



*Sanctuary Shekel*

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Welcome to Jesus Time where we spend time with Jesus in His time and culture.

At the conclusion of His spring Gentile Ministry Jesus returns after having been located and unsuccessfully confronted by the Jewish Scribes near Caesarea Philippi.

Our point being from this point forward it becomes very noticeable not only because of the crowds that surround Jesus, but by the legal authorities ever present that Christ our Lord never stays too long in one place from this time forward.

This is the second time Jesus informs He must die.

✝ They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, <sup>31</sup> because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.” <sup>32</sup> But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

Mark 9:30-32 NIV

As Jesus traveled with His Disciples, He began to teach them the meaning and purpose of His life, of Him being born as The Messiah Christ.

Notice now subtly per topic Christ our Lord begins to inform His believers of future events. First by What? Must be- meaning is needed & going to happen to Him.

Jesus taught His Apostles & Disciples of His imminent betrayal & death.

Of course, His believers were uncomprehending and quite sorrowful to hear, receive, and believe this message. As in How? could Jesus allow this awful thing. GOD forbid! Was Peter's reaction.

After all is not Jesus THE Christ and would it not be nothing short of a total failure if Jesus died?

The Disciples wanted Jesus to cleanse this world of evil & Sin immediately right now!

Everyone wanted Messiah's promise of “Thy Kingdom Come” to commence.

Never realizing that His death and resurrection did signify that His payment for our Sin being total & acceptable unto His Father GOD is a prerequisite a requirement for our Justification of Salvation.

People still to this day do not understand that a ‘Way’ His Way had to first be provided for any believing yet sinful people to be able to ever enter into the Kingdom of GOD.

This must be before Jesus institutes The Kingdom or else no one but Him would will be able to get in.

✝ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Continuing

John 14:6 KJV

✝ When they came to Caper'na-um, the collectors of the half-shekel tax went up to Peter and said, “Does not your teacher pay the tax?”

Matthew 17:24 RSV

(Half Shekel was about 1-2 days full wages for the average worker)

Obviously, the Tax collector who had replaced Levi now Matthew in Capernaum had recognized the well-known successful business man Peter & with his return he was immediately confronted about his and Jesus's for that matter now past due Sanctuary tax that all adult Jewish males were required to pay starting at the age of 20 years old once a year. Exodus 30 establishes the Tabernacle/Sanctuary tax for adult males and Peter had been with Jesus out of country when this specific tax had come due.

This was not the Roman census tax but yet another Jewish tax this one actually was Biblical used for the supporting of the Temple sacrificial flocks that were maintained outside of Jerusalem near Bethlehem.

You know; the Shepherds who were told to visit the baby Jesus born in a stable laying in a manger.

Get that? The very same shepherds who tended the Temple sacrificial animals were the first ones to see for themselves being the human witnesses of the birth of the promised ultimate sacrificial Christ.

Additionally, those adult Jewish males who lived remotely such as in Babylon or Media they were permitted to bring their Half Shekel Sanctuary Tax along with their all of their other taxes and tributes no later than the Feast of Tabernacles. (Sukkot) The final of 3 yearly required Jerusalem Temple Pilgrimages. However, of age Jewish males living within Israel proper were given to the 25<sup>th</sup> of Adar (Mid March) to pay the Exodus Sanctuary Tax or their goods could be confiscated as payment.

Possessions not property. Property- even including one's freedom as in being sold into slavery was then permissible for not paying the much larger full Temple Tax. (Passover/Easter for us)

Again, the Temple at Tax time was a busy noisy place bustling with constant crowds and the sound of music. Trumpets would blare for all to hear when someone's tax was paid in full.

Continuing

✚ And when he (Peter) came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?" <sup>26</sup>And when he said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. Matthew 17: 25b-26 ESV

Before Peter even has a chance to inform Jesus about their taxes Christ our Lord was already within the house and speaks to Peter as he arrives inside already knowing as Jesus questions Peter "who do the Kings of this world tax their sons or the sons of others?"

Of course , Peter responds not the Kings sons but the sons of others. ( this said tax was on adult males)

Meaning:

As The Son of GOD whose Father owns the Temple, Jesus and whom He declares owes no Tax!

So, Jesus makes it plain as The Christ He does not owe this Tax nor those He chooses to exempt.

Conclusion

✚ However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a stater. Take that and give it to them for you and Me." Matthew 17:27 NASB

Ok, first things first; a "stater" is a silver four-drachma Greek coin.

Calling said coin a stater is like calling a dollar bill a buck or a quarter 2 bits.

Yes, catching a fish with the proper coin was indeed a miracle provided by GOD because someone dropped the proper coin and then the Lord had a fish pick it up and literally await for Peter to catch it at a specific place and time. Who but GOD could do this?

But yet there is still more to this story a literal fulfillment of a common ancient Jewish fable.

It was custom in Jesus Time to splurge on the Sabbath for a luxurious family dinner.

Even as far as spending in installments through the week to finance a weekly Sabbath feast.

For the record this Sabbath day feast was not only a tradition but a Pharisaical requirement.

The story goes as such a man borrowed heavily to feed his family on the Sabbath only to find when he opened his fish to eat that he found a precious gemstone richly rewarding him for obedience.

Jesus literally just fulfilled this Jewish legend with and by a fish providing riches to pay His and Peter's Exodus Tax thusly proving their service to GOD'S Temple as obedient & true.