

**Notes on the Greek New Testament**  
**Week 190 – Mark 12:1-34**

**Day 946: Mark 12:1-5****Verses 1-12**

Cf. Mt 21:31-46; Lk 20:9-19. Gundry treats 11:27-12:12 as a single section. He writes, "The pericope ... falls into two halves, a dialogue between the Sanhedrin and Jesus (11:27-33) and a parable spoken by him to and about them (12:1-12)."

In Matthew's Gospel this is the second of three parables all with a theme of displacement. France comments, "The theological question posed by this parable is therefore where the true people of God is now to be found. In speaking it 'against them' (v. 12) Jesus is implicitly claiming that it is in him, not in the old regime which they represent, that God's designs for his people will find their fulfilment.

"The choice of a vineyard as the setting for the story already suggests that it is about the long saga of God's dealings with Israel. The vine or vineyard as an image for Israel in relation to Yahweh is well known from the OT (e.g., Ps 80:8-18; Is 27:2-6; Je 2:21; 12:10; Ezk 19:10-14; Ho 10:1). But the wording of v. 1 is more specific, in that it echoes in detail the introduction to Isaiah's song of the vineyard (Is 5:1-2), an allegory, explicitly drawn out, of God's disappointment with his people. Jesus' parable does not develop the image in the same way: in Isaiah it is the vineyard which has failed, here it is the tenants; in Isaiah the vineyard is to be abandoned and devastated, here it will be entrusted to new tenants.

Isaiah's message is thus one of unrelieved disaster, whereas Jesus' parable offers hope for a new beginning. But the new beginning will come only after judgment on the existing regime."

**Verse 1**

Καὶ ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς ἐν παραβολαῖς λαλεῖν,  
Ἀμπελῶνα ἄνθρωπος ἐφύτευσεν, καὶ  
περιέθηκεν φραγμὸν καὶ ὠρυξεν  
ὑπολήνιον καὶ ὠκοδόμησεν πύργον, καὶ  
ἐξέδετο αὐτὸν γεωργοῖς, καὶ ἀπεδήμησεν.

ἀρχω midd begin  
λαλεω speak, talk

To the chief priests, scribes and elders. "The details of the preparation of the vineyard from ἐφύτευσεν to ὠκοδόμησεν πύργον echo directly LXX Is 5:2, though the items are not in the same order." France.

ἀμπελων, ωνος m vineyard  
φυτευω plant  
περιέθηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 2 s  
περιτιθημι put around  
φραγμος, ου m fence, wall, hedge  
ὄρουσσω dig, dig a hole in  
ὑπολήνιον, ου n trough placed under a  
wine press  
οἰκοδομεω build  
πύργος, ου m tower, watchtower

"Used for watching against thieves or animals and for shelter for the husbandmen." Cranfield.

ἐξέδετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s  
ἐκδιδομαι let out, lease, rent  
γεωργος, ου m farmer, tenant farmer,  
vinedresser  
ἀποδημεω leave (home) on a journey, go  
away

**Verse 2**

καὶ ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς τοὺς γεωργοὺς τῷ  
καιρῷ δούλον, ἵνα παρὰ τῶν γεωργῶν  
λάβῃ ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος·

ἀπέστειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s  
ἀποστελλω send, send out  
καιρος, ου m time, appointed time,  
season  
δουλος, ου m slave, servant  
καρπος, ου m fruit, harvest

"The normal method of payment for the tenancy was for an agreed proportion of the crop to be surrendered to the owner. In the case of a new vineyard it would be at least four years before a crop would be harvested, so that there is a long interval between the beginning of the tenancy and the καιρος for the sending of the collector; the tenants have had time to feel securely entrenched." France.

**Verse 3**

καὶ λαβόντες αὐτὸν ἔδειραν καὶ  
ἀπέστειλαν κενόν.

ἔδειραν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl δερω  
beat, strike, hit  
κενος, η, ον empty

I.e. empty-handed.

**Verse 4**

καὶ πάλιν ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἄλλον δοῦλον· κάκεινον ἐκεφαλίωσαν καὶ ἠτίμασαν.

παλιν again, once more

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

κάκεινος, η, ο contraction of καὶ ἐκεινος  
and that one, and he, that one also, he  
also

κεφαλίω beat over the head

The meaning of this verb is uncertain. It is not otherwise known. France says the verb "is assumed to mean 'hit on the head' (though it could mean 'decapitate': is there an allusion here to John the Baptist?)"

ἀτιμάζω treat shamefully, dishonour

**Verse 5**

καὶ ἄλλον ἀπέστειλεν, κάκεινον ἀπέκτειναν, καὶ πολλοὺς ἄλλους, οὓς μὲν δέροντες οὓς δὲ ἀποκτένοντες.

ἀποκτείνω and ἀποκτεννω, -ννω kill,  
put to death

δερω see v.3

**Day 947: Mark 12:6-12****Verse 6**

ἔτι ἓνα εἶχεν, υἱὸν ἀγαπητόν· ἀπέστειλεν αὐτὸν ἔσχατον πρὸς αὐτοὺς λέγων ὅτι Ἐντραπήσονται τὸν υἱόν μου.

ἔτι still, yet, moreover

εἷς, μια, ἓν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one  
εἶχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἔχω

"The position of ἓνα before the verb and separated from υἱὸν ἀγαπητόν adds emphasis both to the finality of this expedient (there is only one person left to send) and, theologically, to the uniqueness of the son over against the numerous slaves." France.

ἀγαπητός, η, ον beloved

Recalls the voice from heaven in 1:11 and 9:7 and echoes Abraham's sacrifice of his son as recorded in LXX Gen 22:2.

ἔσχατος, η, ον adj last, final

ἐντραπήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl  
ἐντρεπω make ashamed; pass  
respect, regard

**Verse 7**

ἐκεῖνοι δὲ οἱ γεωργοὶ πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς εἶπαν ὅτι Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ κληρονόμος· δεῦτε ἀποκτείνωμεν αὐτόν, καὶ ἡμῶν ἔσται ἡ κληρονομία.

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those

Here has a disparaging sense. It "points back to the picture already drawn of the men: 'those husbandmen, being such as we know they were'." Swete.

ἑαυτός, ἑαυτή, ἑαυτόν him/her/itself

κληρονόμος, ον m heir

δεῦτε adv. come (of command or  
exhortation)

"The same words [δεῦτε ἀποκτείνωμεν αὐτόν] are used by Joseph's brothers in LXX Gen 37:20." Cranfield.

ἀποκτείνω and ἀποκτεννω, -ννω kill,  
put to death

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

κληρονομία, ας f inheritance

**Verse 8**

καὶ λαβόντες ἀπέκτειναν αὐτόν, καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω τοῦ ἀμπελώνου.

ἐκβαλλω throw out, cast out

ἔξω adv. out, outside, away

"The throwing of the son out of the vineyard has obvious symbolic significance in relation to the rejection of Jesus, but in that case the order of death followed by throwing out is surprising (and is reversed by Matthew and Luke, reflecting the death of Jesus outside Jerusalem). At the level of the story proper the murder followed by the throwing out of the body (not even a decent burial) provides a vivid climax, and perhaps Mark intends no more." France.

**Verse 9**

τί [οὔν] ποιήσει ὁ κύριος τοῦ ἀμπελώνου; ἐλεύσεται καὶ ἀπολέσει τοὺς γεωργοὺς, καὶ δώσει τὸν ἀμπελῶνα ἄλλοις.

κύριος here means 'owner'

ἐλεύσεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s

ἔρχομαι

ἀπολέσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἀπολλυμι  
destroy, kill

ἄλλος, η, ο see v.4

"Mark's readers would have had no difficulty in identifying the ἄλλοι as the church. But Jesus' words remain uninterpreted to those who heard him in the temple." France.

**Verse 10**

οὐδὲ τὴν γραφὴν ταύτην ἀνέγνωτε, λίθον ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας·

γραφη, ης f writing, Scripture  
ἀναγινωσκω read

"The quotation is from Ps 118 (LXX: 117):22f., and follows the LXX exactly." Cranfield.

λίθος, ου m stone  
ἀποδοκιμαζω reject  
οἰκοδομεω build  
ἐγενήθη Verb, aor indic, 3 s γινομαι  
κεφαλη, ης f head  
γωνια, ας f corner; κεφαλη γωνιας  
main corner stone, keystone

"It is as clear warning to the leaders of Israel that the one whom they are rejecting will be exalted by God as Jesus could possibly give without dropping altogether his messianic veiledness." Cranfield. France comments, "What the parable did not contain was any concept of the rejected son himself being vindicated and taking the supreme place; indeed the imagery of the parable did not allow it without moving outside the story situation to include the possibility of resurrection after death. It is that crucial move which this quotation allows, thus completing the total scenario by weaving in the final and hitherto neglected element of Jesus' three passion predictions. This is a creative use of Scripture which Jesus' hearers at the time could certainly not have been expected to work out for themselves, despite the rebuke implied in the opening question."

**Verse 11**

παρὰ κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη, καὶ ἔστιν θαυμαστή ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν;

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s  
γινομαι

θαυμαστος, η, ον marvellous, wonderful

"The second verse of the quotation might serve as a motto for the whole of Mark's gospel. It is the gospel of paradox, of human amazement at the unexpected work of God." France.

**Verse 12**

Καὶ ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν κρατῆσαι, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν τὸν ὄχλον, ἔγνωσαν γὰρ ὅτι πρὸς αὐτοὺς τὴν παραβολὴν εἶπεν. καὶ ἀφέντες αὐτὸν ἀπῆλθον.

ζητεω seek, search for, look for  
κρατεω hold, hold fast, sieze  
φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)  
ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

ἔγνωσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl γινωσκω

ἔγνωσαν ... explains ἐζητουν rather than ἐφοβήθησαν.

προς here means 'with reference to'

εἶπεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s λεγω  
ἀφιημι leave, let go

ἀπῆλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl  
ἀπερχομαι

"While this full grouping of ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς καὶ πρεσβύτεροι will not appear again until 14:43, the fact that no new subject is announced for the next verb, ἀποστελλουσιν, indicates that they remain active in the background." France.

**Day 948: Mark 12:13-17****Verses 13-17**

Cf. Mt 22:15-22; Lk 20:20-26.

**Verse 13**

Καὶ ἀποστέλλουσιν πρὸς αὐτὸν τινὰς τῶν Φαρισαίων καὶ τῶν Ἑρωδιανῶν ἵνα αὐτὸν ἀγρεύσωσιν λόγῳ.

ἀποστελλω send, send out

"The sequence of plural verbs without expressed change of subject since 11:27 leaves little doubt that the subject of ἀποστελλουσιν is still the ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς καὶ πρεσβύτεροι. This is an official delegation with the aim of discrediting Jesus." France.

τινας Pronoun, m & f acc pl τῖς  
Ἑρωδιανοί, ων m Herodians (partisans  
of the Herodian family)

Cf. 3:6.

ἀγρευω trap, catch off guard

France comments that the verb is usually used of trapping animals for food, adding that it "forms a vivid metaphor for their hostile purpose."

**Verse 14**

καὶ ἐλθόντες λέγουσιν αὐτῷ, Διδάσκαλε, οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀληθὴς εἶ καὶ οὐ μέλει σοι περὶ οὐδενός, οὐ γὰρ βλέπεις εἰς πρόσωπον ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἀληθείας τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ διδάσκεις· ἔξεστιν δοῦναι κῆνσον Καίσαρι ἢ οὐ; δῶμεν ἢ μὴ δῶμεν;

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

οἶδα know

ἀληθης, ες true, truthful, honest

Cf. Jn 7:18.

μελει impersonal verb it is of concern, it matters

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

I.e. not concerned about the opinions of men.

βλεπω see, look

προσωπον, ου n face, appearance

βλεπεις εις προσωπον ανθρωπων a Hebrewism meaning to show partiality. I.e. Jesus would not be intimidated by, nor would he tailor his answer in accordance with, the nature of the questioner: he would give his honest view.

αληθεια, ας f truth, reality

οδος, ου f way

διδασκω teach

εξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is lawful, it is proper

I.e. in accordance with God's law.

δοϋναι verb, aor act infin διδωμι

κηνσος, ου m tax

France comments, "All Roman taxes (customs, tolls, etc.) were unpopular, but the poll tax (κηνσος) was a particularly offensive demand for Jewish patriots. First imposed less than a generation earlier by means of Quirinius's census when Judea became a Roman province under direct rule in A.D. 6, it was immediately the cause of the revolt led by Judas of Galilee in that year (Josephus, *War* 2.118; *Ant.* 18.4-10, 23-25). That revolt had been quickly stamped out, but it remained the inspiration for subsequent patriotic leaders, culminating in the Zealot movement which precipitated the climactic revolt of A.D. 66 and the consequent siege leading to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The question was therefore an essentially political one, aimed to elicit Jesus' stance with regard to 'Zealot' ideology. As a Galilean he was not liable to pay the κηνσος, which applied only to provinces such as Judaea which were under direct Roman rule. They approach him as a 'foreign' visitor who might be expected to offer a more 'objective' judgment, but his response may be expected to be of interest to the political authorities of Judaea." France continues, "But for Judas the the issue has been as much theological as political." It was his view "that allegiance to God and to Rome as a pagan occupying power are fundamentally incompatible."

Cranfield adds, "The Pharisees, who were no friends of the tax, though they justified paying it, and the Herodians, who supported it, came together to ask Jesus, united by the desire to destroy him in one way or another. The question was a trap; for if Jesus said, 'Yes', he would be finished as far as the people were concerned, whereas if he said, 'No', he could at once be denounced to the Romans."

η οτ

δωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl διδωμι

### Verse 15

ο δε ειδως αυτων την υποκρισιν ειπεν αυτοις, Τι με πειραζετε; φερετε μοι δηναριον ινα ιδω.

ειδως Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s οίδα

Cf. 2:8; 5:30.

υποκρισις, εως f hypocrisy, pretence

πειραζω test, put to the test, tempt

φερω bring

δηναριον, ου n denarius

ιδω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s οραω see, observe

### Verse 16

οι δε ηνεγκαν. και λεγει αυτοις, Τίνος η εικων αυτη και η επιγραφη; οι δε ειπαν αυτω, Καισαρος.

ηνεγκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl φερω

εικων, ονος f likeness, image

επιγραφη, ης f inscription, superscription

"The most common type of *denarius* of Tiberius has on its obverse the Emperor's bust adorned with a laurel wreath and on its reverse a representation of his mother Livia. The legend, which is abbreviated, reads (in full): *Tiberius Caesar Augusti Filius Augustus Pontifex Maximus*. Both legend and images set forth the mythology of the imperial cult and so troubled the consciences of religious Jews." Cranfield.

France comments, "By asking his questioners to show him a denarius Jesus wrong-footed them. He himself apparently did not have a denarius, but his questioners were able to produce one. They were therefore in no position to criticise Jesus for lack of patriotism or of religious scruples, if they themselves were already carrying the 'idoltrous' imperial money."

### Verse 17

ο δε ιησους ειπεν αυτοις, Τα Καισαρος αποδοτε Καισαρι και τα του θεου τω θεω. και εξεθαυμαζον επ αυτω.

αποδιδωμι give, pay, render, give back

The compound verb emphasises obligation. On Jesus' attitude to the Roman Empire cf. Jer 27:5ff; 28:14; 29:7. France comments, "The theological basis of Jesus' response is ... that the Zealot ideology underlying the supposed dilemma is false. Instead of setting loyalty to God and to Caesar in opposition to each other, the straightforward meaning of Jesus' words is that both may be maintained at the same time. He gives no specific guidance as to what is one's obligation to each party, though the implication of his ἀπόδοτε Καίσαρι following on the recognition that the denarius bears Caesar's name surely implies that the use of the denarius to pay the poll tax falls clearly within the category of Caesar's dues. His pronouncement assumes that there is no clash between the legitimate claims of Caesar and of God. It is therefore an answer no Zealot could have given. But neither is it simply pro-Roman: God also has his rights. "Jesus' response to this question thus provides a basis for the more developed teaching of Rom 13:1-7 and 1 Pet 2:13-17, each of which simply assumes that it is possible to be loyal to the Roman government and to God at the same time and indeed goes further in grounding this instruction (which in Rom 13:6-7 includes specifically the payment of taxes) in the belief that the (pagan) civil authorities are a God-given institution. None of these passages envisages a conflict of loyalties, and therefore they offer no guidance for those situations, with which the church soon found itself only too familiar, where God and Caesar appear to be pulling in opposite directions. But it is an important starting point for debating such conflicts to recognise that for Jesus, as well as for Paul and Peter, the *normal* situation is one of compatible loyalties rather than, as the Zealots would have insisted, one of conflict between Caesar and God."

ἐκθαυμάζω be completely amazed

### **Day 949: Mark 12:18-27**

#### **Verses 18-27**

Cf. Mt 22:23-33; Lk 20:27-40. "The question from the Pharisees and Herodians was political, with a theological nuance. The Sadducees now pose a purely theological question, earthed in a specific test case. Jesus' response to this question will be a matter of complete indifference to the Roman government, but because it focuses on an area or current controversy on which the dominant 'parties' in Jerusalem were sharply divided, it carries the potential for alienating one or other faction among the listeners. In addition, since the questioners seem to assume that Jesus supports the 'Pharisaic' notion of an afterlife, it offers the opportunity to discredit him as a wise teacher by presenting him with a *reductio ad absurdum* of that position which any Pharisaic teacher might be expected to find equally embarrassing, and so making him look ridiculous before the crowd." France.

#### **Verse 18**

Καὶ ἔρχονται Σαδδουκαῖοι πρὸς αὐτόν, οἵτινες λέγουσιν ἀνάστασιν μὴ εἶναι, καὶ ἐπερωτῶν αὐτὸν λέγοντες,

"The Sadducees were the aristocratic party, made up of the high priestly and leading lay families of Jerusalem. They were wealthy and worldly. Their arrogance and their harshness in the administration of justice were notorious. Conservative in doctrine, they rejected what they regarded as Pharisaic innovations; but their main concern was for the maintenance of their privileges, not for doctrinal purity." Cranfield. These were probably representatives of the ἀρχιερεῖς mentioned earlier.

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἡτις, ὅτι who, which

ἀναστασις, εως f resurrection, raising up

Cf. Acts 23:6-8.

ἐπερωτῶ ask, question

#### **Verse 19**

Διδάσκαλε, Μωϋσῆς ἔγραψεν ἡμῖν ὅτι ἐάν τις ἀδελφὸς ἀποθάνῃ καὶ καταλίπῃ γυναῖκα καὶ μὴ ἄφῃ τέκνον, ἵνα λάβῃ ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ ἐξαναστήσῃ σπέρμα τῷ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ.

διδασκαλος, ου m see v.14

"The address διδασκαλε (cf. v. 14) is particularly appropriate for what purports to be a serious theological question such as a rabbi might be expected to pronounce upon."  
France.

γραφω write

ἐάν if

ἀποθνήσκω die

καταλίπη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s

καταλείπω leave, leave behind

γυνή, αἰκος f woman, wife

ἀφῆ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἀφιημι leave

τεκνον, ου n child; pl descendants

ἔξανιστημι have (σπερμα) children

σπερμα, τος n seed, offspring

Cf. Deut 25:5-10. "The levirate law is based on the assumption that a man's 'survival' is through the continuation of the family line, and for those who could see no other form of 'resurrection' this remained an important issue. The use of the verb ἔξαναστήση in the echo of Gn 38:8 (LXX ἀναστησον), following so soon after the reminder that the Sadducees do not believe in ἀνάστασις, neatly emphasises that this is the only sort of 'resurrection' they can envisage." France.

### Verse 20

ἑπτὰ ἀδελφοὶ ἦσαν· καὶ ὁ πρῶτος ἔλαβεν γυναῖκα, καὶ ἀποθνήσκων οὐκ ἀφῆκεν σπέρμα·

ἑπτα seven

πρῶτος, η, ον first

ἔλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαμβανω

ἀφῆκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφιημι

### Verse 21

καὶ ὁ δεῦτερος ἔλαβεν αὐτήν, καὶ ἀπέθανεν μὴ καταλιπὼν σπέρμα· καὶ ὁ τρίτος ὡσαύτως·

δυτερος, α, ον second

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s

ἀποθνήσκω

καταλιπὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

καταλείπω see v.19

τρίτος, η, ον third

ὡσαυτως adv in the same way, likewise

### Verse 22

καὶ οἱ ἑπτὰ οὐκ ἀφῆκαν σπέρμα. ἔσχατον πάντων καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἀπέθανεν.

ἀφῆκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἀφιημι

ἔσχατον παντων adv last of all

### Verse 23

ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει, [ὅταν ἀναστῶσιν,] τίνας αὐτῶν ἔσται γυνή; οἱ γὰρ ἑπτὰ ἔσχον αὐτὴν γυναῖκα.

ὅταν when

ἀναστῶσιν Verb, 2 aor act subj, 3 pl

ἀνιστημι trans (in fut and 1 aor act)

raise; intrans (in 2 aor & all midd) rise,

come back to life

"The clause ὅταν ἀναστῶσιν is widely attested in the versions even though missing from most early MSS, and was likely to be omitted either as apparently redundant ... or by assimilation to Matthew and Luke; there is no obvious motive for its insertion." France.

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 3 s εἶμι

ἔσχον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl ἔχω

"The intention of the Sadducees is to ridicule the Pharisaic doctrine of the resurrection accepted by Jesus." Cranfield.

### Verse 24

ἔφη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Οὐ διὰ τοῦτο πλανᾶσθε μὴ εἰδότες τὰς γραφὰς μηδὲ τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ θεοῦ;

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say

πλαναω lead astray, mislead, deceive

εἰδότες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl οἶδα

know, understand

I.e. 'because you do not understand...' "For the Sadducees, who saw their position as based on Scripture and not on later ideas, that was a particularly wounding accusation, and one which Jesus will need to justify in vv. 26-27." France.

γραφη, ης f writing, Scripture

μηδε negative particle nor, and not, neither

"Those who understand the Scriptures and therefore reckon with the power of God will not deny the resurrection because they cannot comprehend the 'how' of it." Cranfield.

### Verse 25

ὅταν γὰρ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῶσιν, οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται, ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ὡς ἄγγελοι ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

νεκρος, α, ον dead

οὔτε not, nor (οὔτε ... οὔτε neither ...

nor)

γαμεω marry

γαμίζω give (a bride) in marriage

"The mention of the angels touches on another point at which the Sadducees disagreed with the Pharisees (cf. Acts 23:8)." Cranfield.

France comments, "Jesus suggests that the earthly perspective, within which the exclusiveness of the marriage bond has a central place, is inappropriate to a new quality of life which is not like that of human beings on earth but of 'angels in heaven'. Earthly life is temporary, and therefore requires the procreation of further life, in the context of marriage, for its continuance, but heavenly life is eternal, and there is no place in it for procreation. Marriage and reproduction belong only to the earthly sphere (note that it is marriage, not love, which Jesus declares to be inappropriate in heaven). Angels, as eternal beings, have no need to reproduce. And in such a context the exclusiveness and jealousy which belong to marriage are no longer appropriate. Something like that seems to be the logic of Jesus' very compressed argument. It is based on a theology of angels and of heaven which is for us a matter of faith rather than experience, and as such may leave many readers less than satisfied. But its purpose is to challenge the assumption of the Sadducees that an afterlife, if it exists, must be just like this one, and can therefore be evaluated in terms of life on earth (cf. 1 Cor 15:50). That is to fail to appreciate τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ θεοῦ." France's comments need to be nuanced a little in light of the 'earthy' character of NT hope concerning resurrection and new creation, but are nevertheless valuable.

### Verse 26

περὶ δὲ τῶν νεκρῶν ὅτι ἐγείρονται οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ Μωϋσέως ἐπὶ τοῦ βάλτου πῶς εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς λέγων, Ἔγω ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραάμ καὶ [ὁ] θεὸς Ἰσαάκ καὶ [ὁ] θεὸς Ἰακώβ;

ἐγείρω raise

"The change from the active ἀναστῶσιν in vv. 23, 25 to the passive ἐγείρονται here may be intended to draw attention to the fact that resurrection is not automatic but is the result of God's active concern (as the argument of vv. 26-27 will assume), a demonstration of the δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 24)." France.

ἀναγινωσκω read, read in public worship  
βιβλος, ου f book, record  
βατος, ου m & f bush, thornbush

I.e. in the passage relating the story of the burning bush. Cf. Rom 11:2, ἐν Ἡλίῳ.

πῶς how(?)

"In LXX Ex. 3:6 the phrase θεὸς Ἀβραάμ καὶ θεὸς Ἰσαάκ καὶ θεὸς Ἰακώβ, without articles (except that LXX A has an article before the first θεὸς only), follows an introductory ὁ θεὸς τοῦ πατρὸς σου which is omitted in all the synoptic quotations. All three synoptic quotations show textual variations here, but it seems probable that Matthew included articles before all uses of θεὸς, and Luke only before the first. It is perhaps more likely that Mark agreed with Luke (and substantially with the LXX) in omitting the last two articles (and possibly the first; so D W) and that they were added by assimilation to Matthew; but the matter is of stylistic rather than exegetical interest." France.

### Verse 27

οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς νεκρῶν ἀλλὰ ζωντῶν· πολὺ πλανᾶσθε.

ζῶ live, be alive

πολὺ adv much, greatly

πλανᾶω see v.24

"The fact that in Moses' time God could still call himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob implies that at that time he still remembered and cared for them, and, since he is the living, almighty and faithful God, those whom he remembers and cares for must be alive... And if they were still alive with God (for this pre-resurrection life, cf. Lk 23:43; 16:19-31; Phil 1:23...) in the time of Moses, we may be confident that at the last God will also raise up their bodies, so that they may share the final blessedness. The kernel of the argument is the faithfulness of God."

Cranfield

France similarly comments, "The argument is ... a reflection on the character of the covenant God whom Moses encountered, a God who through his new name 'I AM' is revealed as the living God, the ever-present helper and deliverer of his people. If such a God chooses to be identified by the names of his long-dead servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom his covenant was made, and whom he committed himself to protect, they cannot be simply dead and forgotten: οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς νεκρῶν ἀλλὰ ζωντῶν. It is a cryptic, allusive argument worthy of a rabbinic teacher, but its basis, far from being merely the tense of a verb, is in the fundamental theological understanding of Yahweh, the living God, and of the implications of his establishing an 'everlasting covenant' with his mortal worshippers."

**Day 950: Mark 12:28-34****Verse 28**

Καὶ προσελθὼν εἰς τῶν γραμματέων ἀκούσας αὐτῶν συζητούντων, ἰδὼν ὅτι καλῶς ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς, ἐπρωτησεν αὐτόν, Ποία ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη πάντων;

προσερχομαι come, approach  
εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἐνος, μιας, ἐνος one  
συζητεω argue, discuss, question  
ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω  
see, observe  
καλως adv well

"καλῶς in this context means not just 'cleverly' (so as to escape the intended trap or even to win the argument), but that Jesus' answers have been good, wholesome, satisfying, leading the scribe to hope for an equally enlightening (not just clever) answer to his own more fundamental question; cf. the combination of καλῶς with ἐπ ἀληθείας in v.32." France.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s  
ἀποκρῖνομαι answer, reply

"Whereas other questions have been posed by groups, giving the impression of official delegations, this comes from an individual, and it soon becomes clear that his attitude is not that of the majority of the γραμματεῖς. He comes already favourably disposed towards Jesus, and leaves even more so. Such an open-minded enquirer prefigures the minority support which Jesus and his followers will find even in the Sanhedrin (15:43; Acts 5:33-39; cf. Jn 7:50-51; 19:38-40)." France.

ἐπερωταω see v.18  
ποιος, α, ον interrog pro. what, which  
ἐντολη, ης f command  
πρωτος, η, ον first, leading, foremost

παντων "πασων might have been expected, as ἐντολη is feminine and is actually read by some MSS; but παντων is to be explained as a stereotyped use of the neuter genitive plural to intensify the superlative." Cranfield.

France comments, "The question of v. 14 was primarily political with theological overtones, and that of v. 23 essentially theological. Here, as is appropriate to a question from a scribe, we move onto more legal ground. The question is familiar from scribal debates about the law. Given that there are, according to scribal reckoning, 613 separate commandments in the five Books of Moses (R. Simlai [c. 250]...), the question of priority could not be avoided. The rabbis discussed which commandments were 'heavy' and which 'light', and sometimes ranked certain categories of law as more essential than others. There was a natural desire for a convenient summary of the law's requirements, a single principle from which all the rest of the Torah was derived (the rabbis used the term *k'lal* for such a summarising principle). See *b. Sab.* 31a for the famous request to Shammai and Hillel to 'teach me the whole Torah while I am standing on one leg', and Hillel's reply, 'Do not do to your neighbour what is harmful to you; this is the whole Torah: the rest is commentary.' Jesus' own summary in Mt 7:12 is strikingly similar, and again carries the rider, 'This is the law and the prophets'."

**Verse 29**

ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι Πρωτη ἐστὶν, Ἄκουε, Ἰσραήλ, κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστίν,

Jesus quotes the 'Shema', Deut 6:4f.

**Verse 30**

καὶ ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος σου.

ἀγαπήσεις Verb, fut act indic, 2 s ἀγαπαω  
love, show love for

"The love here commanded is the response of a man in the totality of his being to the prior love of God. The whole man is the object of the divine love and the whole man is thereby claimed by God for himself." Cranfield.

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire  
καρδια, ας f heart  
ψυχη, ης f self, inmost being, life, 'soul'  
διανοια mind, understanding  
ἰσχυς, υος f strength

"In place of δυνάμεως in the final phrase Mark has ἰσχύος; there is no great difference in meaning, and ἰσχύος (Luke uses the same noun) may well reflect an alternative Greek version which was in common use... The other difference from the LXX is that Mark has added the phrase καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου, thus giving four phrases where Deuteronomy has only three. There is some variation in the three nouns in the LXX versions of Deut 6:5 and of the related text 2 Ki 23:25, all four of Mark's nouns being represented among the variants, but with the exception of the Lucian revision (presumably influenced by NT texts) no LXX version has more than the three nouns of the Hebrew. Mark and Luke, however, according to the best represented text), each have four nouns, though Mark reverts to only three in the scribe's resume in v. 33. Matthew, like Dt 6:5, has only three nouns, but by retaining Mark's additional διάνοια and omitting ἰσχύς he has left himself without an equivalent to the third Hebrew noun... These variations indicate a text in regular liturgical or cataphetical use. They do not greatly affect the overall sense of the pronouncement, but the NT expansion from three nouns to four seems to be a distinctive feature of Jesus' use of it. It is difficult to differentiate clearly between the force of καρδία, ψυχή and διάνοια in the context of Hebrew thought, but the addition of διάνοια ... may suggest a deliberate extension of the familiar text to emphasise the intellectual faculty as a key element in God's service." France.

### Verse 31

δευτέρα αὕτη, Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν. μείζων τούτων ἄλλη ἐντολή οὐκ ἔστιν.

δευτερος, α, ον **second**

Though asked for the single greatest commandment, Jesus adds a second in his reply, since the two are inseparable (cf. 1 Jn 4:19,20). For Jesus' "explicit linking together of these two very familiar OT texts we have no Jewish precedent... The two are linked both by the key verb ἀγαπήσεις and by the fact that they represent respectively the first and second parts of the decalogue." France.

πλησιον i) prep with gen **near**; ii) ὁ π. **neighbour, fellow man.**

σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun **yourself**

The quotation is from Lev 19:18 (cf. Rom 13:10; Jas 2:8). "The command to love one's neighbour as oneself does not in any way legitimise self-love (as has sometimes been thought); but in it God addresses us as the men we actually are, sinners who love ourselves, and claims us *as such* for love to our neighbours." Cranfield.

μειζων, ον **greater, greatest**  
ἄλλος, η, ο **another, other**

### Verse 32

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ γραμματεὺς, Καλῶς, διδάσκαλε, ἐπὶ ἀληθείας εἶπες ὅτι εἷς ἔστιν καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος πλὴν αὐτοῦ·

καλως may be taken with εἶπες: 'Truly Master, you have well said ...'. "But it is perhaps better taken by itself as an exclamation." Cranfield. France agrees, saying, "For καλῶς as an exclamation in response to someone else's statement ('Well said', 'Hear, hear!') cf. Rom 11:20."

διδασκαλος, ον m **teacher**  
ἀληθεια, ας f **truth, reality**; ἐν ἀ. **truly**  
εἶπες Verb, aor act indic, 2 s **λεγω**  
πλην prep with gen. **except, besides**

Cf. Deut 4:35; Is 45:21; Ex 8:10.

### Verse 33

καὶ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν αὐτὸν ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς συνέσεως καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος καὶ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν τὸν πλησίον ὡς ἑαυτὸν περισσότερον ἔστιν πάντων τῶν ὀλοκαυτωμάτων καὶ θυσιῶν.

συνεσις, εως f **understanding, insight**

"The substitution of συνεσις for διάνοια in v.30 introduces a little variety, but makes no appreciable difference to the sense." Cranfield. France comments, "Its meaning is not far from that of διάνοια and has a similarly 'intellectual' tone."

ὅλος, η, ον **whole, all, complete, entire**  
περισσοτερος, α, ον **greater, much more**  
ὀλοκαυτωμα, τος n **whole burnt offering**  
θυσια, ας f **sacrifice, victim**

"ὀλοκαυτωμα represents the Hebrew *olah* and denotes sacrifice in which the flesh was not eaten, but the whole victim was burnt. Θυσια generally represents *zebah*, which is the ordinary word for a sacrifice in which the flesh was eaten by the worshippers." Cranfield.

France comments, "The sweeping 'demotion' of the whole system of temple sacrifice on the part of a scribe (much of whose professional concern focused around sacrificial regulations) is remarkable, though it may be paralleled by the summaries of the law attributed to both Hillel and Akiba... Its terms strongly recall Ho 6:6, where in the LXX the same two nouns, θυσια and ὀλοκαυτώματα are subordinated to ἔλεος (towards other people?) and ἐπίγνωσις θεοῦ. It does not of course, any more than did Ho 6:6 (and cf. e.g., 1 Sa 15:22; Is 1:10-17; Je 7:22-23), imply any doubt as to the validity of the sacrificial system; the point is its relative importance."

"After such an encouraging comment it is surprising to read that no one dared ask any more questions. Does Mark intend us to think back to the discomfiture experienced by the earlier questioners, or are we to assume that the 'good sense' displayed by this man is so exceptional, and the implications of his statement so radical, that others are wary of associating with him? But perhaps it is more likely that Mark intends no such direct link with the immediately preceding pericope, and that the final clause of v. 34 is simply a bridge passage to prepare for the new pattern from v. 35 where it is Jesus himself who poses the question or speaks on his own initiative." France.

### Verse 34

καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἰδὼν [αὐτόν] ὅτι νουνεχῶς ἀπεκρίθη εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Οὐ μακρὰν εἶ ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ. καὶ οὐδεὶς οὐκέτι ἐτόλμα αὐτὸν ἐπερωτῆσαι.

ἰδὼν see v.28

"The omission of αὐτόν by κ D W Θ and many other MSS is an obvious correction to the redundancy of Mark's grammar; its omission in most OL and some other versions is naturally explained as a matter of idiomatic translation rather than of textual difference." France.

νουνεχῶς wisely, sensibly  
ἀπεκρίθη see v.28  
μακρὰν far, far off  
βασιλεία, ας f kingdom

"Could the scribe but come to realise it, he was indeed not far from the kingdom of God; for he was actually in the presence of, and already apparently to some extent drawn towards, him in whose person and activity that Kingdom had come near to men, the one who is himself the αὐτοβασιλεία (see on 1:15)." Cranfield.

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing  
οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more  
τολμαῶ dare, be brave  
ἐπερωτῶ ask, question