

A Study of Mark 12

I. Outline. From Headings in NJKV

1. Parable of the Vineyard Owner or Wicked Husbandmen (Mark 12.1-12; cf., Matthew 21.33-46; Luke 20.9-19).
2. Question of Taxes (Mark 12.13-17; cf., Matthew 22.15-22; Luke 20.20-26).
3. Question of the Resurrection (Mark 12.18-27; cf., Matthew 22.23-33; Luke 20.27-40).
4. Question of the Greatest Commandment (Mark 12.28-34; cf., Matthew 22.34-40).
5. Jesus Questions the Leaders (Mark 12.35-37; cf., Matthew 22.41-45; Luke 20.41-44).
6. Jesus Condemns the Leaders (Mark 12.38-44; cf., Matthew 23.1-14; Luke 20.45—21.4).

II. Summary.

The PARABLE of the Vineyard Owner (Tenants) comes on Tuesday of Jesus' crucifixion week. He very clearly teaches the Jewish leaders that their rejection of God and His will is to lead to their eventual destruction. According to verse 12, they did not miss the message. Had they not feared the people, they would have taken Him at that very point. The questions that come at Jesus from those leaders are not designed to provide them learning, but rather it is an attempt to get Jesus to say something that might be used against Him. Of course, Jesus was far too brilliant to be entrapped by those foolish enough to try such a thing. Jesus had a question of His own for these leaders. He wanted them to explain the relationship between the Christ and David. Jesus openly warned the people to beware of the leaders because of their inconsistency and their dishonesty and hypocrisy.

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Christ.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

IV. Words/Phrases to Study

- 12.1... **BEGAN TO SPEAK TO THEM BY PARABLES**—"We said that a parable must never be treated as an allegory, and that a meaning must not be sought for every detail. Originally Jesus' parables were not meant to be read but to be spoken and their meaning was that which flashed out when first they were heard. But to some extent this parable is an exception. It is a kind of hybrid, a cross between an allegory and a parable. Not all the details have an inner meaning, but more than usual have. And this is because Jesus was talking in pictures which were part and parcel of Jewish thought and imagery" [William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible*, an e-Sword Module].
- 12.1... **WINEFAT**—"hupolēnion; gen. hupolēniou, neut. noun from hupó (G5259), and lēnós (G3025), a vat. The lower section of a winepress into which the juice of the grapes flowed (Mark 12:1; Septuagint: Isaiah 16:10; Joel 3:13; Haggai 2:16)" [*The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, an e-Sword Module].
- 12.1... **TOWER**—"a place where watchmen could be stationed to protect the vineyard from thieves as the grapes ripened for the vintage" [J.W. McGarvey, *Fourfold Gospel*, an e-Sword Module].
- 12.1... **LET IT OUT TO HUSBANDMEN**—"Representing the rulers of the Jews (Matthew 21:45); but the people as a whole, a nation or a church, are included (Matthew 21:43). It is customary in the East, for the owner to let out his estate to husbandmen; i.e., to tenants, who pay him an annual rent, either in money or, as apparently in this case, in kind. Went into a far country. "For a long while" (for time), adds Luke. At Sinai, the Lord may be said to have openly manifested himself to Israel, but then to have withdrawn himself again for a while, not speaking to the people again face to face (Deuteronomy 34:10-12), but waiting in patience to see what the law would effect, and what

manner of works the people, under the teaching of their spiritual guides, would bring forth” [B.W. Johnson and Don DeWelt, *Bible Study Textbook: The Gospel of Mark*, an e-Sword Module].

- 12.6... **HAVING YET THEREFORE ONE SON, HIS WELLBELOVED**—“Finally, the vineyard owner sent His son. The son was the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a prophet like Moses. (Deuteronomy 18:15) They said of the Son, ‘Let’s kill him! That way we can have it all for ourselves.’ (Mark 12:7) They knew He was the Son but they wanted to kill him anyway! Christ became the rejected Stone. (Psalm 118:22). The question was asked, ‘Now what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants, and give the vineyard to others.’ (Mark 12:9) They had rejected the Son and the result would be judgment and destruction” [Charles Box, WalnutStreetChurchofChrist.org, an e-Sword Module].
- 12.9... **HE WILL COME AND DESTROY THE HUSBANDMEN, AND WILL GIVE THE VINEYARD UNTO OTHERS**—“Mark represents Jesus as answering His own question, ‘What shall the Lord of the vineyard do?’ But Matthew (Matthew 21.41) represents the chief priests and scribes as giving the answer. Doubtless the latter is the more exact representation, and Mark reports it as the answer of Jesus, because it was the answer that He wanted, and because when it was given, He approved it” [J.W. McGarvey, *The New Testament Commentary: Vol. I—Matthew and Mark*, Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publishing Company, 1875, p., 340].
- 12.10... **THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED IS BECOME THE HEAD OF THE CORNER**—“By a singular irregularity of arrangement Jesus here interrupts the progress of the parable to introduce the figure of the rejected corner-stone; then, in the next verse, He makes the application of the parable; and finally, at verse 44, He returns to the figure of the stone. In the figure of the rejected corner-stone, the chief priests and Pharisees are represented as trying to build the walls of a house, but being unable to fit the stones at the corner because they rejected the only stone that was cut for that place. They were guilty of this folly in rejecting Jesus while trying to construct a conception of the kingdom of God” [J.W. McGarvey, NTC, p. 185].
- 12.11... **AND IT IS MARVELLOUS IN OUR EYES?**—“This was from the Lord and it is marvellous in our eyes.’ It will all be God’s doing, a marvellous revelation of how He goes about His purposes, and something to be wondered at. The cognate verb of ‘marvellous’ occurs regularly in Mark as referring to Jesus (see Mark 5:20; 6:51; 12:17; 15:5; 15:44). The whole work of Jesus was seen as marvellous from start to finish” [Peter Pett, *Commentary Series on the Bible*, 2013, an e-Sword Module].
- 12.15... **PENNY**—“dēnárion; gen. dēnáríou, a neut. noun formed from the Latin denarius, which denotes the Roman penny. It was a silver coin equivalent in value to the Greek drachma. Denarius, or the dēnárion rendered as "penny," is the most frequently mentioned coin in the gospels (Matthew 18:28; Matthew 20:2, Matthew 20:9-10, Matthew 20:13; Matthew 22:19; Mark 6:37; Mark 12:15; Mark 14:5; Luke 7:41; Luke 10:35; Luke 20:24; John 6:7; John 12:5; Revelation 6:6). It was the most important Roman coin which circulated throughout the empire and with which all public accounts were tallied. In Mark 14:5; John 12:5 the ointment with which Mary anointed our Lord is valued at three hundred denarii, which sum probably represents at least the annual income of a laborer of those days. This appears from the parable of the laborers in the vineyard in Matthew 20:1-15 where a denarius is evidently considered liberal pay for a day's work of twelve hours beginning at 6 a.m. and ending at 6 p.m. In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37), two denarii are given to the innkeeper as a reasonable payment in advance for the upkeep of the wounded traveler for a day or two, to be supplemented, if necessary, on the return of the Samaritan. Of special interest is the reference to the denarius in Matthew 22:19; Mark 12:15; Luke 20:24 in connection with the Pharisees' question as to the lawfulness of paying tribute to Caesar. The denarius was the money of the tribute or tax (Matthew 22:19). It bore upon it the name and title of the reigning emperor, along with the effigy either of himself or of some member of the imperial family, i.e., the ‘image and superscription’ to which our Lord alluded. It was issued by imperial authority, the Roman Senate only having the right to

mint copper coins. Thus the dēnárion could appropriately be spoken of as ‘that which is Caesar’s’” [Kenneth S. Wuest, *Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, 1942-1945*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., An e-Sword Module].

- 12.19... **MOSES WROTE UNTO US, IF A MAN’S BROTHER DIE, AND LEAVE HIS WIFE BEHIND HIM, AND LEAVE NO CHILDREN, THAT HIS BROTHER SHOULD TAKE HIS WIFE, AND RAISE UP SEED**—“The Sadducees created what we call a *reductio ad absurdum* argument, reducing things to the absurd or the ridiculous. A man marries a woman, and he dies. He has six brothers who can fulfill the levirate obligation. She married each one, and tragically all seven died without bearing a child. The Pharisees and most rabbis believe the world to come is basically an improved and better version of this world, which therefore would include things like marriage. Assuming monogamy (which they would have), to whom then will she be married in the world to come? The Sadducees argue such a scenario is absurd, and it shows the foolishness of believing in a future resurrection. Look at all the problems it could potentially cause. No, God is too smart for that, and the books of Moses (which are the undisputed Word of God) do not mention a future resurrection. Therefore, it must not exist. Jesus has already spoken of His own resurrection three times (Mark 8: 31; 9: 31; 10: 34). The Sadducees think they have Him cornered” [Akin, Daniel L. (2014-06-01). *Exalting Jesus in Mark* (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary) (p. 281). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition].
- 12.25... **THEY NEITHER MARRY, NOR ARE GIVEN IN MARRIAGE**—“Significantly, Jesus here affirmed that there will be a resurrection of the dead, that ‘they shall rise from the dead.’ Also, the new life will not be encumbered by any such thing as marriage, or any of the physical relationships so important in the present life” [Burton Coffman].
- 12.28... **WHICH IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF ALL?**—“Perceiving that he answered them well - That is, with wisdom, and with a proper understanding of the law. In this case the opinion of the Saviour corresponded with that of the Pharisees; and the question which this scribe put to him now seems to have been one of the very few candid inquiries of him by the Jews for the purpose of obtaining information. Jesus answered it in the spirit of kindness, and commended the conduct of the man” [Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes*, an e-Sword Module].
- 12.34... **THOU ARE NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD**—“Alas, this is the epitaph for many. Men behold, in some glorious burst of apprehension, the majesty and truth of the Son of God; but the road of acceptance is rugged, being blocked at every milestone with difficulties and opposition. If this scribe had confessed the Lord, he would have been thrown out of the synagogue, possibly even stoned to death; and the silence of the record leads one to suppose that this is as near as he ever came to the kingdom of God” [Burton Coffman].
- 12.37... **AND THE COMMON PEOPLE HEARD HIM GLADLY**—“This remark has reference, not merely to the paragraph with which it is connected, but to the entire discussion which had occupied the day. But what was true of the common people assembled then in Jerusalem, was equally true of those among whom He had taught in Galilee and Perea. It was only the elders, the chief priests, the lawyers, and the scribes, who did not hear Him gladly. To these He appeared in the light of a rival and an enemy, and He appeared thus only because He persisted in exposing their errors and in pressing on the attention of the people truths which they rejected. That the common people hear a man gladly in our own age can not be taken as proof in itself that his teaching is like that of Jesus, yet he who is most like Jesus will still be most gladly heard by the common people. He who in any great degree fails of this must have some most serious defect as a preacher of the gospel of Christ” [McGarvey, *NTC*, pp., 343-44].
- 12.38... **SALUTATIONS IN THE MARKETPLACES**—“...courting to be saluted in the streets with particular marks of respect, and to be addressed with the sounding titles of rabbi, father, and master; thinking such public acknowledgments of their merits due from all who met them” [Joseph Benson, *Commentary of the Old and New Testaments*, 1857, an e-Sword Module].
- 12.40... **DEVOUR WIDOWS’ HOUSES**—“This statement places Jesus among the prophets who raged against abuse of the poor (see Isaiah 1.17, Isaiah 1.23; Isaiah 10.1-4; Ezekiel 22.7) and sets the

tone for the next story” [NIV First Century Study Bible, with notes by Kent Dobson, 2014, Zondervan, an Olive Tree Bible Study App Module]. |||| “People often left their whole fortune to the temple, and a good deal of the temple-money went, in the end, to the Scribes and Pharisees. The Scribes were universally employed in making wills and conveyances of property. They may have abused their influence with widows.” [*Vincent’s Word Study Dictionary*, an Olive Tree Module].

- 12.41... **AND JESUS SAT OVER AGAINST THE TREASURY**—“In the Court of the Women, which covered a space of two hundred feet square. All round it ran a colonnade, and within it, against the wall, were the thirteen chests or ‘trumpets’ for charitable contributions. These chests were narrow at the mouth and wide at the bottom, shaped like trumpets, whence their name. Their specific objects were carefully marked on them. Nine were for the receipt of what was legally due by worshippers, the other four for strictly voluntary gifts. See Edersheim, ‘The Temple.’” [Vincent].

V. Lessons & Applications.

- **Mark 12.1-12...** Lessons from this parable: (1) This is an account, first of all, of THE INGRATITUDE OF MAN. (2) This parable also teaches us of GOD’S GRACE AND PATIENCE. (3) Our parable also has a tremendous lesson concerning THE IRRATIONALITY OF SIN. (4) This parable also teaches the ULTIMATE JUSTICE OF GOD. (5) We learn here of THE HARDNESS of those who are in rebellion against God. [Bill Irby, in *The Parables of our Lord*, Faulkner University Lectures, 1994, pp., 129-132].
- **Mark 12.13-17...** “The answer which Jesus gave to their question—‘**Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s**’—sets forth the true significance of our twofold relationship with reference to God and the powers that be. Each has a claim on us; and we cannot be the kind of followers of Christ, which we ought to be, without discharging both of these responsibilities. There would have been no cause for astonishment on the part of the enemies of Jesus, at the time of this lesson, if they had been trying to do right themselves” [Leslie G. Thomas, *Teacher’s Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1969, p. 322]. |||| “There must be a return to respect for authority, and it must begin in the home with the family and spread out as leaven into all layers of society. Great is our need to respect civil authority; our continuation as a nation is wrapped up in this crucial matter. The Bible, as today’s texts amply prove [Mark 12.13-17 and 1 Peter 2.13-17, DRL], is not silent about the subject. The church of our Lord must make an intense impact for good on lawless society” [Robert R. Taylor, Jr., *Companion Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1995-96, p. 215].
- **Mark 12.29-31...** “Jesus’ reply to the scribe is twofold. He shows not only what is most fundamental and basic of all but what is second in priority as well; ... Most fundamental of all is the devotion of the total person to the one true God. All of life must revolve around the devotion to God. We must be strong in the Lord; therefore we must love Him with all our strength (1 Corinthians 16.13-14). Ignorance is unacceptable; therefore we must study to show ourselves approved in mind and body (2 Timothy 3.15; 2 Peter 3.18). The Bible heart has reference to the very center of our being or personality. In it, life (soul), mind, will, and conscience, will function (Hebrews 4.12). This being true, it is easy to see just why this commandment is fundamental to the true Israel of God (Deuteronomy 6.4-5; Romans 2.28-29; Romans 9.6; Galatians 6.16). Many modern approaches to personality disorders are void of any ultimate and final point of reference. That which is healthy and normal is the proper love for God with our total being. Anything less is unsatisfactory before God. ... It is vital that we understand that the love of self is not ‘selfishness.’ Selfishness in most cases is what the world regards as ‘self-love.’ Selfishness is condemned by the Lord (Matthew 16.23-27). The which is proper love of self and is to be the measurement of love for others is that love which is rooted in, and devoted to, the love of God with the total person. If this were understood, there would be less difficulty with teaching others the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Some have perverted concepts of love and

they will not present to the lost what they need to hear and assume they are doing the ‘loving’ thing” [Leslie G. Thomas, *Companion Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1984-85, pp., 158-59].

- **Mark 12.30... WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND, AND WITH ALL THY STRENGTH**—“The words heart, soul, mind, and strength are not intended to define, but rather to emphasize, that is, to show that true religion is not the isolated allegiance of simply a part of our nature, but the consecration of all the powers of our being and of every relation of our lives. Religion, as interpreted by Jesus, summons into its service all the manifold powers and activities of our being—the affections of the heart, the aspirations of the soul, the energies of the mind, the strength of the will; it seeks to gather up our feelings, thoughts, and will into one great commanding passion for God. Someone has said that it does not take much of a man to be a Christian, but it takes all there is of him. Carlyle, in writing of his father, said that he was religious with the consent of his whole faculties” [Leslie G. Thomas, *Teacher’s Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1960, p. 66].
- **Mark 12.45-30...** “Jesus Christ was born in the ‘City of David’ of the lineage and seed of the great king of Israel. He fulfilled all of the promises of God and the writings of the holy prophets regarding Him. He died and was buried in the City of Jerusalem where the tomb of David was still clearly visible. Christ, the son of David was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead. He was exalted by God to sit at His right hand as the occupant of David’s throne. He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords until the appointed time to return and gather all nations before Him to separate the righteous from the unrighteous. Christ will then return to heaven with the righteous for whom He has prepared, but the unrighteous will ‘go away into everlasting punishment’ (Matthew 25.31-46)” [Adron Doran, in *The Book of Mark*, 14th Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship, 1989, Edited by Jim Laws, p. 355].
- **Mark 12.41-44...** “Let us not forget that Jesus still sees the treasury. He knows how much, and from what motives, men give to His cause. He looks at the heart, and what our views are, in giving alms; and whether or we do it as unto the Lord, or only to be seen of men. It is so rare to find any who would not blame this widow, that we cannot expect to find many who will do like to her; and yet our Savior commends her, therefore we are sure that she did well and wisely. The feeble efforts of the poor to honor their Savior, will be commended in that day, when the splendid actions of unbelievers will be exposed to contempt” [Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible*, an Olive Tree Module].

VI. Questions.

True or False

01. ____ The hypothetical story about one woman marrying seven brothers (as each died) was presented to Jesus by the Pharisees.
02. ____ Jesus refused to answer the question about the greatest commandment of all.
03. ____ The common people had great difficulty understanding Jesus.
04. ____ The husbandmen revered the son of the vineyard owner.
05. ____ Jesus asked for a penny that He might purchase bread with it.

I Found it in Verse(s)

06. ____ Three patriarchs mentioned.
07. ____ Jesus tells some that they did GREATLY ERR.
08. ____ A poor widow.
09. ____ Going into a far country.

10. _____ The religious leaders feared the people or they would have taken Jesus.

Short Answer

11. Two things causing the Sadducees to err: (1) not _____ the _____;
and, (2) not _____ the _____ of God.

12. God is not the God of the _____, but He is the God of the _____.

13. The person who wrote: **THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, SIT THOU ON MY RIGHT HAND, TILL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES THY FOOTSTOOL:** _____

14. The five verbs that tell what all the Vineyard Owner did with his property: (1) _____;
(2) _____; (3) _____; (4) _____; (5) _____ it out.

15. What did Jesus say we should render to God?

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Mark 11 Questions... **01**—True (7); **02**—False (13); **03**—True (17); **04**—True (26); **05**—False (33); **06**—30; **07**—25; **08**—20; **09**—9; **10**—1; **11**—By the door (4); **12**—He was hungry (12); **13**—Peter (21); **14**—Chief priests, scribes, elders (27); **15**—Yes, No (29, 33).

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL

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VIII. Crossword Puzzle.

| Back to the Bible: Luke 12 (KJV) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <u>ACROSS</u> | <u>DOWN</u> |
|---|---|
| 01) Jesus talks about five in one house ____. | 01) Jesus spoke of some who could ____ the face of the sky. |
| 03) Jesus talks of them as being many and few. | 02) Take thine ____, eat, drink, and be merry. |
| 05) Jesus said to beware of it. | 04) Describes the multitude. |
| 09) Disciples were to ____ of the leaven of the Pharisees. | 06) Ye are of more ____ than many sparrows. |
| 10) It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the ____. | 07) Ravens do not have one. |
| 12) Grouped with magistrates & powers. | 08) Something spoken in ____ shall be heard in the light. |
| 13) Solomon was not arrayed like. | 11) Lilies don't do it. |

IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...

Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!

W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?

W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...

W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...