

WEEK 18: MARK 12 - THE JEWS CONFRONT JESUS; JESUS ANSWERS THE JEWS

HIGH SCHOOL

GOAL

To develop a better understanding of Mark 12

LESSON

Materials Needed: Orthodox Study Bible

Extended Learning Opportunities:

The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Mark pages 101-108

The Gospel of Mark the Suffering Servant by Fr. Lawrence Farley pages 189-204

GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 12

Read verses 1-12 and then discuss: (Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers)

Jesus is explaining that God sent many prophets to the people of Israel. With exceptional patience, God keeps sending prophets to the Jews despite their defiance and rebellion. Jesus is talking directly to those who are opposing Him - the Pharisees, the Herodians, and their supporters. Finally, God sends His Son, Jesus, to the people of Israel - and they kill Him too.

Parable: a short story indirectly teaching a truth, religious principle, or moral lesson by way of comparison

Servant: a person in the service of another (*the prophets*)

The Son: (*Jesus*)

Vineyard: yard or land growing vines of grapes (*the people, whom the Lord has planted*)

Vinedresser: a person who tends grapevines (*the Pharisees, the Herodians, their supporters*)

Hedge: a row of bushes or small trees planted closely together and used as a fence or boundary (*the law which forbade them from mingling with pagan nations*)

The Tower: (*the Temple*)

The Winepress (the Wine Vat): (*the altar*)

Verses 13-17: (Tribute to Caesar)

Yet again, Jesus' enemies are trying to trap Him with a question in front of a crowd.

If Jesus answered that it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, then the Pharisees could say to the people that Jesus was leading them into slavery.

If Jesus answered that it was unlawful to pay taxes to Caesar, then the Pharisees could accuse Jesus of leading the people into rebellion and have Him arrested.

Instead, Jesus asks for a coin. He explains to them that you can pay taxes and still show reverence to God. Additionally, the things that belong to "Caesar" are the needs of the body - such as food, clothing, and shelter. That which belongs to God are prayer and vigils.

Pharisees: a sect (group) of Jews who were rule oriented

Herodians: those who supported King Herod (a regional leader)

Caesar: the emperor of the Roman Empire

Verses 18-27: (Concerning the Sadducees)

First, we have to understand that the Sadducees are another sect (group) of Jews. They did not have all the same beliefs as the Pharisees. The Sadducees were a group of the high-priestly family and other aristocratic families in Jerusalem. They did not believe in life after death and only accepted the first five books of the Old Testament.

When they posed this question about marriage to Jesus, they are not trying to ask some crazy question. At this point in time, land and belongings would be passed down to the children in the family. If a man died before having children, it was lawful for his brother to marry his wife in hopes of having children. Those children would then inherit the family land and belongings. This also ensured preserving the family name within Israel.

Jesus answers the Sadducees in a way that they would understand. He quotes from Exodus (one of the first 5 books of the OT that they accept), "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Jesus continues, "He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken."

What is the lesson for us today from this section of Mark? There is life after death, but it will not be exactly how it is now. We will live like angels in heaven - in that, we will not need food, clothing, shelter, or have the social institutions of our age (such as - marriage, childrearing, etc.)

Sadducees: A sect (group) of Jews who did not believe in life after death or angels. They only accepted the first five books of the Old Testament.

Verses 28-34: (Concerning the Scribes)

In Matthew, we read that the scribe approached Jesus with the intent of testing Him. While Mark says that the scribe is wise. Are Matthew and Mark contradicting one another? No.

The scribe is still approaching Jesus with ill intent, but Mark explains how Jesus handles the situation. Mark shows Jesus' patience with the scribe and answers in such a way that encourages the scribe to have a change of heart. The scribe is "not far from the kingdom of God" and Jesus' praise helps to direct the scribe in the right direction.

Scribes: lawyers or those who recorded information in writing

Verses 35-40:

Jesus is correcting the false teachings of the scribes.

Verses 41-44: (The Widow's Mite)

It was the custom at the time for people to donate to the Temple in order to support the priests, the poor, and widows. Jesus points out to His disciples that this poor widow gave absolutely all the money she had. She kept nothing for herself. That comes at a great cost to the person who has nothing left to sustain themselves. Whereas, others were certainly generous with their donations, they kept some for themselves. When they gave money, their comfort level at home did not change. They still had plenty of food. The poor widow placed her trust in God that He would sustain her.

Widow: a woman whose husband has died

Mite: a Roman coin of very small value

REVIEW:

- What is a parable?
- Who is the son in the parable of the wicked vinedressers?
- Who are the servants in this parable?
- Who is the vineyard?
- Who are the vinedressers?
- Summarize the story of the widow's mite. What can we learn from this story for our own lives?

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

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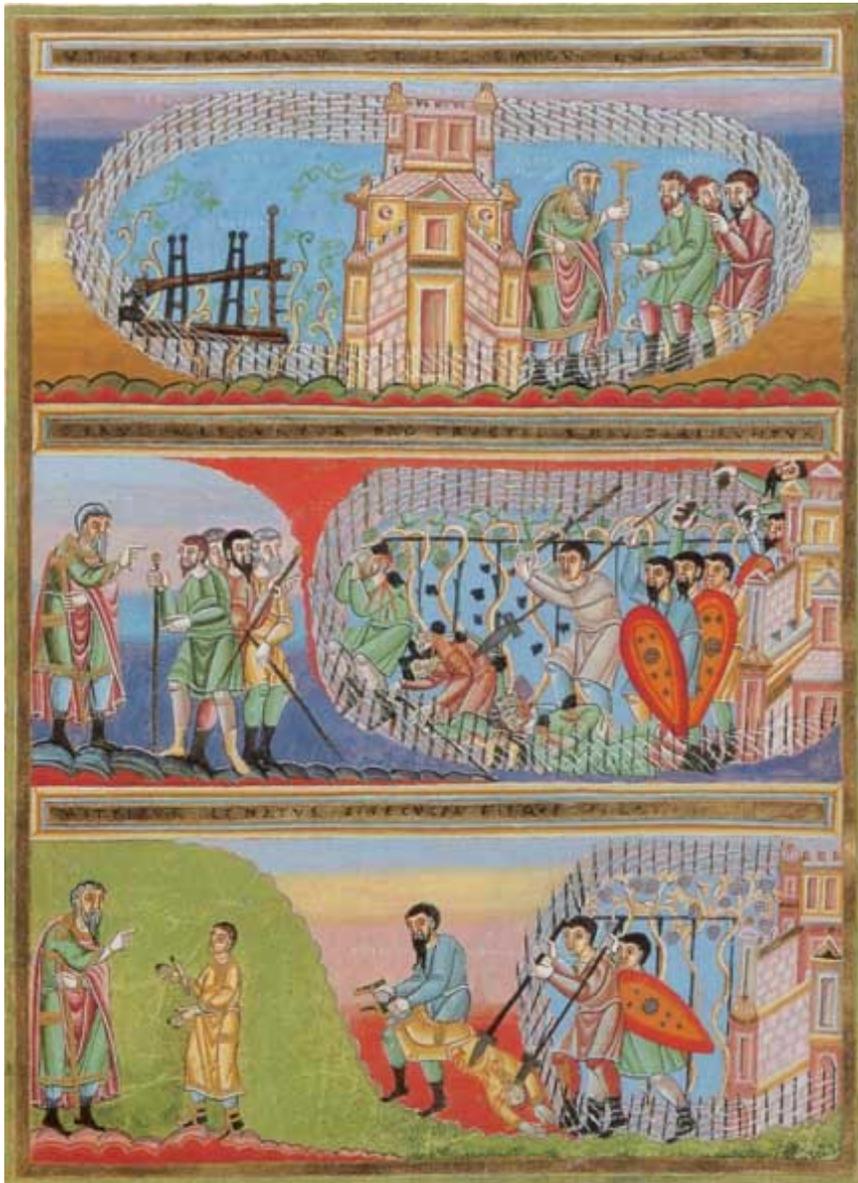
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THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED VINEDRESSERS



Jesus

Prophets

The Temple

The Altar

The Pharisees

The Law

The people whom
the Lord planted

God

Directions: Do you remember who and what are represented in the parable of the wicked vinedressers? In your lesson today, you learned who the parable was about. Fill in the answers using the words provided above.

The tower represents _____ The winepress represents _____

The vinedressers represent the _____ The landlord represents _____

The son is _____ The servants represent _____

The vineyard is _____ The hedge represents _____

TRIBUTE TO CAESAR

MARK 12:13-17



Have you ever written your name inside of a book, your backpack, a jacket, or some other item so if you lost it, someone might bring it back to you?

The Roman emperors would stamp their name and image on the coins in the Roman Empire. It was a way of showing their power and wealth.

Jesus tells the people he's not interested in what is seen as important in this world. He wants us to grow closer to Him. We can do this by praying and also receiving Holy Communion. What are additional ways that help us grow closer to God?

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3RD - 4TH GRADE

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THE WIDOW'S MITE

MARK 12:41-44



Summarize the story of the widow giving two coins in the temple.

How did she give more overall than the other people?

In everything we do, we should always try to give as much as possible, especially to God.

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1ST - 2ND GRADE

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What are some ways that we can give? Can we ask to do some chores around the house to earn some money and then give that money to the church?

REVIEW:

- Tell me what happened in today's Bible story.

THE WIDOW'S MITE

MARK 12:41-44



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PRE-K - KINDERGARTEN

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