

Daily Bible Study

*“An Ignorant Question Which Missed The Point”*

*Mark 12:18 - 27*

*February 5– February 11, 2012*

**THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY** –As we now return to the Gospel of Mark we pick up and take as our text **Mark 12:18-27**. In this section of Mark 12 we have seen and Lord willing are going to continue to see in the upcoming lesson the enemies of Jesus trying to catch him in his words and His teaching. They ask three questions total in this section of Scripture (**Mark 12:13-37**): *“Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?”* The question was asked by Pharisees and Herodians. Jesus answered: *“Render to Caesar the things that are Caesars, and to God, the things that are Gods.”* Now we will get a question concerning marriage and the resurrection which we will unpack this week. I will say by way of introduction that they asked an ignorant, insincere question because they didn’t want an answer as much as they wanted to catch and discredit Jesus. It was ***An Ignorant Question Which Missed The Point***. Suffice to say, they had the wrong idea of the life to come. Finally, Lord willing we will see in a couple weeks the question, *“Which is the first (foremost, greatest) commandment of all?”* Jesus answers with Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and then when the scribe declared his agreement, Jesus told him, *“You are not far from the kingdom of God.”* So Jesus in answering rightly and clearly declares Himself to be more than a clever, smart teacher but in offering a question of His own declares Himself as the greater son of David and actually the Lord of David; God Himself in the flesh. Read our text for the week, **Mark 12:18-27** *“Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying: “Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man’s brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise. So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife.” Jesus answered and said to them, “Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’ ? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken.”*

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, teach me Your Word; give me open ears and a willing heart.*

**TUESDAY – Mark 12:18-23** “Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying: “Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man’s brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise. So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife.” These verses contain the detailed question that the Sadducees brought to Jesus in order to undermine His credibility and influence. We must note that the Sadducees who now approach Jesus are in many ways different from the Pharisees who had just put Jesus to the test in **Mark 12:13-17**. The *Sadducees* were the priestly party from which the high priest was selected. The temple was their special domain, and they must not have been at all happy with Jesus cleansing of it the day before. They were crass materialists, wealthy and aristocratic; this lent itself to their collaborating with the Roman government for they obviously wished to keep their comforts and privileges. They had major differences and distinctions from the Pharisees. They accepted only the written Scriptures as opposed to the Pharisees who added oral law, traditions, and many added rules and regulations to God’s Word. The Sadducees did however give more importance to the Pentateuch and it was there on the written Mosaic law that they stood. Most importantly to our text and discussion the Sadducees did not believe in immortality, resurrection, and life after this physical one. They didn’t believe in spirits, angels, or anything “supernatural” if I may. It was their opinion and argument the early books of Scripture did not contain evidence for immortality; therefore they did not accept it. It is because of these views that they have been labeled by many Christians in modern times with the title, “sad-you-see’s”. Truly it would be sad if one believed this was all there was to life, what we could physically see and “experience”. So the Sadducees come to Jesus with this ignorant question designed to make the belief in individual resurrection look ridiculous. This background must be understood or you will miss the point of the text. They are not concerned with marriage lessons; they have the answer to propagating the family line through single living brothers from **Deuteronomy 25:5-10**, the passage they cite in our text. This is really about trying to make Jesus look like a joke; ridiculing Him about life after resurrection. It was understood to these men that the whole point of the **Deuteronomy 25** passage was to ensure the family name continued and the estate or property remained in the family. So, it appears the Sadducees conjure up this exaggerated case with the *seven brothers*, in an attempt to make the idea of a resurrection look foolish.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

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Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me study Scripture and not use it to twist for my own purposes. May I seek You in Your Word earnestly and honestly for answers, knowing You love to give them.

**WEDNESDAY – Mark 12:24** “*Jesus answered and said to them, “Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? Jesus answers this “ignorant question” in two parts; the first of which we look at today. Remembering the text and understanding that the Sadducees say there is no resurrection, we see Jesus deals with that greater question, the resurrection although He also graciously gives some pertinent answers to the matter of marriage etc...shedding some light on the mysteries concerning life after the resurrection. At the very beginning Jesus informs them of the root of their misunderstanding truth: Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? The word *mistaken* is a Greek word meaning “to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way” and it is translated deceive, err, go astray, wander and seduce among others. We are clearly warned here that a lack of knowledge of Sacred Scripture leads to all kinds of deception, wandering, and going astray. Sadly and tragically this is a point at which people are deceived in their understanding of the gospel itself. We remember Paul’s words to Timothy which inform us of the life giving power of knowing and believing Holy Scripture (2 Timothy 3:15). If they had known Scripture, particularly the passage they cite from Deuteronomy 25:5-6 they would know their isn’t specific teaching there which speaks to these relationships in the life hereafter. But as to Jesus words, *nor the power of God* we learn they should have known all the Old Testament passages which teach the resurrection of the body (Job 19:25-27, Psalm 16:9-11, 49:15, Isaiah 25:8, Daniel 12:1-2) they also should have believed in the power of God (Romans 4:17-21, Hebrews 11:19) and His ability to do anything He desires such as raise the dead.*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

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Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, help me to study the Scriptures and be informed of truth from them. Help me also believe in Your power O Lord, to do whatever You desire, including my resurrection.*

**THURSDAY – Mark 12:25-26a** “*For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage...*” Concerning the relationship between marriage and eternity we learn from this passage that after the resurrection, *they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.* Do not read into this that you will not know your spouse as such in the resurrection; this is not said. We do see that after a person rises again the laws of physical life as we know it now, no longer rule. We are raised *incorruptible* (1 Corinthians 15:53-54). The risen *are like the angels*, and physical things like marrying and procreation are no longer needed. Our glorious resurrection bodies are going to be immortal and there will be no more death and need of reproduction. Interestingly Jesus adds *like the angels* to men who deny their very existence (Acts 23:8), and this in spite of the fact that the Pentateuch, taught their existence (Genesis 19:1, 15, 28:12, 32:1). These facts prove Jesus right in His statement concerning their ignorance and unbelief. Jesus continues to make the point of

their not knowing Scripture as He says, *But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage...* He reminds them of the Pentateuch which was their specialty and their ignorance of it. We need to understand and not be dogmatic where we can't be; as one commentator states, "the afterlife in the OT was a veiled reality and the progressive revelation of the NT clarifies and defines the reality, but still in veiled, metaphorical language. Heaven is a sure promise and truth, but its exact nature is a mystery". Summing up what we've learned so far, we see the incredible skill in Jesus' answer. He uses the OT Scripture they did accept and He touches a nerve; namely, their knowledge of Scripture. Furthermore we see Jesus rebukes them for their lack of faith in the power of God and explains they missed the point that resurrection life is not simply continuation of this life but a different quality altogether. Oh how much they were missing by unbelief!

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thanks for the promise of resurrection. Help me trust Your power and search Scripture for the knowledge it contains. Thank You for enlightening me Holy Spirit.*

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 12:26-27** *“But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’ ? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken”.* Jesus now goes back to **Exodus 3:6** and argues that the meaning of the verse is that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are still alive in God at the time of Moses. Since *God is not the God of the dead but of the living*, the conclusion is that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still alive, and are awaiting a glorious resurrection. *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob...* notice the occurrence of the word “God” three times; it is mentioned separately in connection with each of the three men which stresses personal relationship with each of them. We also know the phrase, *I am the God...* is a play on the tense of the Hebrew verb “to be, to exist.” A form of this verb becomes the very covenant name for the God of Israel, YHWH. We see that in **Exodus 3:14** and also hear Jesus speak to this fact and refer to His name as such in **John 8:58**. The title implies God is the ever-living and only-living One. Because He lives, His people live also because of His promise, His Word (**Psalm 103:15–17, Isaiah 40:6–8, John 14:19, 1 Peter 1:3, 23–25**). This last phrase *You are therefore greatly mistaken* is found only in Mark and is a severe, solemn and impressive end to this discussion. Jesus is saying in the vernacular; You are big-time deceived. May this not be said of us.

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thanks for the living hope in Jesus of final resurrection applied to me by the Holy Spirit. Holy Trinity; You are the ever living, all powerful, eternal Three in One!*