

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Mark: Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God

#### Part III: The Perfect Sacrifice Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 11:1-15:47

#### H. Believing In Jesus As Messiah And The Old Testament God

(Mark 12:28-37)

##### I. Introduction

- A. Mark's Gospel was written by John Mark who was rebounding from having abandoned Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:13) due to Mark's lapse in following Christ over some difficulty.
- B. That failure would have risen in part from Mark's lack of faith in trusting an Almighty God to help him face the difficulty, unbelief rising out of a small view of the Lord Himself.
- C. Though Mark trusted in Christ, Israel's leaders did not, and Jesus in Mark 12:28-37 tried to get a scribe to see He was the Messiah and Old Testament God that he might believe in Him. We view this passage for insight:

##### II. Learning To Believe In Jesus As Messiah And The Old Testament God, Mark 12:28-37.

- A. After Jesus had answered the Sadducees, and a scribe realized He had answered them well, the scribe asked Him what was the most important (*prote*, "first") commandment of all, Mark 12:28; B. K. C., N. T., p. 163.
- B. The scribe likely had no evil motive, but alluded to a debate among the scribes on "weightier and lighter statutes" of the Law where they often tried "to sum up the whole Law in a single unifying command," Ibid.
- C. Jesus' Mark 12:29-31 reply went beyond this debate on "lighter/weightier classifications" to clarify "the most important command and its inseparable companion, which together summarize the whole Law," Ibid.:
  1. Christ taught that the most important command identified the Scripture's God Who is One in essence as the true God versus pagan polytheism, and that He was to be loved with one's entire being, Mark 12:29-30:
    - a. The Jews' famous "Shema" from the opening word of the Deuteronomy 6:4 creed of "Hear!" (*shema*), is mentioned by Jesus in Mark 12:29. That creed importantly separates the Biblical faith on God from pagan religions, for it holds God to be One in essence in contrast to the pagan polytheism that held to many gods.
    - b. This Old Testament God Who is One in essence is to be loved with one's entire being, Deuteronomy 6:5 with Mark 12:30. Jesus mentioned one's heart, soul, mind and strength, going beyond what either the Hebrew text or the Septuagint did to "stress the comprehensive nature of the command," Ibid., p. 164.
  2. The second command that was linked to the first was God's Leviticus 19:18b call that one love his neighbor as himself, Mark 12:31a. One's neighbor is made in God's image (Genesis 1:27), so the neighbor is to be loved akin to the God Who is to be loved because the neighbor bears that beloved God's image.
  3. Jesus then summed up that there was no other commandment that was greater than these, Mark 12:31b.
- D. The scribe respectfully replied that Jesus had spoken the truth, and, typically avoiding making any unnecessary reference to God lest he use His name in vain, he confirmed that He is one, that there is no other deity besides Him, and to love Him with one's whole being and one's neighbor as one's self was better than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices, Mark 12:32-33; Ibid.
- E. This answer by this scribe reflects an accurate understanding of the spirit Isaiah 1:11-17 where God told His people to repent of their sin and relieve the oppressed in their midst versus vainly offering burnt offerings and sacrifices without rightly making these adjustments! (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Mark 12:33)
- F. Jesus accordingly replied that this scribe was not far from the kingdom of God, Mark 12:34, and no one dared to ask Him any more questions!
- G. However, Jesus continued to "answer" (v. 35) this scribe, teaching in the temple the next step that would take him into the kingdom was the step of accepting Jesus as Messiah and the Old Testament God, Mark 12:35-37!
  1. Jesus then asked how the scribes, like the scribe with whom He had just spoken, say Messiah is David's son when David by the Holy Spirit referred to Him as David's Lord in Psalm 110:1 (Mark 12:35-37).
  2. The only answer is to view Messiah as God, and that leads to the next step to enter the kingdom -- trusting in Jesus as that Messiah and Old Testament God due to His fulfillment of the Scriptures! (John 5:46)

***Lesson:*** After teaching that the most important command was to love with one's whole being the Old Testament God Who was One in essence opposite pagan gods, and to love his neighbor who is made in God's image as one loves himself, Jesus added one needed to believe Messiah was God and believe He was that One to be saved.

***Application:*** May we love with our entire being the Old Testament God Who is One in essence versus pagan multiple gods, may we love our neighbor as ourselves and may we believe in Jesus, the Messiah, as that God.