

COMMENTARY

GOSPEL OF MARK

Chapter 12

vs. 1-12:

Jesus now begins to devote Himself to teaching the people, that which they will need to know and also handles those who are opposing Him.

Jesus tells the story of a landowner who plants a vineyard and prepares it for the making of wine. He then contracts the work out to some farmers and goes away on a journey. At harvest time he sends a servant to collect his portion. The tenants beat the servant and send him away empty-handed. Over and over this happened with each servant that was sent. Finally, the landowner sent his son, feeling that the tenants would not dare to hurt him. The tenants however, kill the son in anticipation that they would then gain possession of the land.

Jesus asks the people what will happen to such tenants. The obvious answer is that the landowner will come and kill the tenants (an eye for an eye was the law at that time) and give it to others.

Jesus then warn them that the one rejected by men will become the most important. The religious leaders then realized that Jesus was condemning them. The parable represents God (the landowner) giving a task to His people (the Jews; religious leaders especially) who mistreat God's servants (the prophets) and finally kill the Son (Jesus). God will thus destroy them and give the Kingdom to others (Gentiles and those obedient) who will obey.

vs. 13-17:

The religious leaders then tried to find ways to discredit Jesus. They sent some Pharisees (upholders of the Law of Moses) and some Herodians (supported the enemy rule of the Romans; much to the disgust of many of the Jews) to test Jesus. Flattering Him, they then ask Him to decide whether or not it was right to pay taxes (if yes, the people would begin to reject Jesus; if no, the Roman government would take care of Him).

Jesus knew their intentions and confronted them with it. He then had them present a coin and explained that the people are to give to Caesar what is his, and to give to God what is rightfully His.

vs. 18-27:

The Sadducees (who do not believe in resurrection or angels) presented Jesus with a "problem" case. According to Jewish law, if a man died, leaving a wife and no children, then his brother is to marry her and raise up a child for the deceased. In this situation, a man had died along with his six brothers, who had married the same woman, but none of them had any children. The Sadducees questioned as to who she would be married to, if there was a resurrection.

Jesus replied that the bonds of matrimony will no longer bind when we are raised from the dead. He also corrected their thinking about the resurrection by reminding them that God always said that "I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob". If He still is, then they must be alive; for God is not a God of the dead!

vs. 28-34:

Another teacher of the law came and asked Jesus which was the

greatest commandment. Much discussion had been made of this in the religious circles for years, and there was much disputing.

Jesus replied that the most important is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength (in so doing you would keep all of His other laws) and the second greatest was to love your neighbor as yourself (this would assure that you treated your fellow-man fairly and lovingly). The teacher agreed with Jesus, going on to state that such obedience to these commands is more important than the burnt offerings and sacrifices.

Jesus commended the teacher and stated that this man was not far from the Kingdom of God and what it was all about (personal loving and obedient relationship with God).

vs. 35-40:

After being "grilled" by the religious leaders, Jesus now puts them on the spot with a question of His own. He inquires how the promised Messiah could be a descendant of David speaks of the Messiah as being greater than he. They could not reply but were perplexed. [David can call the Messiah, Lord; for even though the Messiah is a partial descendant, Jesus was the SON OF GOD and was worthy of that respect and honor!]

Jesus then warned the people against the hypocrisy of the teachers of the law. Even though they knew what God wanted, they were more concerned with prestige, wealth and power.

Jesus then watched as people put in their offerings. Even though some people gave great amounts, the one that He commended was a widow who put in a very small amount. Jesus stated that she had given more than all the others (this confused the people). Jesus then explained that she gave a greater percentage (100%) of her living income than the rest who gave out of their excess.

COMMENTARY

GOSPEL OF MARK
Chapter 13

vs. 1-31:

[There is controversy over the following refers strictly to events in New Testament times or to the Second Coming of Christ.

The emphasis in this next section is on the sufferings and persecution Jesus' followers would face and not on the exact time of when these things would take place!]

One of Jesus' disciples was impressed with the magnificence of the temple that men had built. Jesus shows them the folly of such awe by informing them that the time is coming when the entire building will be destroyed.

Outside of Jerusalem (on the Mount of Olives) Peter, James, John and Andrew asked Jesus when this destruction would take place and for a sign that they are about to take place. Jesus warns them not to be deceived by false "returns of Christ". They need to be ready for wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes and famines will take place (we find that these things will definitely take place before Christ's return--Revelation).

Jesus warns the disciples that they will be persecuted and that the gospel will be preached to all nations. When they are taken to trial, the Holy Spirit would speak for them, and that they have no need to worry about their defense.

Jesus also states that Christians will be betrayed, even by those closest to them.

In the last days, the only places that will be safe will be away from civilization. Persecution and sinfulness will increase and there will be great tribulation. God is still in control (even though it might not appear to be so) and will shorten those days and send Christ to return in the clouds with power and glory and angels will gather the elect from the ends of the earth.

Christians are to be on guard, however. Jesus warns that false Christ's and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive even the most faithful.

Jesus then states that by these signs they will know that Christ's return could come at any moment (throughout history people have seen evidence of these signs; therefore, every generation lives with the expectancy of Christ's return at any moment!). Jesus assures that this race (this is an accurate translation) of the Jews would not be destroyed before these things came to pass. He then assures them that these things will most certainly take place!

vs. 32-36:

Jesus emphasizes that NOBODY knows the time of His return and that we should therefore, always be ready for His return.

STUDY GUIDE

Mark 12:

1. How were the servants of the vineyard owner treated by the tenants?
2. What did the tenants do with the son?
3. What will the owner of the vineyard do to the tenants?
4. What question did the Pharisees and Herodians ask Jesus?
5. What was Jesus' reply?
6. What question did the Sadducees ask Jesus?
7. What did Jesus say about marriage and the resurrection?
8. Who is God the God of? (See vs. 27)
9. What did Jesus say the greatest commandment was?
10. What did the man say was more important than burnt offerings and sacrifices?
11. Why did Jesus warn the people about the teachers of the Law?
12. Why did Jesus say the poor widow gave more than the rest?

BONUS:

1. How do Christians fall into the same trap as the tenants of the vineyard?
2. How do Christians fall in to the same trap as the teachers of the Law? (See vs. 38-40)
3. What can Christians learn about giving from the widow?

STUDY GUIDE

Mark 13:

1. What did Jesus say about the magnificent buildings of Jerusalem?
2. What did Peter, James, John and Andrew want to know?
3. What did Jesus say would happen to them? (See vs. 9)
4. Why were they not to worry about what to say?
5. Who will be saved?
6. What will those days be?
7. Why will God shorten those days?
8. How will false Christs and false prophets try and deceive the elect?
9. How will the Son of Man come?
10. What will not pass away before these things happen?
11. Who knows the day or hour of Christ's return?
12. What are His disciples to do? (Vs. 35)

BONUS:

1. What indications are there that Jesus could come back today?
2. Of what significance is verse 13?
3. Did Jesus fully answer His disciples questions? Explain.