribute to Caesar, or Not?**

- **Luke 20:20-26:** So, they (the Chief Priests and Scribes) (v19) 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 authority and jurisdiction of the governor (Pilate). <sup>21</sup>So they asked him, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and show no partiality, but truly teach the way of God. <sup>22</sup>Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" <sup>23</sup>But he

perceived their craftiness, and said to them, <sup>24</sup>"Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." <sup>25</sup>He said to them "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." <sup>26</sup>And they were not able in the presence of the people to catch him in what he said, but marvelling at his answer they became silent.

The denarius was a silver coin and the most common Roman coin during the days of the apostles it was a day's wages for a Roman soldier (Matt 20:2, 10).

**Roman law and capital Punishment:** under Roman rule the Jewish religious leaders had no authority to sentence a person to death they could not administer capital punishment. This is why the chief priests and scribes sent spies to trap Jesus they needed to find something he was doing or saying that would be against Roman law so they could take him to Pilate and have him found guilty and put to death.

**Spies attempt to trap Christ:** the foolish spies approach Jesus, pretending to be sincere they flatter him and then ask, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not," but Jesus knows that their reason for asking the question is not because they want to know the answer, but to trap him. The Lord being the master of conversation and wisdom asks them the question, "Whose likeness and inscription is on a denarius?" They of course answer, "Caesar's." Jesus then tells them to, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and give to God the things that are God's." Jesus never argued he was the master of wisdom and brilliant at putting his enemies in situations where they were left with no answer. The things that are Caesars are the taxes, but the things that are God's are not limited to money, but include worship and praise as well as helping the poor and needy when it is in our power to do so and showing to our neighbour, kindness, mercy, compassion and forgiveness etc.

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## LUKE 20:27-36

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### **Those who are Resurrected neither Marry nor are Given in Marriage.**

- **Luke 20:27-36:** There came to him some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, <sup>28</sup>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. <sup>29</sup>Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children. <sup>30</sup>And the second <sup>31</sup>and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. <sup>32</sup>Afterward the woman also died. <sup>33</sup>In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife." <sup>34</sup>And Jesus said to them "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, <sup>35</sup>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, <sup>36</sup>for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

The Sadducees were a heretical sect of the Jews, the root of the word Sadducees means to be righteous sometimes the word has been taken to mean the righteous ones. There is no evidence of the Sadducees to be found in Israel before the Babylonian captivity. From the time of the exile the priesthood in general constituted the nobility of the Jewish people, but after the exile the High Priest became an increasingly powerful figure because the position of the High Priest and the throne were united in a single person. The Sadducees became the party favourable to the Roman government because they were more interested in maintaining the political status quo than in the religious purity of the nation. From the time of the Maccabees to the final fall of the Jewish State the Sadducees were the political party of the Jewish aristocratic priesthood. Sadducees were priests, but not all priests were Sadducees and as aristocrats they were naturally very conservative and held only to the written Law. Though

they resisted the truth of the Gospel and are mentioned about a dozen times in the New Testament and most likely referred to when mention is made of the chief priest Jesus only once warned his disciples against the Sadducees on all other occasions his criticism was against the Pharisees. The Sadducees question:

- Whose wife will the woman be? (v33).

Refers to the following law in the book of Deuteronomy regarding marriage, death and inheritance, Moses wrote:

- If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to 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 blotted out of Israel. (Deut. 25:5-6).

This was so that the inheritance of land would always remain in the name of the Father and be passed on down through his descendants. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection so they wonder (as many who do believe in the resurrection no-doubt would) when a Jewish widow has laid with other men to produce a son whose wife will she be in eternity.

**NOTE:** if the wife died, I guess the husband would have to raise up a son from another woman, in this scenario it probably was not so critical who the woman was as it is the man's name that is carried forward not the women.

**Eternity and marriage:** to answer the Sadducees question Jesus tells them, "Those considered worthy to attain to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, because they cannot die anymore, they are sons of God and like the angels." Is it any wonder God has to test the genuineness of our faith like gold tried in a fire (1 Peter 1:7), once God grants eternal life that life cannot be destroyed. (v36).

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## LUKE 20:37-40

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### **God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living.**

- **Luke 20:37-40:** But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. <sup>38</sup>Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him." <sup>39</sup>Then some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, you have spoken well." <sup>40</sup>For they (the Sadducees and Scribes) (v27, 39) no longer dared to ask him any question.

It was from the burning bush the LORD said, "I Am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exod. 3:6, 14-15)." These three were buried with their fathers and are sleeping, waiting for the first resurrection that's why the LORD from the burning bush said, "He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." God knows that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be resurrected at the first resurrection (Rev. 19:11-16) when Christ returns in glory. Jesus is pointing out to the Sadducees whose entire faith was built upon Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but who did not believe that there would be a resurrection that if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not going to be resurrected that would mean that God is the God of the dead and not the God of the living. These verses also show that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are not alive in heaven at this present time (as some believe). The entire focus of this conversation Jesus is having with the Sadducees is upon the resurrection. Jesus is using Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to prove to the Sadducees that there will be a resurrection because God is the God of the living and not the God of the dead.

**NOTICE;** in the resurrection the mighty and awesome power of God will transform those who are resurrected to be like the angels in heaven, meaning they will be eternal and so much more, what an amazing and glorious future for those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Christ is David's Son.**

- **Luke 20:41-44:** But he said to them (the Sadducees and Scribes) (v27, 39) "How can they say that the Christ is David's son? <sup>42</sup>For David himself says in the Book of Psalms, " "The Lord said to my Lord Sit at my right hand, <sup>43</sup>until I make your enemies your footstool."<sup>44</sup>David thus calls him Lord, so how is he his son?" (Psalm 110:1) (Matt. 22:41-45) (Mark 12:36).

**How can Christ be David's Son?** David by prophecy and in the Holy Spirit called Israel's coming Messiah the Christ his Lord. The Jews highly esteem King David even to this day they have a memorial tomb of David. The Bible says children are to honour their parents meaning esteem them and not the other way around. To the Jewish mind a father would never be considered less than his natural born son therefore if Jesus was David's son (i.e., a natural born descendant) how does David in prophecy call him Lord? David would then be making himself less than his natural born grandchild and no Jewish father would call his natural born son Lord for that reason. This is why Jesus is asking the Sadducees and scribes, "If David in prophecy calls Israel's coming Messiah the Christ his Lord how can he be the son of David's (natural born descendant). Bible prophecy does say that Israel's Messiah will come from the loins of David meaning his bloodline (a descendent) (Acts 2:29-36). This is because Joseph, Jesus foster father was from the bloodline of David's son Solomon and Mary was from the bloodline of David's son Nathan so in this sense prophecy was fulfilled in that Jesus descended from the bloodline of David, but technically Joseph was the foster father while God was Jesus real Father which means Jesus was not the son of David, but his Lord. The Sadducees and scribes esteemed King David as a great Jewish King and prophet of Israel, but they also knew that a Jewish father would not call his own natural born son his Lord and therefore could not answer Jesus question because they did not accept the virgin birth or that Jesus was the Son of God. The brilliant master of conversation and wisdom had once again brought his accusers to a place where they have no answer, he had them completely stumped.

**In the book of Acts Peter picks up on David's prophecy:"** Peter says to Israel:

- The patriarch David being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of Christ and that he would not be abandoned to Hades, nor would his body see corruption because God would raise him up, and exalt him to His right hand and now Christ having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, has poured out this (the gift of foreign languages) that you yourselves are seeing and hearing because David did not ascend into the heavens, but he did say, "The LORD (Jehovah) said to my Lord (Christ), sit at My right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.' Therefore, let all Israel know for certain that God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." (Acts 2:29-36).

Peter in these verses shows that David foresaw the resurrection of Christ.

**Christ's footstool:** God is in the process of making all the enemies of Christ his footstool (Heb. 1:13-14) meaning all nations and people will submit to his authority and his rule. At the right time Jesus will return as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God

will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish.

The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## LUKE 20:45-47

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### **Beware of the Scribes.**

- **Luke 20:45-47:** And in the hearing of all the people he said to his disciples, <sup>46</sup>"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 honour at feasts, <sup>47</sup>who devour widows' houses and for a pretence make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

The chief priests and the scribes:

- Dressed in religious robes to appear holy
- Loved the best seats, being exalted and treated as someone important.
- Took money from widows, the poor and those who lacked.
- Prayed long prayers to look spiritual and appear godly.

Jesus says they will receive the greater condemnation this is because everything they are doing is hypocritical, it is all about self, pride and ego they are serving God for their own glory instead of shepherding the people and having God's best interest foremost in their hearts and minds.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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