

CLOSE-UPS OF JESUS THROUGH THE LENS OF MARK - Part twenty-seven

Wednesday, January 6th, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.

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Mark 12:35-44 - "[35] And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? [36] David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.' [37] David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?" And the great throng heard him gladly. [38] And in his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces [39] and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, [40] who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation." [see also Luke 12:43-48, John 19:11] [41] And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. [42] And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. [43] And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. [44] For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

Up until now, Jesus has been *answering* the questions. Now He *asks* one of His own. He will have some very stern things to say against the religious leaders of His day. His question here sets up their guilt. Jesus is going to show that He, above all others, should have been welcomed and heeded. He should have been embraced by the expectant people of God. In this question, Jesus sets the stage for the wrath to come.

1) ALL OF THE JEWS WERE WAITING FOR THE CHRIST ("MESSIAH")

And they all knew something else - the Messiah would be a direct descendant of King David. When believing people called Jesus the "*Son of David*" it was to this they were giving testimony.

This expectation was linked to a promise given back in the days of Samuel - **2 Samuel 7:12** - "**When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom.**" Verses 13-17 go on to establish that this kingdom would be more than a manmade, earthly kingdom. It would be "*eternal*" and "*established forever.*"

The New Testament then goes to great lengths to establish the direct link between Jesus and David (that's what those long genealogies in Matthew 1:1-17 are all about). Jesus was undeniably the "*Son of David*".

2) IN VERSE 36 JESUS QUOTES PSALM 110:1

"David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.' Or take a look at the same quote in **Matthew 22:43-44** - "He said to them, "How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, [44] 'The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet'?"

A) NOTICE JESUS' HIGH VIEW OF THE OT SCRIPTURES.

Some would think of the Psalms merely as the religious expression of men as they sought God. Jesus clearly saw a *dual authorship of the OT Scriptures*. It wasn't just David speaking. He said David was "*speaking by the Spirit*" (43). The Spirit of God was directly at work. This fits in directly with Paul's words in **2 Timothy 3:16** - "**All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...**"

B) IN PSALM 110:1 DAVID CLEARLY REFERS TO TWO LORDS, WITH ONE SPEAKING TO

THE OTHER

"**The LORD says to My Lord....**" If the first "LORD" is Jehovah God (indicated by the use of all capital letters), then **who is the second Lord?** And **why does David call him Lord?**

Obviously, in Jesus' mind this awkward little verse from the Psalms was a very important passage. He had it on His mind a great deal. What does this verse really say?

It has a lot to do with everything we have been looking at in Mark's gospel. The people were looking for David's Son, the Messiah. **But they were expecting a certain kind of Messiah.** They were looking for a human, political mastermind who would solve the Jews' problems. For a long time this false expectation kept even Jesus' disciples from recognizing who Jesus truly was. The Bible says they couldn't make sense of His death and resurrection until **after** they had happened.

But all of the Jews respected David. David's words were as good as gold. So Jesus goes to the very words of David to teach that David knew the coming Messiah would be his son, **but more than merely his son.** The Messiah would not just be of David's ancestry in the limited sense. The Messiah who was son would also be the Messiah who was **Lord.**

How could the sacred Scriptures teach such a thing? There was only **one** God, only **one** who was to be addressed as divine. **Exodus 20:1-3** - "**And God spoke all these words: {2} 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. {3} 'You shall have no other gods besides me'**"

Isaiah 42:8 - "**I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another"**

To a monotheistic nation who had grown up with verses like these, Jesus' question was a good one indeed - "**How could King David call his own son Lord?**" Of course the answer Jesus is trying pull out of them is obvious to us. The Messiah is **more than they were expecting.** The Messiah was God Himself - Jesus, the Second Divine Person of the Trinity.

C) **JESUS UNDERSCORES THE PROPHETIC ELEMENT OF THE MESSIAH'S TRIUMPH OVER ALL OF HIS ENEMIES - Mark 12:36**

"....until I put your enemies under your feet). See also **Isaiah 53:10-12.** Perhaps He wanted His enemies to know that even in their plotting to take His life, there would be no stopping God's Kingdom. The disciples, too, would be encouraged by being reminded that the Messiah would triumph, their hope would not be disappointed if they kept their trust in Him. The **enemies** were predicted. The **victory** was certain.

3) **BECAUSE JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH, AND BECAUSE HE WAS GOD ALMIGHTY, THE DOOM OF HIS ENEMIES WAS SPELLED OUT - Mark 12:38-44**

"[38] And in his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces [39] and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, [40] who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation." [41] And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. [42] And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. [43] And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. [44] For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

Here we have more detail put on the words quoted from the Psalmist in verse 36. They would be judged:

i) **for using religion to promote pride and position (38-39)**, ii) **for using religion for personal gain (40)**. These are highly relevant words for our modern culture. This unnamed woman marks the strongest contrast to phoney religion. As far as she knows she is totally unwatched in her act of passionate, loving sacrifice. This amateur puts the professional religionists to shame.

But there's another lesson here. It reaches into what Jesus viewed as the core issue of New Testament giving to His kingdom. Certainly the wealthy had put more into the offering when measured by dollar amount or receipt issued.

Yet Jesus said this woman gave more than they - **"And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box."** How can this possibly be?

Answer? Because divine measurement isn't by dollars placed into the place. It measured by dollars kept for oneself. Giving is measured by **self-expenditure**. This is how God protects His people from the disease of covetousness. There's more grace in His standard than we usually see.