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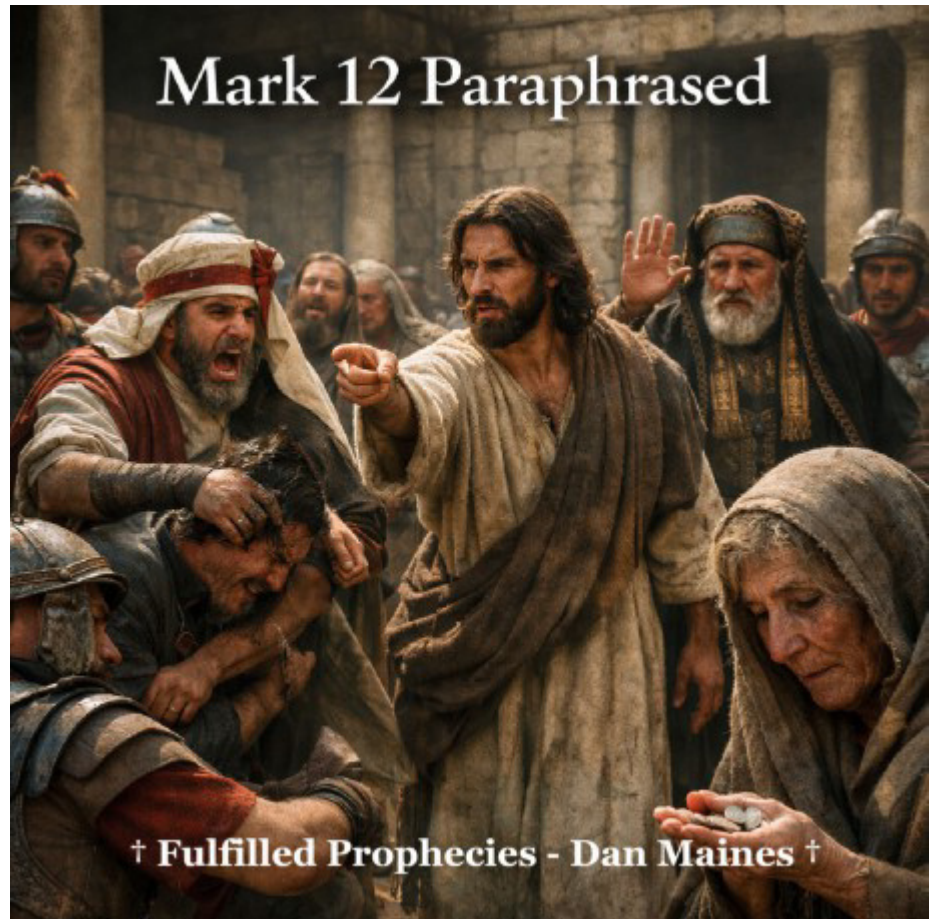
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## Mark 12 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## Mark 12 Paraphrased

### Introduction

† In this chapter Jesus confronts the corrupt leadership of Israel through parables, questions, and direct teaching, exposing their hypocrisy while revealing the coming judgment that would fall upon Jerusalem in that generation (Matthew 23:36).

† The religious leaders attempt to trap Jesus with political, theological, and legal questions, but every attempt exposes their ignorance of Scripture and the power of God (Luke 20:20-26).

† This entire confrontation happens in the temple during the final week before the destruction that would come upon that covenant system, exactly as Jesus had already warned (Luke 21:5-6).

### **Mark 12:1**

Jesus began speaking to them using a story. A man planted a vineyard, built a fence around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a tower. Then he leased the vineyard to farmers and traveled to another country.

† The vineyard represents Israel, imagery drawn directly from Isaiah's prophecy about God's covenant people (Isaiah 5:1-7).

† The farmers represent the religious leaders who were entrusted with Israel but failed to produce righteousness (Ezekiel 34:2-10).

### **Mark 12:2**

At harvest time he sent a servant to the farmers to collect some of the fruit from the vineyard.

† The servants represent the prophets whom God repeatedly sent to Israel (Jeremiah 7:25).

† The fruit represents justice, righteousness, and obedience to God (Micah 6:8).

### **Mark 12:3**

But they grabbed the servant, beat him, and sent him away with nothing.

† Israel repeatedly rejected and mistreated the prophets God sent to them (2 Chronicles 36:15-16).

† Jesus exposes the long history of rebellion among the leadership of Israel.

### **Mark 12:4**

So he sent another servant to them, but they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully.

† The pattern of rejecting God's messengers continued for centuries (Nehemiah 9:26).

† This reveals the hardened condition of the leadership Jesus was confronting.

### **Mark 12:5**

Then he sent another, and they killed him. He sent many others, some they beat and others they killed.

† This reflects the persecution of prophets such as Zechariah who was killed in the temple court (2 Chronicles 24:20-21).

† Jesus shows that their actions against Him were part of a long pattern of rebellion.

### **Mark 12:6**

He still had one person left to send, his beloved son. Finally he sent him to them saying, They'll respect my son.

† The son represents Christ Himself, the heir and rightful authority over Israel (Hebrews 1:2).

† Jesus is clearly identifying Himself as the Son sent by the Father.

### **Mark 12:7**

But those farmers said to one another, This is the heir. Come on, let's kill him and the inheritance will be ours.

† The leaders wanted control of the nation and its religious system (John 11:48).

† Their rejection of Christ revealed their desire for power rather than truth.

### **Mark 12:8**

So they seized him, killed him, and threw his body out of the vineyard.

† Jesus foretold His own rejection and crucifixion outside the city (Hebrews 13:12).

† The parable also hints at the coming removal of those

leaders.

### **Mark 12:9**

What will the owner of the vineyard do? He'll come, destroy those farmers, and give the vineyard to others.

† This points directly to the destruction of Jerusalem and the removal of the corrupt leadership (Luke 21:20-24).

† The kingdom would be given to a people producing fruit, including believers from all nations (Matthew 21:43).

### **Mark 12:10**

Haven't you read this scripture: The stone the builders rejected became the chief cornerstone.

† Jesus quotes Psalm 118 which the leaders knew well (Psalm 118:22).

† The rejected Messiah would become the foundation of God's kingdom.

### **Mark 12:11**

This came from the Lord, and it's amazing in our eyes.

† God's plan of redemption through rejection was foretold long before (Isaiah 53:3).

† The leaders were witnessing the fulfillment of that prophecy.

### **Mark 12:12**

They wanted to arrest him because they knew the story was about them, but they feared the crowd, so they left and went away.

† Their reaction proves they understood the message but refused to repent.

† Fear of people often keeps leaders from obeying truth (Proverbs 29:25).

### **Mark 12:13**

Later they sent some Pharisees and supporters of Herod to trap him with his own words.

† The Pharisees and Herodians normally opposed each other but united against Jesus (Psalm 2:2).

† Their goal was political entrapment.

### **Mark 12:14**

They came and said, Teacher, we know you're truthful and don't care about anyone's status. You teach the way of God honestly. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?

† Their flattery was manipulation intended to set a trap.

† If Jesus rejected taxes they could accuse Him of rebellion against Rome.

### **Mark 12:15**

Should we pay or shouldn't we? But Jesus knew their hypocrisy and said, Why are you testing me? Bring me a denarius so I can look at it.

† Jesus immediately exposes their motives (Psalm 94:11).

† Their hypocrisy revealed their dishonesty before God.

### **Mark 12:16**

They brought the coin. He asked them, Whose image and inscription is this? They said, Caesar's.

† Roman coins carried the emperor's image declaring his authority.

† Jesus used their own object to teach the truth.

### **Mark 12:17**

Jesus said, Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God. And they were amazed by him.

† Civil authority and divine authority are distinct responsibilities (Romans 13:1).

† Humanity bears God's image and ultimately belongs to Him (Genesis 1:27).

### **Mark 12:18**

Then Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him

with a question.

† The Sadducees rejected resurrection and many supernatural doctrines (Acts 23:8).

† Their theology was rooted in denial of God's power.

### **Mark 12:19**

Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies leaving a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.

† This law comes from the levirate marriage command (Deuteronomy 25:5-6).

† They attempted to use the law to ridicule resurrection.

### **Mark 12:20**

There were seven brothers. The first married a woman and died without leaving children.

† The story is hypothetical and exaggerated.

† Their goal was mockery rather than truth.

### **Mark 12:21**

The second brother married her and died leaving no children. The third did the same.

† The repeated deaths were meant to create a dilemma.

† Their reasoning was rooted in earthly assumptions.

### **Mark 12:22**

All seven brothers married her and none left children. Finally the woman died too.

† Their scenario ignored the power of God to establish new realities.

† They were measuring resurrection by earthly marriage laws.

### **Mark 12:23**

In the resurrection when they rise again, whose wife will she be since all seven had married her?

† They assumed resurrection life mirrored earthly life exactly.

† Their misunderstanding set up Jesus' correction.

### **Mark 12:24**

Jesus answered, Aren't you mistaken because you don't understand the scriptures or the power of God?

† Ignorance of scripture leads to false theology (Hosea 4:6).

† Denying God's power limits understanding of His promises.

### **Mark 12:25**

When people rise from the dead they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven.

† Jesus describes the changed conditions of resurrected life.

† Marriage serves earthly purposes but not the resurrected order.

### **Mark 12:26**

But regarding the dead rising again, haven't you read in the book of Moses in the passage about the burning bush, how God said to him, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

† Jesus proves resurrection from the Torah which the Sadducees accepted (Exodus 3:6).

† God's covenant relationship with the patriarchs continued beyond death.

### **Mark 12:27**

He's not the God of the dead but of the living. You're seriously mistaken.

† God's covenant promises guarantee life beyond physical death.

† Their denial of resurrection contradicted their own scriptures.

### **Mark 12:28**

One of the scribes came near and heard them arguing. Seeing that Jesus answered them well he asked, Which commandment is the most important of all?

† Unlike the others this scribe approached sincerely.

† Jewish teachers often debated which law carried greatest weight.

### **Mark 12:29**

Jesus answered, The most important is this: Hear Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

† Jesus quotes the Shema, Israel's central confession of faith (Deuteronomy 6:4).

† True worship begins with acknowledging the one true God.

### **Mark 12:30**

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.

† Total devotion to God fulfills the purpose of the law (Deuteronomy 6:5).

† Love for God must involve every part of life.

### **Mark 12:31**

The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

† Jesus quotes Leviticus 19:18 linking love for God with love for others.

† These two commands summarize the entire law and prophets (Matthew 22:40).

### **Mark 12:32**

The scribe said, Teacher, you're right. God is one and there is no other besides Him.

† The scribe affirmed the core truth of Israel's faith.

† His response shows sincere understanding.

### **Mark 12:33**

And to love Him with all the heart, understanding, and strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself is far more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.

† True obedience outweighs ritual sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22).

† The prophets repeatedly taught the same truth.

### **Mark 12:34**

When Jesus saw he answered wisely He said, You're not far from the kingdom of God. After that no one dared question him anymore.

† The man was close to truth but still needed faith in Christ.

† Jesus had silenced every trap set by His opponents.

### **Mark 12:35**

While teaching in the temple Jesus asked, How can the scribes say the Messiah is the son of David?

† Jesus begins revealing the deeper identity of the Messiah.

† The leaders understood the prophecy but not its full meaning.

### **Mark 12:36**

David himself said by the Holy Spirit, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

† Jesus quotes Psalm 110, one of the most quoted messianic prophecies.

† The Messiah would reign with divine authority.

### **Mark 12:37**

David himself calls him Lord, so how can he be his son? And the large crowd enjoyed listening to him.

† The Messiah is both David's descendant and David's Lord.

† This points to Christ's divine identity.

### **Mark 12:38**

In his teaching he said, Beware of the scribes who like walking around in long robes and receiving greetings in the marketplaces.

† Jesus exposes religious pride and love of recognition.

† Leadership driven by status corrupts faith.

### **Mark 12:39**

They like the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.

† Their religion was focused on public status.

† True humility was missing from their leadership.

### **Mark 12:40**

They devour widows' houses and for show make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.

† Their corruption harmed the most vulnerable.

† Jesus warns of severe judgment for religious exploitation (James 3:1).

### **Mark 12:41**

Jesus sat across from the treasury watching how people put money into the offering box. Many rich people were giving large amounts.

† The temple treasury was located in the court of women.

† Jesus observed not just the amount but the heart behind the giving.

### **Mark 12:42**

A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins worth almost nothing.

† Her offering was financially small but spiritually significant.

† God measures generosity by sacrifice, not amount.

### **Mark 12:43**

Calling his disciples he said, This poor widow gave more than everyone else who put money in the offering box.

† Jesus evaluates giving based on devotion and trust.

† Faithful sacrifice carries great value in God's kingdom.

### **Mark 12:44**

They all gave out of their surplus but she gave out of her poverty, putting in everything she had to live on.

† Her offering represented complete trust in God.

† This contrasts sharply with the greed of the religious leaders.

### **Historical References**

† Josephus records the corruption and greed of Jerusalem's priestly leadership shortly before the destruction of the city, confirming Jesus' warnings about them (Josephus, Wars of the Jews 5.13).

† Irenaeus wrote that Christ exposed the hypocrisy of Israel's leaders while revealing the true meaning of the law (Irenaeus, Against Heresies Book 4).

† Eusebius preserved early Christian teaching that these events happened shortly before the judgment that fell upon Jerusalem in AD 70 (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5).

† Clement of Alexandria wrote that Jesus revealed the spirit of the law rather than the empty rituals practiced by the religious authorities (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata Book 7).

### **How It Applies To Us Today**

† God still expects His people to produce fruit of righteousness rather than empty religious activity (John 15:8).

† Hypocrisy in spiritual leadership always brings judgment and accountability (1 Peter 5:2-3).

† True devotion to God is measured by love for Him and love for others (1 John 4:20-21).

† Faithful obedience often appears small in the eyes of the world but carries great value before God (Hebrews 6:10).

### **Q & A Appendix**

**Q** What does the vineyard represent in this chapter?

**A** The vineyard represents Israel and the covenant people entrusted with God's law and promises (Isaiah 5:1-7).

**Q** Who were the farmers in the parable?

**A** The farmers represent the corrupt religious leaders who controlled the temple system but rejected God's messengers

(Ezekiel 34:2-10).

**Q** Who is the son sent to the vineyard?

**A** The son represents Jesus Christ, the heir and authority sent by the Father (Hebrews 1:2).

**Q** What judgment did the parable predict?

**A** It predicted the removal of corrupt leadership and the destruction of Jerusalem's system (Luke 21:20-24).

**Q** Why was the widow's offering greater than the others?

**A** Because she gave everything she had while others gave only from their excess (2 Corinthians 8:12).

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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### **Source Index**

† Mark 12

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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