

THE HARD SAYINGS OF JESUS

SESSION #8
03.02.11

MORE HARD SAYINGS

- I. Mark 9:1—“Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.”
 - A. What? To suggest some who were present would not see death before they see the Kingdom of God?
 1. Roman oppression, a basically quasi-enslaved people, and a soon to be crucified Jesus. What?
 - B. What did Jesus have in mind when he made this prediction?
 1. The Son of Man humiliated and suffering would be the Son of Man raised to glory, God ushering in his vindication (Romans 1:3-4).
 2. The true meaning of the word to the criminal on the cross (Luke 23:42-43)—today you will be with me in *paradiso*—you will see God’s act of raising the humiliated Son of Man from a position of obedience to one of confidence, God’s redeeming presence.

II. Mark 11:12-14; Matthew 21:18-22—the cursing of the fig tree.

A. The story is told either when Jesus is headed into Jerusalem or in Jerusalem.

1. The harbinger of the fully formed fig tree in the future (*taqsh*), the appearance of buds, anticipates fully formed figs.

2. Jesus found nothing but leaves, a hopeless fig tree.

3. Immediately, Jesus is found to be in Jerusalem in Mark (11:15) and he enters the temple and drives out the money changers.

B. The fig tree in Luke 13:6-9 and in Mark's/Matthew's "cursing version" seems to represent Jerusalem or the Holy People.

1. It is cursed because of its failure to bring forth fruit, to live according to the promises and mercy of God.

2. No buds, no figs, just leaves.

III. Mark 12:13-17—“Render unto Caesar the things that are the Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

- A. In the parallel texts (Matthew 22:15-22; Luke 20:19-26), the Pharisees ask for a straight answer, as if to restrain the nuance of Jesus or to entrap him.
 - 1. Jesus is in a dilemma—on the one side, the Romans and Herod Antipas, a Jewish governor dedicated to collecting Roman taxes; on the other, Judas the Galilean teaching God alone was Israel’s king, therefore...
 - 2. Was it right for people living on God’s land to give a proportion of its produce to a pagan ruler?
- B. If Jesus says *lawful*, then he offends those who maintained the ideals of Judas the Galilean; if Jesus says *unlawful*, then he risks insurrection.
- C. His response is an object lesson: bring me the coin—
“Render unto Caesar the things that are the Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

