

The Gospel of Matthew

Booklet 23 – Four Lessons

Lesson 62 - Matthew 21:1-11

Lesson 63 - Matthew 21:12-22

Lesson 64 - Matthew 21:23-32

Lesson 65 - Matthew 21:33-46



Workers in the Vineyard

International ESL/Bible Lessons Intermediate to Advanced Level

Glenda Reece
Glenda@eslts.com

Copyright © 2011-2018 by Glenda Reece. Permission is granted to provide printed copies for use in your ESL/Bible classes, but only if the copies are provided at no cost to the students and contain this entire document including all copyright statements. Copying in any form is prohibited for all commercial purposes or any purpose other than the one specifically allowed above.

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc®. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Contents

Lesson 62 - Matthew 21: 1-11 Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King	4
Vocabulary	5
Questions.....	6
Notes.....	7
Lesson 63 - Matthew 21: 12-22 Jesus at the Temple	10
Vocabulary	11
Questions.....	12
Notes.....	12
Lesson 64 - Matthew 21: 23-32 The Authority of Jesus Questioned	15
Vocabulary	17
Questions.....	17
Notes.....	18
Lesson 65 - Matthew 21: 33- 46 The Parable of the Tenants.....	20
Vocabulary	21
Questions.....	22
Notes:	22

Much of the material in these lessons come from *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. I*, by William Barclay. Daily Study Bible Series. Other content comes from Bible Commentaries, Dictionaries and on-line sources. All pictures are from Google Images.

The Gospel Of Matthew

Material for this section is from William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew: The Daily Study Bible Series*. The Westminster Press. Philadelphia. 1975.

Matthew's Gospel is carefully designed.

Section One includes The Genealogy of Jesus, The Birth Story, The John the Baptist Sequences, Baptism and Temptation of Jesus.

Section Two, from Chapters 5-7 is The Sermon on the Mount, or the Teachings of Jesus. These are gathered into a group from all the time of Jesus's ministry. These are the *words* of Jesus.

Section Three shows the actions or *doings* of Jesus.

Chapter 18	Gives the greatest of ethical teaching: humility, responsibility, self-renunciation, individual care, discipline, fellowship, and forgiveness.
Chapter 19	Teaches on divorce and wealth.
Chapter 20	Hiring workers. Walking to Jerusalem. A new standard of values.
Chapter 21	Begins Last week of life of Jesus; Entering Jerusalem as a King, first days

The Gospel Of Matthew

Lesson 62 - Matthew 21: 1-11 Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

¹As they approached Jerusalem / and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, / Jesus sent two disciples, / ²saying to them, / “Go to the village ahead of you, / and at once / you will find a donkey tied there, / with her colt by her. / Untie them / and bring them to me. / ³If anyone says anything to you, / say that the Lord needs them, / and he will send them right away.”



⁴ This took place / to fulfill what was spoken / through the prophet:

⁵ “Say to Daughter Zion,
‘See, / your king comes to you,
gentle and riding on a donkey,
and on a colt, / the foal of a donkey.’”

⁶ The disciples went / and did as Jesus had instructed them. / ⁷ They brought the donkey / and the colt / and placed their cloaks on them / for Jesus to sit on. / ⁸ A very large crowd / spread their cloaks / on the road, / while others cut branches from the trees / and spread them on the road. / ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him / and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna / to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he / who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Hosanna / in the highest heaven!”

¹⁰ When Jesus entered Jerusalem, / the whole city was stirred / and asked, / “Who is this?”

¹¹ The crowds answered, / “This is Jesus, / the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Vocabulary

1. Cloak: An outdoor garment, typically sleeveless, that hangs loosely from the shoulders. As a verb, we often use it in a sentence like this: *The government cloaks its actions from the public. They don't want you to know.*
2. Branches: Noun:
 - part of a tree that grows out from the trunk or from a bough.
 - a lateral extension or subdivision extending from the main part of something, typically one extending from a river, road, or railway: *a branch of the Falls of the Neuse River.*
 - a division or office of a large business or organization, operating locally or having a particular function: *he works at our Boston branch.*
 - a conceptual subdivision of something, esp. a family, group of

languages, or a subject: *a branch of mathematics called graph theory.*

- Computing a control structure in which one of several alternative sets of program statements is selected for execution.

Two Word Verbs

- **(branch off)** diverge from the main route or part: *the road branched off at the town* | figurative: *Duke Ellington was constantly branching off with new musical styles.*
 - **(branch out)** extend or expand one's activities or interests in a new direction: *the company is branching out into Europe.*
3. Hosanna: Used to express joy, adoration, praise in Judaism or Christianity (Not a common word)
 4. Blessed: Given divine pleasure and protection.

Questions

1. How many Christian symbols do you notice in this passage?
2. What was the code that Jesus told the disciples to use to obtain the ass?
3. What do we call this church holiday in our time?
4. Why do you think Jesus made such a dramatic entrance when he knew the authorities like the Chief Priest and Herod wanted him killed?

Notes

1. This passage takes us to the last week in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. It is the beginning of Passover and Jerusalem was filled with people. It was imperative that every able bodied man within 20 miles of Jerusalem come, and that every Jew make the pilgrimage at least once in his lifetime.
2. Thirty years later, a Roman governor required a census of the lambs sacrificed. A regulation said that for each lamb slain, a minimum party of ten was required. That year 250,000 lambs were sacrificed. That would make the approximation of 2,500,000 people crowded into Jerusalem for Passover.
3. Jesus made a very dramatic and well-planned entrance into Jerusalem. He had made plans for this, and had a donkey or ass ready that had never been ridden before. Jesus picked up every bit of symbolism from the Old Testament and used it as he entered Jerusalem.
4. Let's look at the symbolism that every Jew would recognize and be able to tell a story about:
 - The donkey or ass that was a young colt never used for any other purpose (Numbers 19:2, Deuteronomy 21:3, and I Samuel 6:7)
 - The crowd received Jesus like a king. The spreading of cloaks before him and Jesus riding on cloaks. A cloak was a man's

outer garment and often his blanket at night. It was expensive and precious to each man. This was done when Jehu was proclaimed King (2 Kings 9:13).

- They cut branches from the trees and waved them. This was done when Simon Maccabaeus entered Jerusalem after one of his notable victories against the Greeks. (1 Maccabees 13:51)
- They greeted him as they would greet a pilgrim (Psalm 118:26.)
- They shouted “Hosanna” which means save *now*! The word has changed in modern days to a greeting, but it was really a cry for deliverance and help.

5. Jesus knew the people and Judaism. He knew they would understand all the symbols of his great and grand entrance into Jerusalem at a time when the streets were full and Passover was beginning.

6. Jesus made the deliberate dramatic Messianic claim and was offering himself to all the people. Also, this reminded the people of the capture of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes about 175 BC. He deliberately profaned the Temple of the Jews and was set on wiping out all of Judaism and replacing it with the Greek gods. That caused the Maccabean war and the freeing of Judea from the Greeks. Then in 2 Maccabees 10:7 we read of the rejoicing of the purified and rededicated Temple with palm branches songs and

praises. It is an almost exact description of Jesus entering into Jerusalem.

7. It is also important to note that riding the ass or donkey meant that Jesus came in peace. The kings rode a donkey for peace, and a horse for war.
8. Matthew mentions the city of Bethphage only, but Mark says the place was Bethany where Jesus had many friends. Bethphage was the outermost area of Jerusalem and where pilgrims began to enter Jerusalem.

The Gospel Of Matthew

Lesson 63 - Matthew 21: 12-22 Jesus at the Temple

¹² Jesus entered the temple courts / and drove out all / who were buying and selling there. / He overturned the tables of the moneychangers / and the benches of those selling doves. / ¹³ “It is written,” / he said to them, / “My house will be called a house of prayer,’ / but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’”



¹⁴ The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, / and he healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests / and the teachers of the law / saw the wonderful things he did / and the children shouting in the temple courts, / “Hosanna to the Son of David,” / they were indignant.

¹⁶ “Do you hear what these children are saying?” / they asked him.

“Yes,” / replied Jesus, / “have you never read,

“‘From the lips of children and infants
you, Lord, have called forth your praise’?”

¹⁷ And he left them / and went out of the city to Bethany, / where he spent the night.

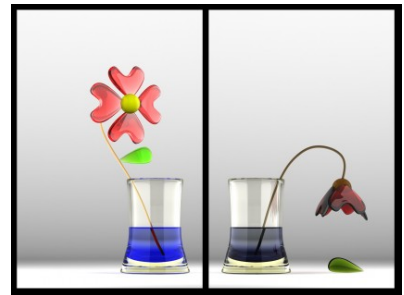
Jesus Curses a Fig Tree

¹⁸ Early in the morning, / as Jesus was on his way back to the city, / he was hungry. / ¹⁹ Seeing a fig tree by the road, / he went up to it / but found nothing on it except leaves. / Then he said to it, / “May you never bear fruit again!” / Immediately the tree withered.



²⁰ When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. / “How did the fig tree wither so quickly?” / they asked.

²¹ Jesus replied, / “Truly I tell you, / if you have faith / and do not doubt, / not only can you do / what was done to the fig tree, / but also you can say to this mountain, / ‘Go, / throw yourself into the sea,’ / and it will be done. ²² If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”



Vocabulary

1. Indignant: Feeling or showing anger or annoyance at what is perceived as unfair. *He was indignant at being the object of suspicion.*
2. To wither: A plant or a person who has dry or shriveled leaves or arms or legs. *The child was born with a withered arm.*

Questions

1. Why did Jesus get angry at the long custom of money changing and selling of Doves?
2. What happens when we ignore something that has always been done, but doesn't really seem quite moral?
3. What does a man do when he finds his livelihood threatened just as the moneychangers must have encountered with Jesus?
4. Should a house of worship become a moneymaking place?
5. What do farmers do when a fruit tree can no longer produce fruit?

Notes

1. Jesus entered Jerusalem riding in like a king. It was a defiant act. But his next entrance, into the Temple is also a defiant act. Look at the Temple compound. The word *naos* was used for the Temple's relatively small building containing the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies into which only the High Priest might enter. But *naos* itself was surrounded by a vast space occupied by courtyards. The entire big area is called *hieron*.
2. In the Court of Gentiles two kinds of trading went on: money changing and the selling of doves.
3. Every Jew had to pay a Temple Tax within a month of Passover or at the Temple. It had to be paid in a certain currency and the exchange of unsuitable money for acceptable money was accompanied by a service charge. If the tax was 7 dollars, then the

service charge was 2 dollar. This was equivalent to a workingman's wage for three days. The Temple got some of the money, some went for public projects like repair of the road, but moneychangers made a great profit.

4. Doves were offered and were essential. Women and lepers and others who were unclean for some reason had to purchase and sacrifice a dove. They had to be perfect and without blemish or mark. The doves could be bought outside the Temple, but they were almost never acceptable, and they were quite inexpensive. But the doves in the Temple court were always acceptable, and they were really expensive. This was an old abuse.
5. Additionally, the stalls of the Temple courts or booths for selling and trading were owned by the High Priest, and were called the Bazaars of Annas, the name of the High Priest. It was the exploitation of the poor and the pilgrim that made Jesus so very angry.
6. The fiercest manifestations of anger in Jesus were directed against those who exploited their fellow men. The cheats and the thieves who called themselves priests and religious people made the Temple, not a house of God and of prayer, but a den of thieves. (Jeremiah 7:11).
7. The thieves were chased out, but many stayed with Jesus. Among them were the sick, the lame and the blind. And Jesus healed

- them in the Temple Court of the Gentiles. What a passage as we see the righteous anger of Jesus and the healing love of Jesus.
8. Another day has passed and Jesus is returning to Jerusalem. He is hungry and wants to eat a fig. The fig tree and the fruit were really a favorite in that land. It is the very symbol of fertility, peace and prosperity.
 9. It is a difficult passage for we don't know why Jesus made the fig tree wither. It could have changed into a wild state or been too old to bear figs. If this action was symbolic, it taught two things.
 10. It taught that uselessness invites disaster. Failure to recognize the purpose of God brings necessary disaster. Everyone in the world is judged on his or her usefulness.
 11. It taught that profession without practice is condemned. The tree had leaves and should have had figs. It didn't.
 12. The prayer promises that end this passage are not to be taken literally, but figuratively. So what is Jesus promising through prayer?
 - Prayer gives us the ability to do, and it is asking God to make us able to do it ourselves.
 - Prayer is the ability to accept, and in accepting, to transform.
 - Prayer brings the ability to endure and bear the trouble and the pain.
 - Prayer is not escape or passing it on to God. It is truly power.

The Gospel Of Matthew

Lesson 64 - Matthew 21: 23-32 The Authority of Jesus Questioned

²³ Jesus entered the temple courts, / and, / while he was teaching, / the chief priests / and the elders of the people / came to him. / “By what authority / are you doing these things?” / they asked. / “And who gave you this authority?”

²⁴ Jesus replied, / “I will also ask you one question. / If you answer me, / I will tell you / by what authority / I am doing these things. /

²⁵ John’s baptism—where did it come from? / Was it from heaven, / or of human origin?”

They discussed it among themselves / and said, / “If we say, / ‘From heaven,’ / he will ask, / ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ / ²⁶ But if we say, / ‘Of human origin’— / we are afraid of the people, / for they all hold that John was a prophet.”

²⁷ So they answered Jesus, / “We don’t know.”

Then he said, / “Neither will I tell you / by what authority / I am doing these things.

The Parable of the Two Sons

²⁸ “What do you think? / There was a man / who had two sons. / He went to the first / and said, / ‘Son, / go and work today / in the vineyard.’

29 “‘I will not,’ / he answered, / but later / he changed his mind and went.

30 “Then the father went to the other son / and said the same thing. / He answered, / ‘I will, sir,’ / but he did not go.

31 “Which of the two did / what his father wanted?”

“The first,” / they answered.

Jesus said to them, /

“Truly I tell you, / tax collectors and the prostitutes / are entering the kingdom of God / ahead of you. / 32 For John came to you / to show you the way of righteousness, / and you did not believe him, / but the tax collectors / and the prostitutes did. / And even after you saw this, / you did not repent and believe him.



Vocabulary

1. Authority: The power to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience.
2. Elders: Senior leaders in a group or religious organization.
3. Origin: the place where something begins
4. Prostitute: a person, typically a woman, but can be a man, who engages in sexual activity for payment.

Related Words:

Adjective	Noun	Verb	Adverb
Original	Origin Original	To originate	Originally
Authoritative	Authority Authorization	To authorize	Authoritatively

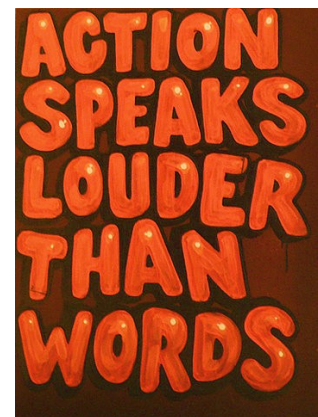
Questions

1. How is answering a question with another question a good debating technique?
2. Why did the members of the Jewish Sanhedrin lose face? Why would that make them hate Jesus more?
3. How do we react to those who promise to do something and then don't do it? Can you give an example?
4. Why do many people call religious believers hypocrites?

Notes

1. It isn't surprising that the Jewish authorities asked Jesus what right he had to throw people out of the Court of the Gentiles for cheating people and what right he had to teach and heal people. It was too soon for Jesus to say that God gave him that right, for he would have been killed that moment. Instead he waited and answered their question with another question.
2. Jesus's question was a trap or dilemma for the Jewish authorities. I want to quote William Barclay here: *The dilemma of the Jewish authorities was this. If they said that the ministry of John was from God, then, they had no alternative to admitting that Jesus was the Messiah, for John had borne definite and unmistakable witness to that fact. On the other hand, if they denied that John's ministry came from God, then they would have to bear the anger of the people who were convinced that he (John) was a messenger of God.*
3. One of the duties of the Sanhedrin, the highest court of justice and the supreme council in ancient Jerusalem, was to distinguish between true and false prophets. Yet they were silent and then said, "We don't know." They lost face with this answer.
4. So Jesus continues the conversation by telling a parable about a man who sent his two sons into a vineyard. The first son refused to obey and told his father no, but then he later went, and the second son said yes, but he didn't go at all.

5. The Jewish leaders were the ones who said they would obey God, and then they did not. The harlots and tax-gatherers were the ones who said they would not obey God, but then obeyed God.
6. Here Jesus is not praising anyone. These are two very imperfect sets of people. Neither was a joy to his father. The ideal son is the one accepted his father's orders with obedience and respect and who unquestioningly and fully carried them out.
7. Barclay tells us *there are two very common classes of people in this world. First there are those whose profession is much better than their practice. They will promise anything; ...but their practice lags far behind.*
8. *Second there are those whose practice is far better than their profession. They claim to be tough, but somehow they are found out doing kindly and generous things, almost in secret. Many who say they have no interest in church or religion or God live more Christian and good lives than many professing Christians.*
9. Also, this parable teaches us that promises can never take the place of performance, and fine words are never a substitute for fine deeds.



The Gospel Of Matthew

Lesson 65 - Matthew 21: 33- 46 The Parable of the Tenants

³³ “Listen to another parable: / There was a landowner / who planted a vineyard. / He put a wall around it, / dug a winepress in it / and built a watchtower. /

Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers / and moved to another place. / ³⁴ When the harvest time approached, / he sent his servants / to the tenants / to collect his fruit.



³⁵ “The tenants seized his servants; / they beat one, / killed another, / and stoned a third. / ³⁶ Then he sent other servants to them, / more than the first time, / and the tenants treated them the same way. / ³⁷ Last of all, / he sent his son to them. / ‘They will respect my son,’ / he said.

³⁸ “But when the tenants saw the son, / they said to each other, / ‘This is the heir. / Come, / let’s kill him / and take his inheritance.’ /

³⁹ So they took him / and threw him out of the vineyard / and killed him.

⁴⁰ “Therefore, / when the owner of the vineyard comes, / what will he do to those tenants?”

⁴¹ “He will bring those wretches / to a wretched end, / ” they replied, / “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, / who will give him his share of the crop / at harvest time.”

⁴² Jesus said to them, / “Have you never read in the Scriptures: /

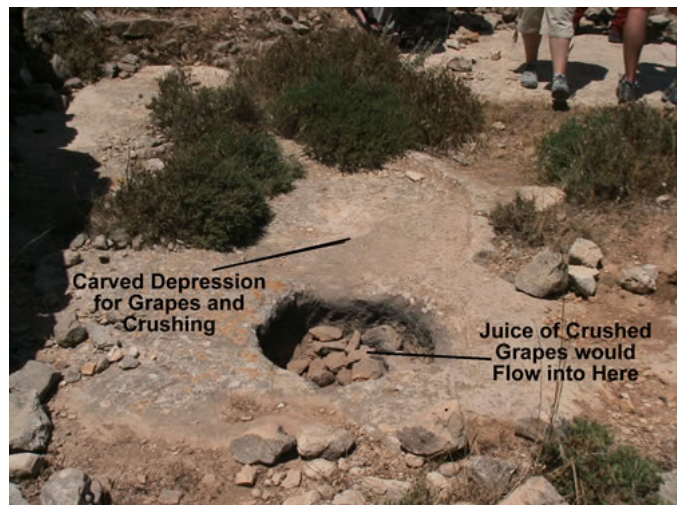
“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
the Lord has done this,
and it is marvelous in our eyes’?

⁴³ “Therefore / I tell you / that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you / and given to a people / who will produce its fruit. /

⁴⁴ Anyone / who falls on this stone / will be broken to pieces; / anyone on whom it falls / will be crushed.”

⁴⁵ When the chief priests / and the Pharisees / heard Jesus’ parables, / they knew he was talking about them. /

⁴⁶ They looked for a way to arrest him, / but they were afraid of the crowd / because the people held / that he was a prophet.



Vocabulary

1. Winepress: A press where grapes are squeezed for making wine.

2. Wretch: Unfortunate or unhappy person.
3. Inheritance: Receive money as an heir at the death of a person.

Related Words:

Adjective	Noun	Verb	Adverb
Wretched	Wretch	To look or feel wretched	Wretched
	Inheritance, Heir	To inherit	

Questions

1. How does Jesus answer the question from the Jewish leaders?
2. What does God provide for each one of us every day?
3. What does God want us to do with the talents and gifts we have?
4. Will you tell this parable in your own words?

Notes:

1. Generally, a parable has only one point, and the details are not to be stressed. Trying to find a meaning in every detail is a mistake. But this parable is very different, for each detail here has a meaning and the Chief priests and Pharisees knew these meanings.
2. Parable identifications:

Vineyard	The nation of Israel
Owner of vineyard	God
Cultivators	Religious leaders of Israel possessed the charge of God for the welfare of the nation and its people.
Messengers	Prophets sent by God, rejected and killed.
Son	Jesus

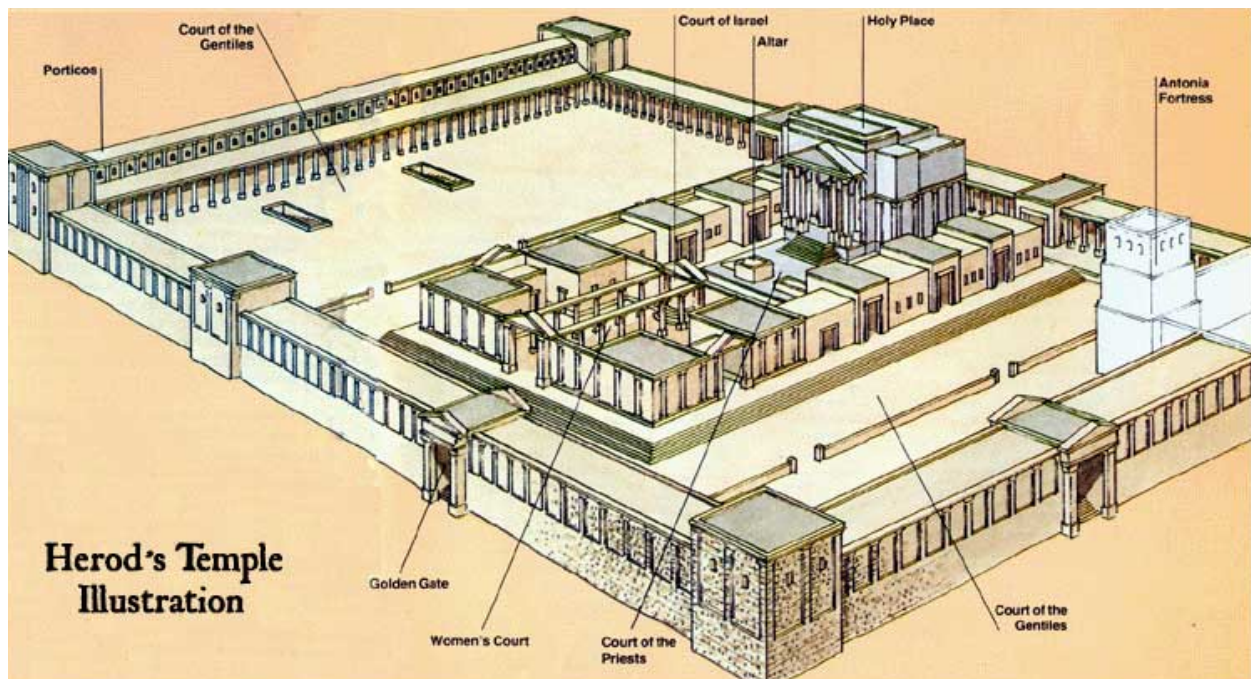
3. This parable tells us about God.

- God trusts in men. He does not stand over his workers and supervise like a policeman. He went away and trusted them with the tasks.
- God is patient. He sent messenger after messenger. He gave men many chances.
- God judges men. Finally, God took the vineyard and gave it to others.

4. It also tells us about men.

- It tells of human privilege. The vineyard had all the workers needed. God never gives us a task without giving us the means to do it.
- It tells of human freedom. God trusts man to do his job.
- It tells of human answerability. A day does come when we must answer to God about the job He gave us to do.

- It tells of the deliberateness of human sin. Man showed a deliberate policy of rebellion and disobedience to the master.
5. It tells about the claim of Jesus.
- Jesus shows that he is not a prophet but the Son of God. This parable is the clearest claim Jesus ever made to be unique and different from even the greatest of the prophets.
 - It shows that Jesus knew of his coming sacrifice. In the hands of wicked men, the son died.



The Temple of Herod in the time of Jesus