



The Question Concerning David's Son | 12:35-37

- 35 – *This question from Jesus concerning the Davidic line of the Messiah is understandable in the context of the expectation of a restored kingdom. The popular hopes expressed in 11:10 in the temple procession, “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!”*
- *That the Messiah was the son of David was a tenet of Judaism firmly grounded in OT prophecies (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea and Amos all speak of it).*
- *Question 1 could be phrased, “What do the scribes mean when they say that the Messiah is the son of David?” And Question 2, “In what sense then is he his son?”*
- *The scribes would have recognized this as a Haggada-question intended to reconcile two seemingly contradictory points in Scripture. Here the unity of Scripture was demonstrated by bringing the two passages into harmony, demonstrating their correct relationship to each other. We recognize this approach too in preaching.*

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- *Jesus question then is this, "How can the Scripture teach both that the Messiah is David's son and also that the Messiah is David's Lord?"*
- *36-37 – Jesus quotes David from Psalm 110:1*
 - *David is clearly regarded as a prophet witnessing to the supreme dignity of the Messiah.*
 - *In this verse, David hears a conversation between the Lord (Yahweh, God the Father) and David's Lord (Adonai, the Messiah, God the Son) saying that Christ would sit at the Father's right hand, the place of honor, until God subjugates Christ's enemies under his feet.*
 - *Only this saying of Jesus traces the authority of an OT passage to its inspiration, the Holy Spirit.*
 - *If David referred to the Messiah as his "Lord," he clearly understood that the one who was to receive the promise was far greater than himself.*
- *Relationship of Jesus as son of David and the Messiah's exultation is further developed in Acts 2:29-36, 13:32-39, Heb 1:5-13. In each the promise to David is the starting point that Jesus is the Messiah whose resurrection & exultation mark the fulfillment of the promise.*

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- *Jesus is not teaching that the future glorification of the Messiah affirms he is David's Lord. David is not the one in view here. The Messiah is in view. Here Jesus anticipates his own resurrection and exultation as the fulfillment of the Messianic promise given to David.*
- *David himself in Ps 110:1 distinguishes between his earthly, political sovereignty and the higher level of the sovereignty assigned to the Messiah.*
- *Christ did not come to restore David's kingdom as popular opinion supposed. He does not merely extend an earthly kingdom, but establishes a wholly different Kingdom.*
- *Jesus knew himself to be in a battle for the salvation of the people of God, not fought against Rome or any earthly power, as it has no earthly, political goals. Jesus set himself against the demonic powers of Satan. And victory demanded placing complete trust into the hands of his Father who had given to his Son this very promise.*

Warning Concerning the Scribes | 12:38-40

- *This general warning is included here in Mark as it follows logically the other conflicts with Jewish leaders –*
 - *28-34 – Jesus' intersection with the scribes was not always strained*
 - *35-37 – scribe's teaching is exposed as simplistic and misleading*
 - *38-40 – Here their self-intoxication is placed under the judgment of God*

- *Here Jesus boldly attacks the love of deference in these scribes whose preoccupation with the Law should have made them zealous that God alone should be praised by men.*

- *38-39 – The robe marked the scribe.*
 - *Long with a long fringe.*
 - *Leaders who wished to parade their position wore white, leaving bright colors to common people.*
 - *The people held them in awe and their words as possessing sovereign authority.*
 - *When a scribe passed, people rose respectfully with greetings of Rabbi, Father or Master.*
 - *Scribes were invited as ornaments to feasts. And given places of honor over the aged or parents.*
 - *Seats of honor were reserved for them in the synagogues.*

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- *But Jesus condemned the scribes for their desire to be tokens of status and for the self-satisfaction they afforded.*

- *40 – The shift from a desire for deference to abuse of privilege (devouring widow's houses) indicates this verse is a new level of warning, separate from 38-39.*

- *The scribes lived on subsidies since it was forbidden for them to be paid for their profession.*
 - *While few scribes were reduced to begging, evidence shows scribes belonged to the poorer classes.*
 - *So they strongly encouraged hospitality to themselves as an act of piety.*
 - *Many rich people of the time became patrons, putting their resources at the scribe's disposal.*
 - *So abuses were inevitable.*

- *The pretext of deep piety and lengthy prayers to win esteem and therefore charitable gifts teaches us the perils of losing perspective in the service of God.*

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- *Replacing God as their center of concern with themselves exposed them to the searching judgment of God.*
 - *2Ch 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of [them] whose heart [is] perfect toward him. [searching in blessing]*
 - *Rom 8:27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. [searching in prayer]*
 - *1Co 2:10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. [searching in revelation]*
 - *Ecc 11:9, 14 9 Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth . . . but know thou, that for all these [things] God will bring thee into judgment. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or evil.*
 - *Rom 2:2, 16 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. ... 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. [searching in judgment]*
 - *Rev 2:23 I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. [searching in judgment]*

The Widow who Gave Everything | 12:41-44

- *41-42 – This brief story sharpens the contrast between the sham righteousness of the scribes and this unnamed widow's wholehearted devotion to God.*
- *It also transitions to the Olivet Discourse as this story is in the Court of the Women as Jesus begins to leave the temple and then answers the disciple's questions about the future of the Temple (13:1-2).*
- *Jesus is seated on a bench watching the people bring their contributions to the Temple treasury. There were 13 trumpet-shaped receptacles for this purpose placed against the wall of the Court of the Women.*
- *In contrast to many wealthy who brought much, Jesus noticed a woman whose poverty could be guessed from the size of her gift.*

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- *She brings only two of the smallest coins (which Mark re-values into Roman coins for his readers). That she gave two is significant, for she could have kept one for herself.*
- *43-44 – In this woman, Jesus saw an example his disciples needed to appreciate. They, like we, probably felt the wealthy made the more significant contribution. Of what value are two small coins? What can they buy or accomplish?*
- *Prefacing his statement with a solemn “Amen!”, Jesus overturns this conventional wisdom. What the disciples failed to appreciate was the total commitment to God the widow’s gift represented – “even her whole living.”*
- *Rabbinic literature of the Rabbis has a similar story of a priest who rejected a woman who offering only a handful of meal. That night in a dream the priest was commanded “Do not despise her. It is as if she offered her life.”*

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- *Here we are reminded “Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks upon the heart” (1 Sam 16:7).*
- *But the gospel narrative goes further. Here the woman not only offers all she has, she offers all she has because that is what is necessary. That is what the disciples and we need to understand. The call of the gospel is a call to absolute surrender to God as the center and indeed everything for our lives.*