



# ZACCHAEUS

## THE CHIEF TAX COLLECTOR

# ZACCHAEUS



Lk 19:1-10

Salvation has come to this house...

- What did it mean to be a **Chief Tax Collector**?
- What caused Zacchaeus to be saved?

# ZACCHAEUS

- The office of **Chief Tax Collector**
- Zacchaeus was not just a tax collector, he was a **Chief** Tax Collector.
  - As such he **supervised** *other* Tax Collectors.
    - As the Chief, he was **entitled and took a cut** from all the subordinate tax collectors.
    - After all, the Chief was ultimately the one held ***accountable*** to the Roman procurator.
- **Zacchaeus was an important man.**  
**Jesus even knew him by name!**

# ZACCHAEUS

- We must remember that in those times, **Palestine** was under **Roman dominion**.
  - **As such, taxes collected were sent to Rome.**
- To that end, Rome set a fixed amount of revenue that a particular tax collector or area needed to collect. A periodic census established the amount.
  - The Tax Collector was not limited to that amount, in that **if he collected an excess above the fixed amount, he kept it for himself.**



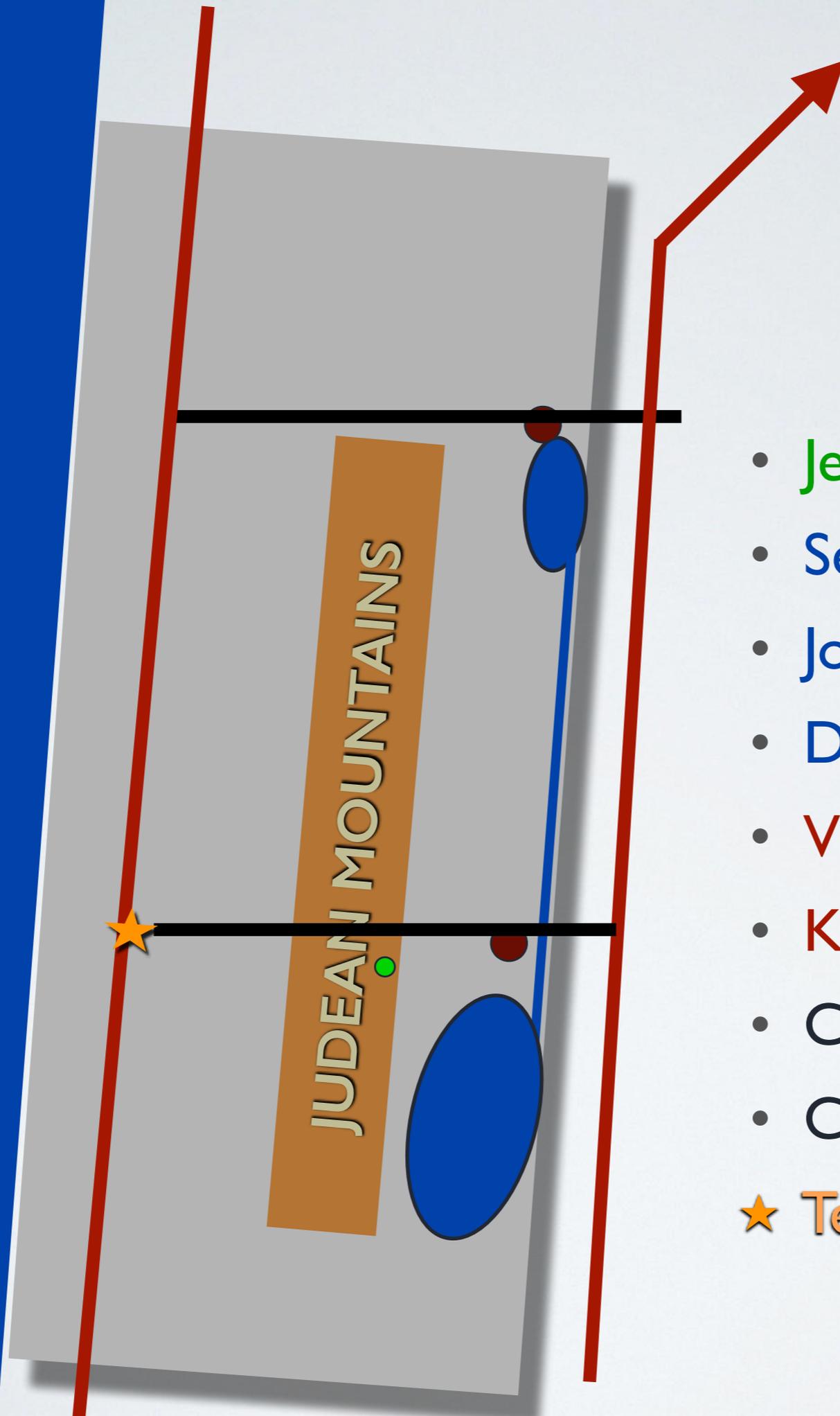
# ZACCHAEUS

**Imagine** that our tax system was based on a **fixed amount** that had to be collected from **our area**, and the **local IRS agent** was entitled to collect *whatever he could seize or acquire*. Any excess went to the IRS agent.

Imagine further that the tax collected was **not for a local benefit** but sent to a **foreign area**, to benefit those who ruled.

- **No, I am not describing Washington, ...**  
despite the any perceived similarity.

Mediterranean Sea



# ISRAEL

- Jerusalem
- Sea of Galilee
- Jordan River
- Dead Sea
- Via Maris
- Kings Highway
- Cross near Capernaum
- Cross over in Jericho
- ★ Tell Gezer

# ZACCHAEUS

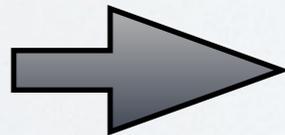
## 2

- We know of **TWO** tax collectors who end up being followers of Jesus:
- One is **Levi**, who we more commonly know as Matthew. **Matthew** had his tax collection business in the Capernaum area. He left it when called by Jesus and became one of the twelve.
- The other, — **Zacchaeus** described as a “**wealthy man**” by Luke (19:2) was probably much richer than we would initially imagine.

# ZACCHAEUS

What caused Zacchaeus  
to be saved?

- Only Luke mentions the encounter between Jesus and Zacchaeus.
- **WHY** does Luke remember this event and preserve it in his Gospel. What is the *underlying message*?
- **Hint** - the *answer* requires seeing the context of the story along with the lessons of **Chapter 18**



# ZACCHAEUS



- We know from our previous study of **Indulgences** that **DETACHMENT** from sin, is a condition for a plenary indulgence.
- We also know that to be Perfect one must be **detached** from all sin (Purgatory avoidance)

# ZACCHAEUS



- We see here, the obvious contrast between the **Rich young man** and **Zacchaeus** regarding their possessions.
- One *could not detach* from his possessions, the *other was happy to detach* and make **reparation** for his extortions.
  - ✱ Of the one that could not detach - **Jesus laments** how richness can be an impediment to holiness.
  - ✱ Of the other, the one who could and committed to **detachment** - **Jesus rejoices** that the wealth is not an impediment.

# ZACCHAEUS

- Note the offer by Zacchaeus as to reparation for his sin, and then as to restitution for his extortion:
  - “Behold half of my possessions I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone, I shall repay four times over.”
- What the law required in restitution per Lev 6: 1-7 was full value + 20%. (cf Nu 5: 6-7)
  - Zacchaeus offer? 4 x the full value!
- If 10 - the law required 12, but Zacchaeus pledged 40.

# LARGER CONTRAST



The Camel disencumbered  
of his hunch **passes through  
the eye of a needle.**  
That is, the wealthy tax  
collector **Zacchaeus**  
abandoning his love of riches,  
and loathing his dishonest  
gains, **receives the blessing of  
his Lord's company.**

Thomas Aquinas. (1843). *Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels, Collected out of the Works of the Fathers: by venerable Bede*

# LARGER CONTRAST

- Commonality between Pharisee and the Young Rich Man
  - Both kept the strict requirements of the law, and neither did any harm to others.
  - Both were proud and content with their lifestyles.
- Commonality between the two Tax Collectors
  - Neither kept strict requirements of the law
  - Both admitted to be sinners and repented
  - Zacchaeus goes furthest detaching from his sin and making a commitment to act in love for his neighbors

# ZACCHAEUS

- I couldn't help but notice that the story of Zacchaeus follows the story of the blind beggar.
- The blind beggar could not see. Zacchaeus also could not see, but wanted to see so he climbed a tree. *This is what a child would do.*
- In doing so, Zacchaeus was acting like the little children that Jesus said we have to become in order to enter the Kingdom of God. *This is also a Luke Chapter 18 theme.*
- Not having been prevented to come to Jesus, Zacchaeus received salvation.



# SALVATION



Abraham

- Notice what Jesus said. He did not say that Zacchaeus “was” already a son of Abraham, but that now he “is.”
- For before, when Zacchaeus was the chief among tax collectors, he bore no likeness to the righteousness of Abraham, hence he was not his son.
- Spiritual sonship is more than biology.

# SALVATION



Abraham

- **Zacchaeus**, sinner and renegade Jew though he be, had not forfeited his right to the promise made to Abraham;
- and **in receiving Jesus** into his house, he **welcomed the One in whom the promise to Abraham was to be fulfilled.**

Ginns, R. (1953). The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to St Luke. A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture (p. 962).

# SALVATION



Abraham

- “This day is salvation come to this House.” (Lk 19:9)
  - “This day,” shows that it was not of his past acts, but his present resolve.
- House - Not only to Zacchaeus himself, *but to his entire family*, in reward for his disinterested charity.

MacEvilly, J. (1887). An Exposition of the Gospel of St. Luke (p. 209). Dublin: Gill & Sons

# PARABLE OF THE GOLD COINS

Lk 19: 11-27      The Parable of the Ten Golden coins



- The requirement to produce fruit with what we are given
- Jesus cautions his listeners that there will be an accounting for that which we have been entrusted.

# PARABLE OF THE TALENTS



- The Parable of the Talents in Mt 25: 14-30 is unique to St Matthew's Gospel - but very similar to the Parable of the Gold Coins in Lk 19: 11:27
- Please refer to [Lk Ch12 PDF GOSPELS download at the catholicjerry.com website](#) for a complete treatment.

when the cat is away ....

# PARABLE OF THE GOLD COINS



A little bit of History as observed by **Antoine Augustin Calmet OSB** - a French Benedictine monk, who wrote in the early 1700s.

## **A Historical Insight**

Distinguishing Matthew's account of Talents, from Luke's Coins and focusing on St Luke's Gospel

# PARABLE OF THE GOLD COINS



- **Calmet** observes, that in the **Lukan parable**, two parts are to be carefully distinguished from Matthew.
- The first, contained in verses: 12, 14, 15, 27, regard the rebellious subjects of a prince, who went abroad to secure a kingdom.
  - The example would have been fresh in the memory of the Jews at the time Jesus would have been teaching this parable.

# PARABLE OF THE GOLD COINS

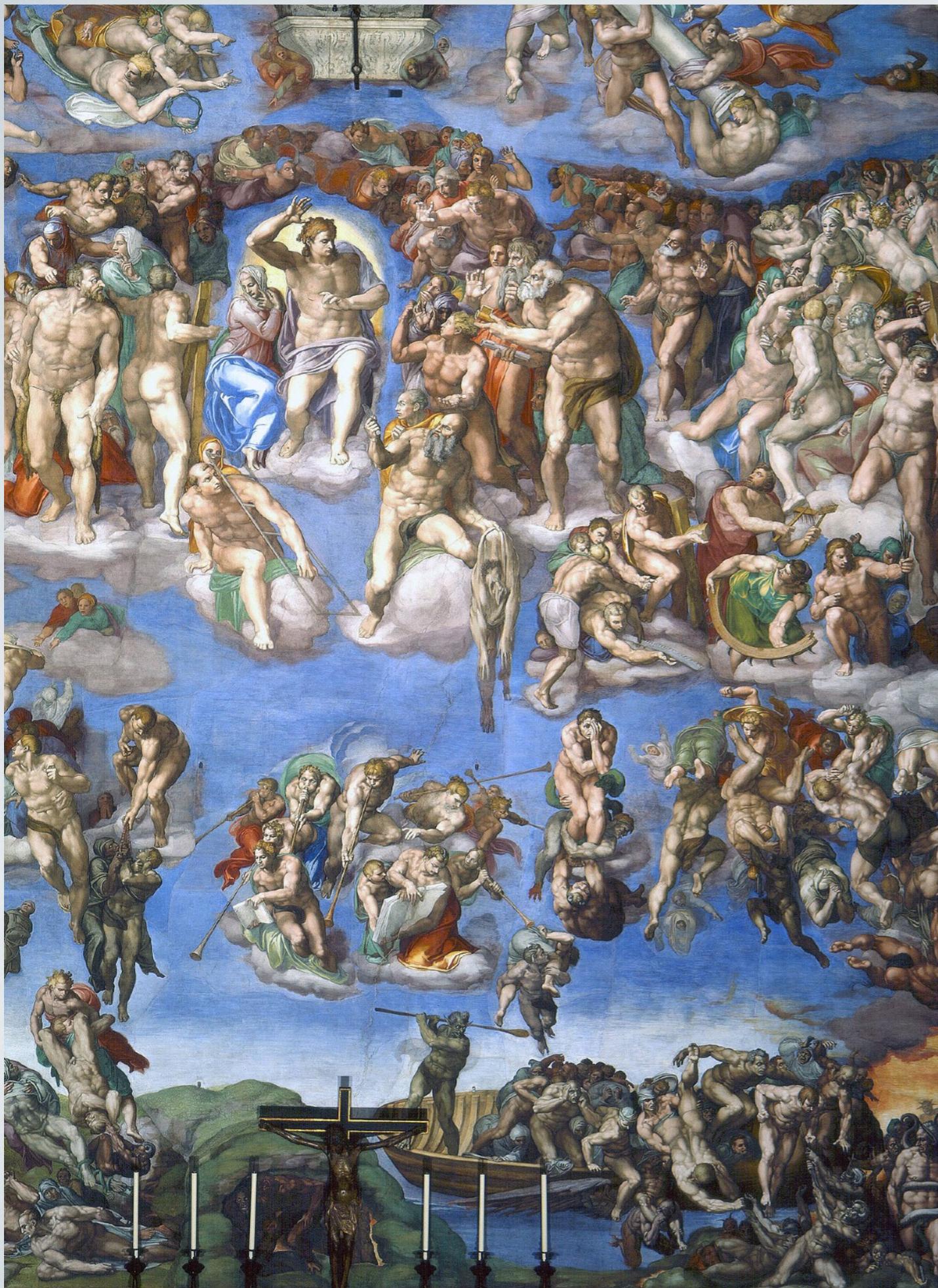
- *Archelaus*, about thirty-three years before this time, had gone to Rome to obtain the kingdom from **Augustus**, as was then required in the case of the rulers of Judea, who ruled under the authority and permission of the Romans, and, therefore, these Judean rulers were immune of their personal demerits and cruelty, that brought so much hatred from the Jews.  
(cf Lk 19:14).
- The Jews held *Archelaus* in special hatred and petitioned **Augustus** against him on account of his previous cruelties.  
(Josephus, Antiq. Lib. 14, c. 11).

# PARABLE OF THE GOLD COINS

- **Augustus** paid no heed to the Jewish petition, and **Archelaus** returned as ruler, to inflict punishment on those who would not have him reign over them.
- Whether our **Lord** had **Archelaus** in view, or only spoke generally, the circumstances admirably suit His point.
- And so far as his going to receive a kingdom was concerned, it was a type of our **Lord's** departure for heaven, to receive a kingdom and glory from His Father, as was his rejection in Judea, a type of the rejection of our **Lord** by His people, and their dreadful punishment, shortly afterwards, at the hands of the Romans. (**Temple destruction in 70AD**)

# PARABLE OF THE GOLD COINS

- This Temple Destruction, secondly was a figure of the punishment to be inflicted at the **last day**, when our Lord shall come in majesty to judge the world.
- The second part of the parable has reference to the depositing of a certain amount of money by the prince in the hands of his servants, for the purposes of gain (vv. 13, 15 ... 26). These are the treasures of the King shared with His subjects to grow His kingdom, which will be accounted for on the King's return.



Finally, As *Archelaus* ultimately inflicted punishment and slayed his Jewish enemies, *Our Lord* appears by allegory to do the same on the *Last Day*:

Jesus says: “Now as for those enemies of mine, who did not want me as their King, bring them here and slay them before me.” *Lk 19:27*

MacEvilly, J. (1887).  
An Exposition of the Gospel of St. Luke  
(pp. 210–211). Dublin: Gill & Son.

# DEVIATING FROM LUKE

Here St Luke proceeds to the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. We know this day as Palm Sunday (Lk 19:28)



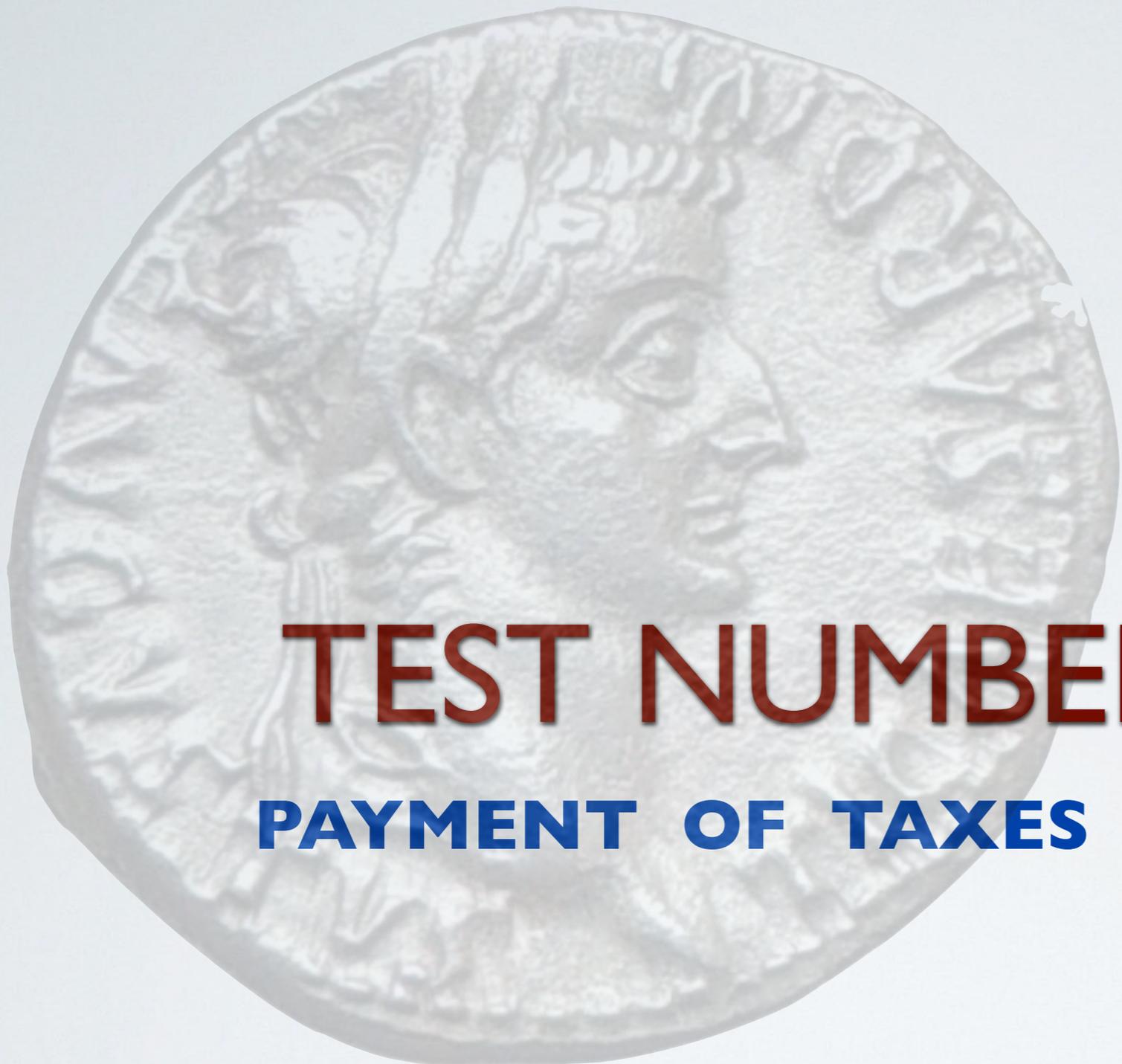
- For the sake of completeness we will cover some passages contained in the *other* Gospels that **precede** the Triumphal Entry and **follow** it.
- We switch to follow the chronology of **Matthew** and **John**.



# TWO TESTS

Jesus was tested a few times with an eye that He might be trapped and therefore turned over to the Romans.

Two stand out



# **TEST NUMBER ONE**

**PAYMENT OF TAXES TO CAESAR**

# The Zealots

**Patriots or Criminals?**

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# The Zealots

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- ❖ This group of 1st Century Jews militantly fought the Romans, *as they had understood the Maccabeans to have fought the Greek occupiers.*
- ❖ Zealots were very opposed to Roman pagan occupation, and sought expulsion of the Romans from Judea by force.

# The Zealots

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- ❖ Zealots were well armed, and it is unclear if they were truly **zealous for the rule of the law of Moses**, which had been abdicated under Roman rule -or this was a belief of convenience to garnish support for their rebel cause.
  - ❖ Zealot - In Hebrew *Kanai* or *Kane*, was the name of this sect of Judaism.

# HaMakane

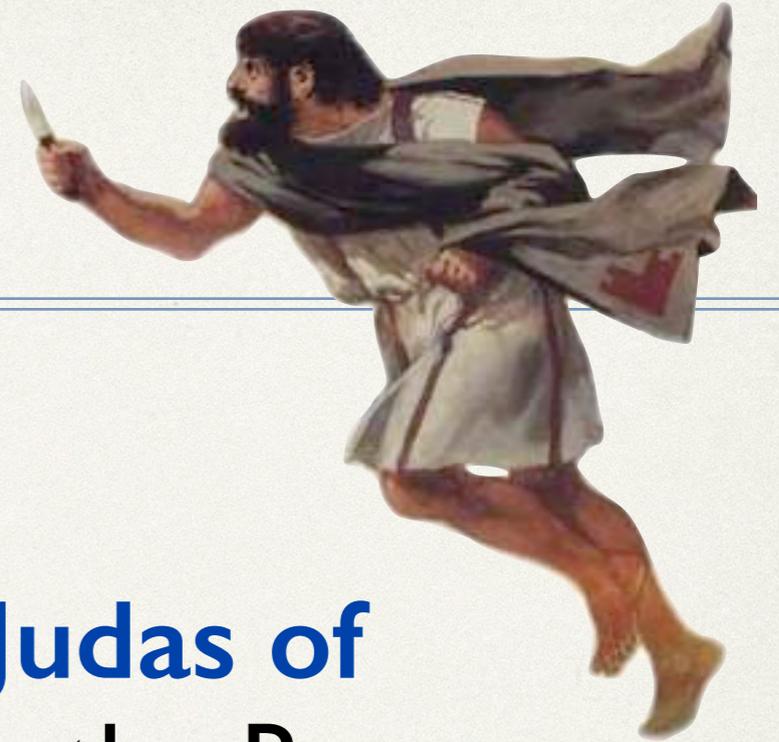
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- ❖ The Romans regarded the Zealots as terrorists.
- ❖ *Josephus* describes **Zealotry** as one of four sects of his time.
- ❖ Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and Zealots.

# HaMakane

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- ❖ **The Zealots were founded by Judas of Galilee**, as a violent resistance to the Roman tax subsequent to the **Quirinius census**, governor of Syria.
- ❖ **Judas** and **Zadok the Pharisee**, preached that God alone was the ruler of Israel and that **no taxes should be paid to Rome**.

# The Zealots - Historical Context

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- ❖ Judas of Galilee and Zadok the Pharisee started The Zealots around 6 AD, who began and continued their revolt against Rome for the next 60 years.
- ❖ Their revolt was ultimately brutally crushed by the Romans.
  - ❖ Judas was killed by the Romans.

# The Zealots - Historical Context

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- \* Judas' sons were put to death under Tiberius in 46AD,
- \* and his **grandson Menachem** committed suicide at **Masada**, before it was destroyed in 73 AD by the Romans.

# Judas, the Messianic King

## JUDAS THE GALILEAN



THE FLESH AND BLOOD JESUS  
DANIEL T. UNTERBRINK

**Judas of Galilee** had been considered a Messianic figure:

- ❖ He was **anointed King** by his followers in Galilee
- ❖ Judas came to Judea and **cleansed the Temple**. For this he was **arrested by Herod the Great**.
- ❖ **Judas was released by Herod the Great** to the Jewish crowd, in accordance with the **same custom** that led **Barabbas, another Zealot, to be released by Pilate**.

❖ **Read Acts 5:34-41\*** - There, we see how **Gamaliel I** (St Paul's Rabbi) compares the legacy of Jesus with that of Judas the Galilean.

# Jesus, HaMakane?

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- ❖ Let us **Read**  
**Mt 22:15-22\***  
(cf Mk 12:13-17).
- ❖ The Pharisees seek to **trap** Jesus by tying him to **The Zealot** movement.

# A possible tie to Jesus?

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- ✦ Jesus is from **Galilee**

- ✦ Is he possibly a **Zealot**, at least a Zealot sympathizer?

- ✦ Is Jesus an **enemy of Rome**?

- ✦ Recall those He called to be **his Apostles**, the 12 closest to His ministry ...



- ✦ ... **Anyone of them a cause for concern?**  
*(Mt 10:2-4)*



# The TRAP

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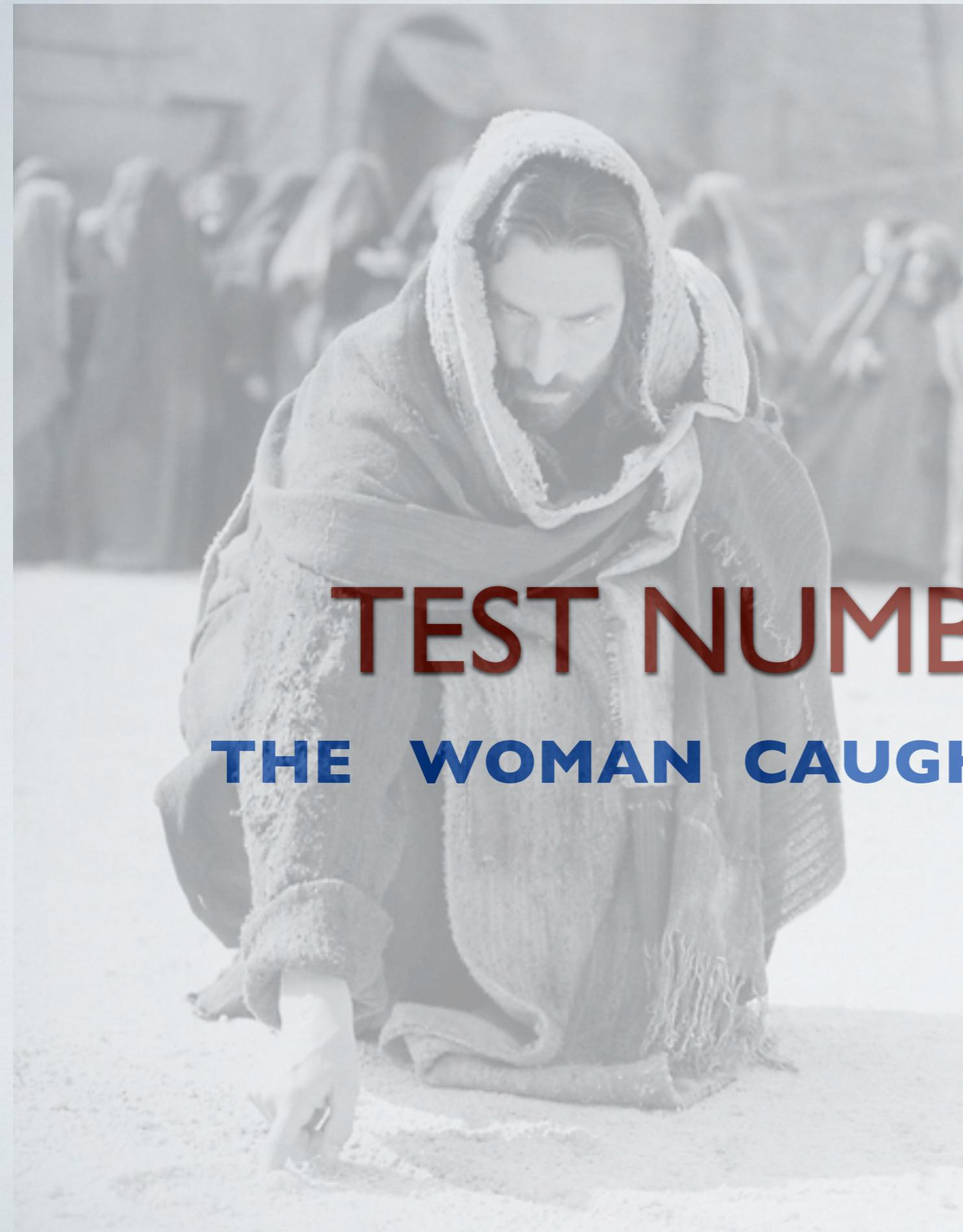
- ❖ Do we pay Taxes to Caesar?
- ❖ If yes, then Jesus is no Messiah - he is not the awaited one who would reunify Israel and quash the Roman occupiers, thus returning the law of Moses to the land. Jesus is discredited.
- ❖ If no, then Jesus is a traitor to Rome - the Romans would judge him for being an insurrectionist and give him the death penalty.

# The TRAP

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- ❖ The perfect answer!
  - ❖ What belongs to Caesar — give to Caesar
  - ❖ What belongs to God — give to God.
- ❖ The Trap fails.





# TEST NUMBER TWO

**THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY**



**John 8: 1-11**

# The Story

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- ❖ 1 [Then each went to his own house] while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.
- ❖ 2 But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and He sat down and taught them.
- ❖ 3 Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle.

# The Story

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- ❖ 5 Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?"
- ❖ 6 They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger.
- ❖ 7 But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."
- ❖ 8 Again he bent down and wrote on the ground.

# The Story

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- ❖ 9 And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him.
- ❖ 10 Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"
- ❖ 11 She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, (and) from now on do not sin any more."

# the \* on the story

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- ❖ John 8: 1-11 is not found on all of the manuscripts of the Gospel of John
- ❖ It was held by the church to be scripture as part of the **Deuterocanon of the New Testament** along with the Long Ending of Mark in Mk 16 and Lk 22:44.
- ❖ **Confirmed at Councils of Hippo and Carthage**

# the \* on the story

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- ❖ St Augustine says that many removed it because it seemed too merciful, and therefore suspect given the Hebrew tradition on adultery.
- ❖ Misinterpreted, it might lead to laxity in a very touchy area. Some scribes might therefore have removed it.
- ❖ Yet, the consensus was that John did write it, and therefore it must be included in the Gospel.

# Back to the Story

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- ❖ Some say this is Jesus' teaching against **Capital Punishment**.
  - ❖ It is nothing of the sort.
- ❖ The story is about a **TEST**. The Pharisees sought to test Jesus, to have Him killed.
- ❖ The Greek word in verse 6, *peirazo*, means to test as one who seeks to trap

What is the stated  
**purpose** of the TEST?

What is the TEST?

# the Key

John 18:31  
Trial before  
Pilate



# Key

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At this, Pilate said to them,

"Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law."

The Jews answered him,

"We do not have the right to execute anyone,"

Given the key

Here is the TEST

# The Mosaic Law

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The Mosaic Law in **Dt 22: 22-24** says:

"If a man is discovered having relations with a woman who is married to another, *both the man and the woman with whom he has had relations shall die.*

Thus shall you purge the evil from your midst."

# The Mosaic Law

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"If within the city a man comes upon a maiden who is betrothed, and has relations with her, you shall bring them **both out to the gate of the city and there stone them to death:** the *girl* because she did not cry out for help though she was in the city, and the *man* because he violated his neighbor's wife.

Thus shall you purge the evil from your midst."

Thus, the Mosaic law  
commanded stoning  
the Woman



# The Roman Law

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As stated in John 18:31:

Caesar's Law, the law of Rome - stripped the Jews of the right to provide for executions, as might otherwise be required by the Mosaic Law.

Under Roman occupation, **only Rome** could **execute** for a crime.

# The Roman Law

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To stone the woman caught in adultery, as a violation of the clear prohibition of Roman Law against executions not ordered by Rome, would label the person who instigated it an “insurrector!”

Insurrections were put down by force, and was itself a capital offense. Those who led the insurrection were normally executed.

Thus, the Roman law  
commanded not to  
stone the Woman



# The TEST

# The Test

Keep the Law of Moses?

or

Keep the Law of Caesar?

# Keep Law of Moses

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- ❖ **Stone the Adulteress**
  - ❖ Jesus will be charged with ordering an insurrection
  - ❖ Jesus would probably be executed
- ❖ **Goal Met: Charge against him - Insurrector**

# Keep Law of Caesar

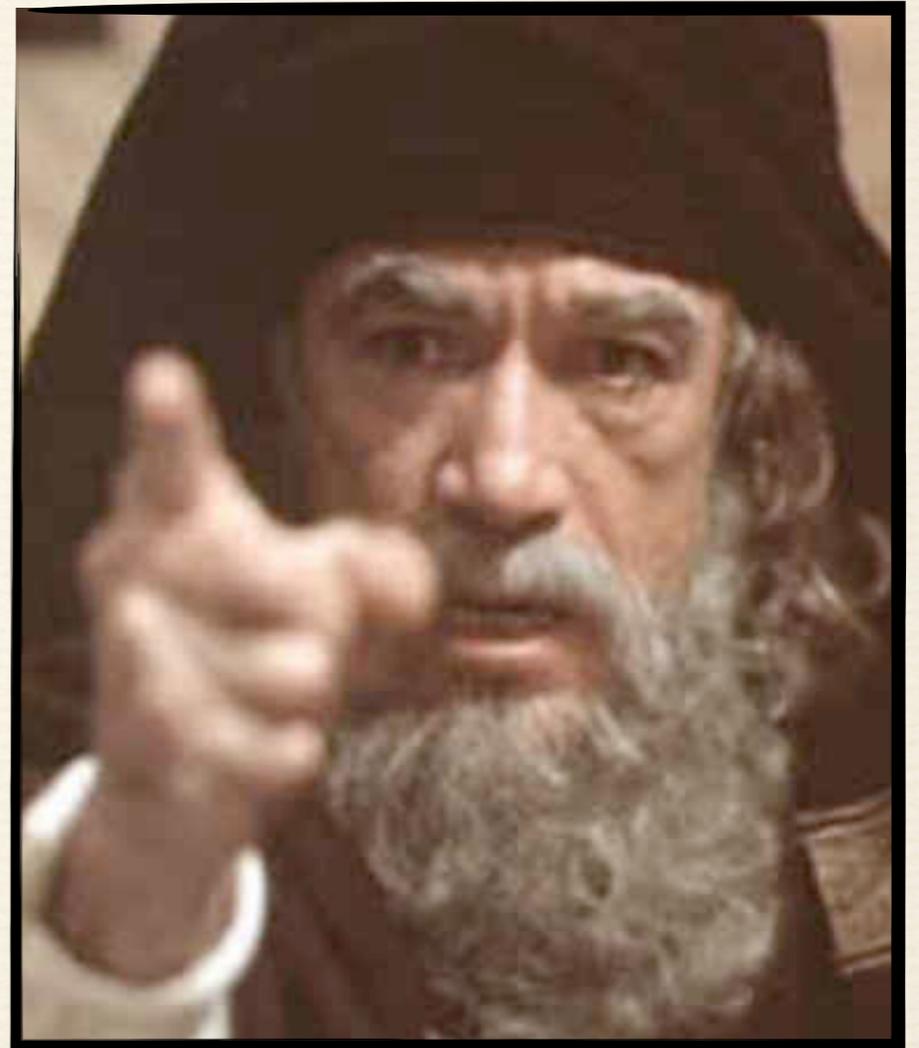
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- ❖ **Don't stone the Adulteress**
  - ❖ Jesus will be charged with being a false Messiah who doesn't keep the law of Moses.
  - ❖ Jesus would be called a hypocrite.
- ❖ **Goal Met: Charge against him - False Prophet and Apostasy. See Dt 13:1-6\***

# Keep Law of Caesar

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- ❖ “You hypocrite, ... here is your Messiah, .... relaxing or avoiding the clear prescription of the Law that God gave to Moses ...”
- ❖ ... especially in context of **John 7:14-36**



# Context of John 8

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- ❖ To understand the bitterness of the Pharisees at this point, one has to read **John 7: 14-36\***
- ❖ The key is verse 7:19, Jesus tells the Pharisees:

*“Did not Moses give you the law?  
Yet none of you keeps the law.”*

# Context of John 8

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- ❖ To a Pharisee, a proud keeper of the Law of Moses, this would be a **public slap in the face**, that would cause **great humiliation!**

# Context of John 8

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- ❖ This statement of Jesus would also feed the people's expectation that the Messiah would be a **deliverer like Moses**, who would free Israel from the bondage of Rome and restore the **Law of Moses** to the land.
  - ❖ **See Deut 18:15-19\***

**A brilliant Trap.**

**What is a Messiah  
to do?**

He begins writing ...

*What is He writing?*

# Writing

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- ❖ **Sins of the Pharisees?** - As such they leave one by one **convicted** of their sins and **remorseful**
- ❖ **Probably wrong** - Misses the Context.  
Misunderstands Pharisees.  
Key Here is think like a Pharisee.

# Writing

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- ❖ **The Pharisees are convinced they are without sin.**
- ❖ **cf John 9:35-42\*** (Are we also blind?)
- ❖ **cf also Phil 3:6** Paul writes of himself that as a Pharisee, he thought himself blameless. [*amemptos: free from all fault and defect*].

*“Let him who is  
without sin, cast the  
first stone.”*

**First Thought ...**

# We Got Him!

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- ❖ **He just authorized stoning!**
- ❖ We can kill the adulterous woman and lay the blame on Jesus
- ❖ **The Romans will then charge Jesus!**

Next Thought ....

*Wait a minute!*

# Do We Have Him?

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❖ **Did he really authorize stoning?**

❖ “Though we are without sin, it will not be credible for us to act on this ...”

❖ “The Romans will not be persuaded that Jesus intended to authorize stoning.”

# Do We Have Him?

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- ❖ **Did he really authorize stoning?**
- ❖ “The Romans will know that *Jesus is on record for saying that we are sinners!*”
- ❖ “In fact he has called us murderers, snakes, a brood of vipers, sons of Satan.”

Tables are  
now Turned

\* the Accusers Dilemma \*

# If **WE** stone Her ...

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**We will stand as  
insurrectors on our  
own.**

We will be executed

Jesus will have  
escaped the trap and  
we will have been  
caught in it ourselves!



# If WE don't stone Her ...

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We will stand as  
Hypocrites by our own  
failure.

We will have proven Jesus  
right: *We DON'T keep the  
law of Moses*, because we  
choose to save our necks  
instead!



# If WE don't stone Her ...

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We will **ADMIT** that we are **sinful!**

Jesus will have escaped the trap and we will have corroborated His prior condemnation of us.



# and ...

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**verse 9** “... in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders.”

**The elders**, being the wisest, were the first to see Jesus’ trap and having no other option dropped their stones.

Their anger no doubt grew, humiliated once again!



# Yet ...

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... *One day*,  
they would have Him  
killed, not because they  
had out smarted Jesus,  
  
but because *His Hour*  
*had Come* and thus *He*  
remained in control of  
His destiny to the end.

**John 10:18**

No one takes my  
life from me. I give  
it up of my own  
accord!

# As Jesus Himself says:

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*“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.”*

(Mt 10:16).

**This continues to apply to us, today!**



# THE GOSPELS

A Scholarly Biblical Study

