

What's the Real Issue

Mark Chapter 12

Mar 12:1 1) The Vineyard vs 1-12

And He began to speak to them in parables: "A man PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT, AND DUG A VAT UNDER THE WINE PRESS AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey.

- *Isaiah 5:1-7* Isaiah portrays the vineyard as the Lord. He has done everything and more to cultivate fruit from the vineyard. The Lord expected good grapes, but it produced bad ones. The Lord then promises to no longer tend it and to lay it waste
- *Psalms 80:8* The psalmist tells us that the Lord planted a vineyard and did much to provide so the vine produces. But the hedge was broke down and wild animals were destroying the vineyard. It is a cry for help from being laid waste.
- *Mark 12* This parable again describes a landowner who plants a vineyard and does all to provide so fruit is expected. But this Landowner rents it out to vine-growers to manage while he is away.
- From all these passages we know that the Landowner is God and the vineyard is Israel and the vine-growers are priests, leaders of Israel. God expected fruit from Israel.
- *Planted a vineyard, (God - landowner, has done it all)*
 - Put a wall around it - to keep it holy separate;
 - Dug a vat - with expectation for fruit and wine;
 - Built a tower - to keep watch for enemy or animals that would destroy;
 - Wealthy Landowners would hire husbandmen or vine-growers to manage the vineyard (common practice)

Mar 12:2 "At the {harvest} time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive {some} of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers.

Mar 12:3 "They took him, and beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

Mar 12:4 "Again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully.

Mar 12:5 "And he sent another, and that one they killed; and {so with} many others, beating some and killing others.

- *Matt 23:37* "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not!"
- *Hebrews 11:37* "They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated ((men) of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect."
- The Landowner only wanted fruit from His investment. And those He graced with the oversight of the vineyard refused, rejected, beat, injured and killed the Landowners messengers.
- *Why? What Reason or Reasoning?*
 - Thought to Highly of themselves
 - Thought to Lowly of the Landowner
 - Possessiveness
 - Had no sense of consequences for their cruel actions

Mar 12:6 "He had one more {to send,} a beloved son; he sent him last {of all} to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

Mar 12:7 "But those vine-growers said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!'

Mar 12:8 "They took him, and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard.

- *This is the ultimate act of God to reach those vine-growers who have, by their reasoning thought more highly than they ought and sought to fulfill their will not God's*
- *Romans 12:3 "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think [of himself] more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. "*
- *The amazing part is that these vine growers think that after murdering the son they will inherit the land.*
- *Some in the church reason that they have a share in the inheritance and we have not cooperated with the son, but because of their religious commitments of church attendance and doing good things they will inherit eternal life.*

Mar 12:9 "What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others.

- *This was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost - Birthday of the church*
- *As we see in the next verse that this is the Lord's doing and It is Marvelous in our eyes.*

Mar 12:10 "Have you not even read this Scripture: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER {stone;}'

Mar 12:11 THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'?"

- *Quoted from Psalm 118:22-23 - a day or so earlier the people shouted from the same Psalm "HOSANNA" "SAVE I PRAY" Now the Lord quoting from the same Psalm put it in context.*
- *Chief cornerstone = This is the first stone that is perfect that all other stones, all other building is measured and fitted to this one stone.*
- *Job 38:1-6 "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who [is] this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Now gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;"*
- *Isaiah 28:16 "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone], a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."*
- *Acts 4:10-12 "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, [even] by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."*
- *1Cor 3:11 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."*
- *Eph 2:19-22 "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner [stone]; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. "*
- *Practical Application - Jesus is our cornerstone. We are measured to Him. We are not measured against other people. Not against our spouse, friends or people whose walk is words than ours. We cannot say "I'm not as bad as..." Jesus is the cornerstone. He is the standard and He will never be lowered or lessened. He is a high standard.*

Mar 12:12 And they were seeking to seize Him, and {yet} they feared the people, for they understood that He spoke the parable against them. And {so} they left Him and went away.

Mar 12:13 **2) The Pharisees** vs 13-17

TAXES - REAL QUESTION IS WHO DO WE WORSHIP?

Then they *sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Him in order to trap Him in a statement.

- *Pharisees & Herodians were normally antagonistic to each other. Yet here they have a common enemy.*
- *But they were wanting to see where Jesus stood on an argument between the two groups. Jesus' answer will divide His followers.*
- *If He says "Don't Pay Taxes" The people will still hold Him as a rabbi but the Herodians could turn Him over to the Roman authorities for subversion.*
- *If He says, "Pay Taxes" He will be against Him .*

Mar 12:14 They *came and *said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?"

Mar 12:15 "Shall we pay or shall we not pay?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius to look at."

- *Jesus knows the trap. He perceives this because He can see the heart of man. But He leaves us with a tool that we can possibly use. Notice the flattery from those who have recently been against him. Flattery is a set up. There is a snare behind flattery.*
- *Jesus didn't have a denarius The Roman coinage had an image and an inscription on it that made the coinage idolatrous to the Pharisees.*

Mar 12:16 They brought {one.} And He *said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" And they said to Him, "Caesar's."

Mar 12:17 And Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were amazed at Him.

- *Romans 13 "Submit to the authorities"*
- *1 Timothy 2 "Pray for the authorities"*
- *The Question was to pay (give) OR not to pay (give). Jesus answered Render (give back) to Caesar AND Render (give back) to God. Jesus is implying that you owe both Caesar and God.*
- *Some preacher once preached What is stamped on the coin? Caesar that give it back to him. That the second question was What is stamped on your heart? God than give that back to God.*

- *THE PHARISEE IS THE ONE WHO JUDGES OTHER PEOPLES WALKS WITH THE LORD AND YET THEY THEMSELVES DO NOT REALIZE THEIR OWN DEPRAVITY.*

Mar 12:18 **3) The Sadducees** vs 18-27

MARRIAGE IN HEAVEN - REAL QUESTION IS

WHAT IS THE REAL QUESTION?

{Some} Sadducees (who say that there is no resurrection) *came to Jesus, and {began} questioning Him, saying,

- *This is the only time the Sadducees come to Jesus in the gospel of Mark*
- *The Sadducees believe in the Torah (1st 5 books written by Moses) but they do not believe in the resurrection, angels, after life. They were more carnal and hedonistic*
- *If there is an after life and you stand before God and your life is judged and you stand accountable for your life you will be more likely to live soberly.*
 - *1 John 3:3 "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. "*
 - *Romans 14:12 "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. "*
- *The Sadducees put forth an argument concerning the resurrection (of which they do not believe). The argument is a foolish argument and is given in a sarcastic manner. They genuinely do not want an answer. The argument is give to trap Jesus or make Him to look foolish.*

Mar 12:19 "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that IF A MAN'S BROTHER DIES and leaves behind a wife AND LEAVES NO CHILD, HIS BROTHER SHOULD MARRY THE WIFE AND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO HIS BROTHER.

Mar 12:20 "There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife, and died leaving no children.

Mar 12:21 "The second one married her, and died leaving behind no children; and the third likewise;

Mar 12:22 and {so} all seven left no children. Last of all the woman died also.

Mar 12:23 "In the resurrection, when they rise again, which one's wife will she be? For all seven had married her."

- *This discussion comes from the Law of the Levirate. (Deut 25:5-8) If your brother died w/o children, it was the obligation of the next brother to fulfill the duties of a husband. He would not only take the wife but all of his brother's property so he had the resources to care for her.*
- *This law is seen in the account of Judah and Tamar (Gen 38) God's purpose in this was to preserve the righteous line through Judah.*
- *Critics ask questions such as these.*
- *2 Timothy 2:23 "Avoid foolish and unlearned questions." Does Adam & Eve have a navel?*
- *Titus 3:9 "Avoid foolish questions" Who Created God?*
 - *Foolish questions create Strife*
 - *Foolish questions are designed to cast doubt*
 - *Foolish questions are to lead people away from the gospel*

Mar 12:24 Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?"

- *Jesus says they are wrong for 2 reasons*
 - *They do not understand the scriptures*
 - *They do not know the power of God*

Mar 12:25 "For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

1ST THE POWER OF GOD

- *Jesus affirms a resurrection. He says "WHEN" they rise. Not "if" they rise.*
- *Resurrection is not just a change of address but a transformation. It is not just another earthly existence in a different location.*
- *Marriage of resurrected beings is not necessary. 1) Propagation not necessary 2) Bride of Christ*
- *"LIKE THE ANGELS"*
 - *Fixed number*
 - *Not necessarily sexless (but in the Bible they are all males)*
 - *De-emphasis concerning sex in heaven*
- *Resurrection body different in substance and purpose.*
- *Jesus gives these proponents of "no resurrection" issues to really debate.*

Mar 12:26 "But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the {passage} about {the burning} bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, and the God of Jacob'?"

2ND THE SCRIPTURES

- Jesus takes them to the Scriptures to show these the final authority on what they should believe concerning the resurrection.
- "I AM"
 - God spoke present tense, yet Abraham, Isaac & Jacob had long passed from this earth.
 - God spoke in present tense, not past tense (was) so currently He is their God
 - Abraham, Isaac & Jacob must still be around. Not on this earth. Resurrected
- Side Notes: Here Jesus acknowledges that Exodus was written by Moses. And secondly, Jesus show us the power of one Word "Am" Every word is important and has depth and consequences to our life.

Mar 12:27 "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken."

- God is not dead, God is not the God of the dead but God is alive
- He is the Living God of the Living.
- Through His is Eternal Life

- THE SADDUCEE IS THE ONE WHO DISCUSSES SCRIPTURE AND BIBLICAL THINGS BUT NEVER ALLOWS THOSE THINGS TO SHAPE HIS LIVE. THE DISCUSSION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE TRUTH.

Mar 12:28 4) The Scribe vs 28-40

GREATEST COMMANDMENT - REAL QUESTION IS IS IT RELIGION OR RELATIONSHIP?

One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?"

- While the Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus and the Sadducees were engaged in foolish arguments to make Jesus a fool, the Scribes observed and sensed Jesus handles these two with correct insight
- The Scribes, while at times receive rebuke from the Lord also seem to come to Him more sincere than the others. Their position over the people, make them accountable thus they do receive a stricter judgment. (James 3:1)
- So they ask Jesus what is the greatest commandment? Moral Law or Ceremonial Law?

Mar 12:29 Jesus answered, "The **foremost** is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD;'
Jehovah Shema Israel Jehovah Elohiym Echad

Mar 12:30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'

- Jesus answers them with the Shema. This is the Pledge of Allegiance to One God.
- Echad - "One" but plural Compound plural (Husband & Wife)
- Elohiym - plural The Trinity is in the Shema

THE SHEMA

- Spoken 2x a day Evening and Morning (Deut 6:7)
- Here in Mark this is a shortened Shema
- The full Shema is 3 parts:
 - Deut 6:4-9 Loving God, Learning Torah and passing on to children the traditions
 - Deut 11:13-21 Positive & negative consequences in following mitzvot
 - Numbers 15:37-41 The Exodus from Egypt and the wearing of Tzitzit (613 commandments)
- "God Is One" - There is no confusion. One authority, One sovereignty.
- "Love God with All your Heart" - all your desires, hopes and dreams.
- "Love God with All your Soul" - all your life (who your are as well as your life or death).
- "Love God with All your Mind & Strength" - all your resources abilities and talents.

- Mar 12:31 "The **second** is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."
- *Jesus Tells us that these are the two greatest commandments.*
 - *How can we Love God or Love our Neighbor?*
 - *1 John 4:19 "We love him, because he first loved us."*
 - *"Your love for him will be in direct proportion to your recognition of His love for you." (Focht)*
 - *How simple is this principal. But hard because we love ourselves more than we love other people.*
 - *Two tables of the Law. 1st is our relationship w/ God the 2nd is our relationship with other people.*
- Mar 12:32 The scribe said to Him, "Right, Teacher; You have truly stated that HE IS ONE, AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM;
- Mar 12:33 AND TO LOVE HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH, AND TO LOVE ONE'S NEIGHBOR AS HIMSELF, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."
- *This scribe is seeing what this is all about. The sacrifices and offerings are silly and worthless if you do not Love the Lord. Thus Loving the Lord is greater than burnt offerings and sacrifices.*
- Mar 12:34 When Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that, no one would venture to ask Him any more questions.
- *Acts 6:7 tells us that many priests accepted the Lord.*
- Mar 12:35 And Jesus {began} to say, as He taught in the temple, "How {is it that} the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David?
- Mar 12:36 "David himself said in the Holy Spirit, "THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES BENEATH YOUR FEET."
- *Jesus is quoting Psalm 110:1 The Jews knew that this psalm was a Messianic Psalm.*
- Mar 12:37 "David himself calls Him 'Lord'; so in what sense is He his son?" And the large crowd enjoyed listening to Him.
- *Culturally speaking (in this Patriarchal system) a Jew would never call his son LORD. Yet in this psalm David calls the Messiah Lord, yet he was to be from David Line (a son)*
- Mar 12:38 In His teaching He was saying: "Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and {like} respectful greetings in the market places,
- Mar 12:39 and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets,
- Mar 12:40 who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers; these will receive greater condemnation."
- *Jesus just finished speaking with a scribe. It seemed to go well yet we see He speaks out about scribes.*
 - *Scribes were those who studied the scriptures and copied the scriptures and knew the scriptures. They were very respected peoples. They were also the lawyers of that day who dealt with wills or property. After a man died his property was handled so debts were paid and the widow was cared for. Yet they would extract a portion for themselves.*
 - *THE SCRIBES WERE THOSE WHO KNEW THE SCRIPTURE AND POSSIBLY KNEW THE TRUTH YET DO NOT TOTALLY GIVE THEIR HEART TO THE LORD.*

Mar 12:41 **5) The Poor Widow** vs 41-44

A PENNY - IS THE REAL ANSWER TO EVERYONE

And He sat down opposite the treasury, and {began} observing **how** the people were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums.

- *Jesus is watching **how** they give ...Not **what** they give*
- *2 Cor 9:7 "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give]; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for **God loveth a cheerful giver**"*
- *Matt 6:4 "That thine alms may **be in secret**: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."*

Mar 12:42 A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent.

Mar 12:43 Calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury;

- *The heart value is more than the face value.*

Mar 12:44 for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on."

- *The Pharisee would look to see whose inscription was on the penny to make sure it wasn't idolatrous.*
- *The Sadducee would look to see who the widow would marry next ...but really not care.*
- *The Scribe would look to make sure the amount measured up to scriptural requirement.*
- *Jesus would look and never see the penny but see a heart totally surrendered and honor her.*

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