

**Lesson 44**  
**Time –4/1/30 AD, 12 Nisan Monday**

In our last lesson, Jesus was teaching in the Temple on Monday. In the forefront of His audience were the two living High Priests, Annas and Caiaphas. He had just finished telling them that the tax collectors and prostitutes were closer to God than they were. He had also warned them that they were wretches who would be brought to a wretched end. As we begin this lesson, Jesus was continuing to teach to the same audience.

***The Old Testament Scripture about the Stone that was Rejected***

**Matthew 21:42** Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “The stone the builders rejected has become the ~~capstone~~ *cornerstone*; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

**Mark 12:10-11** Haven’t you read this scripture: “The stone the builders rejected has become the ~~capstone~~ *cornerstone*; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

**Luke 20:17** Jesus looked directly at them and asked, “Then what is the meaning of that which is written: “The stone the builders rejected has become the ~~capstone~~ *cornerstone*’?”

The Greek words which the NIV has translated “capstone” in Matthew, Mark, and Luke are κεφαλὴν γωνίας {ke-fä-lān' gō-nē'-äs}. They literally mean “head of the corner.” The Hebrew in Psalms 118:22, from which this is quoted, is פִּנֵּה רֵאשִׁית {rōsh pin-nä'} is also literally the “head of the corner” or the “corner stone.”<sup>1</sup> The cornerstone was the stone on which the two walls that were built out of it depended for stability. A capstone on the other hand was usually the top stone on an arch or dome. The difference is critical. The entire Old Testament is built on the person and work of Jesus Christ. He is not just the cherry on the top. That was one of the main problems with 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jewish Christians. They saw Jesus as just the last revelation of the Law of Moses, not as the foundation of the Law of Moses. With the mystery of Christ revealed the whole Old Testament could become clear. The Jews wanted to keep all their old traditions many of which were based on their faulty understanding of the foundation. Also, as the “cornerstone” Jesus was the critical juncture of spiritual Israel and the believing Church who were the new people who would produce the fruit of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus was quoting here from Psalms 118:22. Part of that Psalm had been fulfilled the previous day when the crowd had cried “O LORD, save us; O LORD, grant us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD” (Psalms 118:6). The Lord would save those who would accept the cornerstone of the Lord’s true temple.

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<sup>1</sup> *The KJV, NAS, ASV, NLV, and the Amplified all have it correctly translated as “head of the corner” or “cornerstone.”*

Matthew 21:43 **“Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.**

The “people” Jesus was talking about was the Church. For the Church, the vineyard will not be geographical Israel, but spiritual Israel. It will include that which had also been the heritage of ancient Israel. That included God’s protection, blessing, and guidance. It also included the special custody of the Word of God. The Church was grafted into the vine of Israel but we are to produce the fruit that it often failed to produce. However, the time will come in the Tribulation when God will be able to produce the fruit that was intended from the original vine (the physical descendants of Israel). Those descendants will be the resurrected 144,000 Israelite witnesses for the last half of the Tribulation. Those descendants will also include Moses and Elijah, the two witnesses who will be resurrected for the first half of the Tribulation.

Matthew 21:44 **He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.”<sup>2</sup>**

Luke 20:18 **Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.”**

Here Jesus quoted another Old Testament prophecy from Isaiah 8:13-15. We will look into that in detail:

### ***The Relevant Passage – Isaiah 8:13-15***

Isaiah 8:13 **The LORD Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread,**

Instead of “celebrating” and being in awe of a weak mortal and cruel human king like King Rezin of Aram (who was described in Isaiah 8:6b), instead they should be in awe of the LORD Almighty.

Isaiah 8:14a **and he will be a sanctuary temple;**

The Hebrew word translated by the NIV as “sanctuary” here is מִקְדָּשׁ {mik·dāsh'}. It is used to refer to the Lord’s Tabernacle or Temple in 70 of the 72 times it occurs. The other two times it occurs it referred to the temples of other peoples. This is saying that the Lord Himself would be their Temple. This Temple wouldn’t be constructed of stone and wood. It would be a spiritual Temple constructed of the life and death of Jesus Christ. The LORD Almighty Himself would be Shiloah,<sup>3</sup> “the Sent One.” He would be the Temple. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy by becoming the real Temple with His life. The Tabernacle of the Exodus and the two Temples

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<sup>2</sup> See also Daniel 2:34-35

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 8:7 “this people has rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah.”

built later had only been a shadow and figure of His life. He confirmed this during His visit to the Temple on Passover in 27 AD:

John 2:18-21 “Then the Jews demanded of him, ‘What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple,<sup>4</sup> and I will raise it again in three days.’ The Jews replied, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple,<sup>5</sup> and you are going to raise it in three days?’ But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.”

**Isaiah 8:14b but for both houses of Israel he will be a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.**

In Romans, Paul made it clear that this referred to Jesus Christ the “stumbling stone”:

Romans 9:30-33 “What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it, not by faith, but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the ‘stumbling stone.’ As it is written: ‘See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.’”

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<sup>4</sup> *If you compare 1 Kings 6:1, 1 Kings 6:37-38, and 1 Kings 11:42-43 you will find that the glory of Solomon’s Temple was destroyed in its 34<sup>th</sup> year never to be regained. The Temple of Jesus Christ’s body was also destroyed in its 34<sup>th</sup> year, but it was raised in greater glory in three days. By comparing Ezra 6:15 with Haggai 1:14-15 we see that the Temple of Zerubbabel was completed in exactly three years, six months, and 7 days after its beginning (the foundation had been laid some seventeen years before). “Coincidentally” this was the exact length of time of Jesus’ ministry from His baptism on the Day of Atonement in 26 AD to His resurrection on the Feast of the Firstfruits in 30 AD. The date Zerubbabel’s Temple was started was also the date Christ was born in 4 BC according to my chronology: The Chronology of Christ by Richard S. Thompson.*

<sup>5</sup> *Jesus went to this Passover which was in Jerusalem on 14 Nisan 27 AD. This date is supported by the following facts. According to Josephus, the temple was started in the eighteenth year of Herod the Great’s reign which covered parts of 20 and 19 BC:*

*Antiquities of the Jews, Book XV, Chapter 11, Verse 1 “And now Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign, and after the acts already mentioned, undertook a very great work, that is, to build of himself the temple of God.” Although it was not to be completed for another 36 years, according to the Bible, on the occasion of this visit, the Jews told Jesus that the Temple had been under construction for forty-six years. Since neither Josephus nor the Jews in this passage are more precise, we can only work that out to either 27 BC or 28 BC.*

**Isaiah 8:14c-15** **And for the people of Jerusalem he will be a trap and a snare. Many of them will stumble; they will fall and be broken, they will be snared and captured.”**

This foretold that just as the people of Isaiah’s day were rejecting “Shiloah,” the promise of “the Sent One,”<sup>6</sup> when He finally came, the people would also reject Him. That Jerusalem of Jesus’ day would fall, and all the Jews who were in it would either be killed or taken away into slavery just as it was prophesied here in Isaiah.

### ***Returning to the Gospel Account***

**Matthew 21:45-46** **When the chief priests (*High Priests*) and the Pharisees heard Jesus’ parables, they knew he was talking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.**

**Mark 12:12** **Then they looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.<sup>7</sup>**

**Luke 20:19** **The teachers of the law and the chief priests (*High Priests*) looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.**

The High Priests knew that everything Jesus had spoken since they had first challenged His authority had been a direct challenge to their authority. They were outraged. Although they had been plotting Jesus’s death for three years, they couldn’t see how they could let Jesus live any longer. However, they had to wait until they could arrest Him without so many people present. It was probably a little after this hour that they arranged with Judas Iscariot for a time and place that they could surprise Jesus when He was alone with the Twelve.

At this point they walked away to avoid any further confrontation or humiliation.

### **The Parable of the Wedding Banquet.**

This parable only appears in Matthew. Mark, who recorded the departure of the High Priests didn’t record it. So, it is possible that the High Priests were present for this parable as well.

**Matthew 22:1-2** **Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.**

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<sup>6</sup> *Isaiah 8:6*

<sup>7</sup> *It is possible that the Parable of the Wedding Banquet in Matthew 22:1-14 was related before Annas and Caiaphas (the High Priests), and the Pharisees with them left.*

The “wedding banquet” for the Son also appears in Revelation. There it is called “the wedding of the Lamb”:

Revelation 19:6-9 “Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the *sound of many*<sup>8</sup> waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: ‘Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.’ (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) Then the angel said to me, ‘Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, ‘These are the true words of God.’”

It has been proposed, with some justification, by some that the actual “wedding banquet” will take place in Heaven, after the Rapture of the Church, and while the Great Tribulation is taking place on the earth.

**Matthew 22:3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.**

This first invitation represented the message of the Old Testament prophets. Their invitation had been to the Jews. As Jesus told this parable, the Jewish nation was about to refuse the invitation. Theologically, this demonstrates that not all who are called or invited accept the invitation. They use their free will to reject it.

**Matthew 22:4 “Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner:’ My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.’**

The second invitation, sent when the dinner was ready to eat, referred to the message sent forth to that generation specifically. It had been sent by John the Baptist, the 12 disciples, the 70 disciples, and Jesus Christ Himself.

**Matthew 22:5-6 “But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them.**

This spoke of the historical response of most of the Jews. They either passively turned their back on the call of God, or actively persecuted its messengers.

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<sup>8</sup> *Corrected translation*

<sup>9</sup> *Edersheim asserts that this should actually be translated “early meal.” The implication is the “early meal” (Christ’s First Advent) was ready. The great evening meal (implied), would be the Second Advent of Christ and His reign.*

**Matthew 22:7 The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.**

The “king” represented God the Father. This was a warning of what would happen in forty years. The “city” of those people was Jerusalem. In 70 AD, it would be burned and (except for the massive walls that created the Temple Mount) leveled with the ground.

**Matthew 22:8-9 “Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’**

This prophesied the establishment of Christ’s Church made up of “every tribe and language and people and nation.”<sup>10</sup>

**Matthew 22:10 So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.**

Notice especially that the guests included “both good and bad.” The invitation to be a part of the wedding supper of the Lamb doesn’t depend on our self-righteousness, but on Christ’s righteousness which He will give to anyone who accepts Him.

**Matthew 22:11 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.**

The wedding clothes for the guests in this parable are the same as the wedding clothes of the Bride:

Revelation 19:7b-8a “For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”

The fine linen, clean and white is the righteousness of Christ which we wear only through faith in Christ.

**Matthew 22:12 ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless.**

We can only stand before the presence of God if we are dressed in the imputed righteousness of Christ.

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<sup>10</sup> See Revelation 5:9b.

**Matthew 22:13-14** “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

Those who are chosen are those who stand in the righteousness that is through faith. The entire human race is invited, but only a few (relatively) will accept the invitation through faith. They are chosen because they stand in “the chosen one.” (Isaiah 42:1)

### *The Question of Caesar’s Coin*

At this point the High Priests knew they wanted to kill Jesus. There was only one sticking point. They didn’t have the authority to execute anyone. If they executed Jesus without Roman authority and the huge crowds that had welcomed Jesus rioted, the Romans would blame them. They needed to get Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, to execute Jesus for them. They knew that Pilate wouldn’t be impressed with their religious reasons. He would only be impressed with reasons that touched on the Roman right to rule and to collect taxes.

**Mark 12:13** **Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words.**

**Matthew 22:15-16a** **Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians.**

**Luke 20:20** **Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be honest. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor.**

You will notice by Mark’s account that Herod Antipas was in on the plot and promoted it with his own people (the Herodians). When Jesus was sent to Herod Antipas by Pilate on Wednesday morning it was with the implicit authority to do with Jesus as he wished. Instead, Herod Antipas sent Him back to Pilate because he wanted it to be the Romans who killed Him. That way both he and the Sanhedrin could escape blame from the people.

Luke’s account above makes it clear that getting the Roman Governor Pilate to condemn Jesus was at the heart of their plan.

**Mark 12:14a** **They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.**

**Matthew 22:16b** **“Teacher,” they said, “we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are.**

**Luke 20:21 So the spies questioned him: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.**

First, they began with what was supposed to be disarming flattery. We know it was flattery because they had never admitted that Jesus spoke the truth before. Their challenge also connected to the fact that one of Jesus’ favorite preambles to a teaching was “I tell you the truth.”<sup>11</sup> Then they challenged Him with a difficult question which they thought He couldn’t answer without either implicating Himself in subversion against the Roman authority or incurring the displeasure of the people.

**Mark 12:14b-15a Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn’t we?”**

**Matthew 22:17 Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”**

**Luke 20:22 Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”**

They hoped to get Jesus to respond with what they thought would have been the strict “truth” of Scripture. They thought that would have been that it wasn’t right to pay taxes to Caesar. Unfortunately, they didn’t understand scripture. Unfortunately for their designs, their flattering words about Jesus were correct. He wouldn’t change the truth for anyone. The Roman occupation was something that the Lord had ordained. According to the principal stated in Jeremiah 29:7 they were to seek the prosperity of the people to whom the LORD had subjected them:

Jeremiah 29:7 “Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

As time would show, the Romans would actually be more receptive of the truth than the Jews were.

**Mark 12:15b But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” he asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.”**

**Matthew 22:18-19a But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax.”**

**Luke 20:23 He saw through their duplicity and said to them,**

Jesus saw exactly what they were doing. That didn’t change His answer.

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<sup>11</sup> The phrase “I tell you the truth” occurs 29 times in Matthew alone.

Mark 12:16 **They brought the coin, and he asked them, “Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?” “Caesar’s,” they replied.**

Matthew 22:19b-21a **They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, “Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?” “Caesar’s,” they replied.**

Luke 20:24-25a **“Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?” “Caesar’s,” they replied.**

The coin they held up would have had the portrait of Tiberius Caesar <sup>12</sup> on it. It also would have been issued by the government of Tiberius. Jesus had asked for a Roman denarius. You must understand that there was also in the possession of many of them a Temple shekel. In the Temple the High Priests had instituted a policy whereby the payment of the annual Temple head tax and the purchase of the Passover lambs be paid for with Temple money not Roman money.

Mark 12:17 **Then Jesus said to them, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him.**

Matthew 22:21b-22 **Then he said to them, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.**

Luke 20:25b-26 **He said to them, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.**

In a way, Jesus was throwing the greed of High Priests in their face. However, the main point that Jesus was making was that what God wanted from them was spiritual, not material. As Jesus told Pilate two days later: John 18:36b “My kingdom is not of this world.” God didn’t need to rob the Romans of their earthly money. The currency of God’s people is altogether different. It is spiritual.



Roman Denarius of Tiberius

Temple Shekel

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<sup>12</sup> *Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus lived from 16 November 42 BC to 16 March 37 AD. He was the second Roman Emperor after Augustus. He ruled from 14 AD to 37 AD.*

## *The Question of the Seven Husbands*

**Luke 20:27 Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question.**

**Mark 12:18 Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.**

**Matthew 22:23 That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.**

This is what Josephus told us about the Sadducees and their view of resurrection in his two books, *Antiquities of the Jews* and *Wars of the Jews*:

“But the doctrine of the Sadducees is this: That souls die with the bodies; nor do they regard the observation of anything besides what the law enjoins them; for they think it an instance of virtue to dispute with those teachers of philosophy whom they frequent: but this doctrine is received but by a few, yet by those still of the greatest dignity. But they are able to do almost nothing of themselves; for when they become magistrates, as they are unwillingly and by force sometimes obliged to be, they addict themselves to the notions of the Pharisees, because the multitude would not otherwise bear them.” *Antiquities of the Jews* by Flavius Josephus, Book 18, Chapter 1, Paragraph 4

“But the Sadducees are those that compose the second order,<sup>13</sup> and take away fate entirely, and suppose that God is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; and they say, that to act what is good, or what is evil, is at men's own choice, and that the one or the other belongs so to everyone, that they may act as they please. They also take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in Hades. Moreover, the Pharisees are friendly to one another, and are for the exercise of concord, and regard for the public; but the behavior of the Sadducees one towards another is in some degree wild, and their conversation with those that are of their own party is as barbarous as if they were strangers to them. And this is what I had to say concerning the philosophic sects among the Jews.” *Wars of the Jews* by Flavius Josephus, Book 2, Chapter 8, Paragraph 14

To summarize, this says that the Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection from the dead. Also, because they didn't personally hold to the innumerable traditions of the Pharisees, the Romans found the Sadducees were easier to deal with and as consequence they held the highest offices in the province. For the last century of the existence of the Temple, almost all the High Priests were Sadducees including Annas and Caiaphas. However, because of the overwhelming

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<sup>13</sup> *The first order was the Pharisees.*

popularity of the Pharisees among the people, the Sadducees were obliged to cater to them and include them in the Sanhedrin. Their question to Jesus:

**Luke 20:28-33 “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. The second and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. Finally, the woman died too. Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”**

**Mark 12:19-23 “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”**

**Matthew 22:24-28 “Teacher,” they said, “Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. Finally, the woman died. Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”**

The Mosaic Law to which the Sadducees referred is sometimes called the Levirate Law. It was recorded in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 25:6 “If brothers <sup>14</sup> are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband’s brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her.”

The premise of this question of the Sadducees was to ask what happened in the resurrection. However, we know that the Sadducees didn’t believe in the resurrection. So, what were the Sadducees attempting to accomplish with this question? They already knew that Jesus believed in the resurrection. In His most celebrated miracle, the raising of Lazarus, just a few months before in nearby Bethany, He had proclaimed: John 11:25-26 “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.” I suspect that this was a riddle the Sadducees had posed against their enemies, the Pharisees, who believed in a resurrection. The Pharisees had probably never been able to

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<sup>14</sup> *If there were no literal brothers available, a close relative could substitute. We see an example of this in the Book of Ruth where Boaz supplied the place of a kinsman-redeemer even though he was only a cousin of Ruth’s dead husband.*

answer it without sounding ridiculous. I think the Sadducees were trying to accomplish the same effect on Jesus.

**Luke 20:34-36** Jesus replied, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection.

**Mark 12:24-25** Jesus replied, “Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.<sup>15</sup>

**Matthew 22:29-30** Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

Jesus cut through all the confusion by pointing out that the age of this earthly life will be different from the age of the resurrection. The purposes of the two ages will be different and there will be no need of marriage in the Resurrection. For one thing, there will be no new children. The body of Christ will be complete.

**Luke 20:37-38** But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.<sup>16</sup>”

**Mark 12:26-27** Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!”

**Matthew 22:31-33** But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of

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<sup>15</sup> Notice that this does not say that angels had never been given in marriage or had children. It just says that at that time, they didn’t marry. Genesis 6 seems to indicate that before the Flood they still had a sexual drive and were able to have half-breed children with human women: Genesis 6:1-2, 4 “When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God (angels) saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.--- The Nephilim were on the earth in those days--and also afterward- -when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them.”

<sup>16</sup> In other words, though those who have passed away are dead to us, to God they are still in His sight because they still exist.

**the dead but of the living.” When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.**

The Sadducees not only rejected resurrection, but they accepted only the Books of Moses as authoritative. The Pharisees, who believed in resurrection, had never been able to successfully argue a case for resurrection from the Books of Moses (the Pentateuch). Jesus’ argument here for resurrection stunned the Sadducees because they had never heard it made, and it came from Exodus 3:6 in the Pentateuch, one of the Books of Moses. Jesus amazed them with His simple irrefutable answer from the writings of Moses. The accounts in Mark and Luke are very similar as you can see.<sup>17</sup>

**Luke 20:39-40 Some of the teachers of the law responded, “Well said, teacher!” And no one dared to ask him any more questions.**

**Mark 12:28a One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer,**

**Matthew 22:34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together.**

The term “teachers of the Law” or “experts in the Law” always applied to members of the Pharisees. This is borne out in these passages. The Pharisees could not help appreciating how Jesus had proved their own position on the “resurrection of the dead” from the Pentateuch which they had never been able to do. However, after they got together, they had their own question for Jesus.

### *The Most Important Commandment*

**Mark 12:28b he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”**

**Matthew 22:35-36 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”**

Only Mark and Matthew contain this question of the Pharisees. The question shows some level of agreement between Jesus and one of the Pharisees. Luke had already dealt with the same question which had been asked of Jesus earlier. Then, it had been from the man to whom Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. That had been about four months earlier.

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<sup>17</sup> *There are still large groups in modern Judaism who hold the view of the Sadducees and reject the Resurrection.*

Mark 12:29a-30 **“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’**”

Matthew 22:37-38 **Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.**”

The first commandment to which Jesus referred was from Deuteronomy:

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”

This verse is often called the “shema” because the first two words of the command are the Hebrew *שמע ישראל* {shema`yisrāāl}. It means “hear Israel.” It is still a tradition in Judaism that this prayer serves as a centerpiece of the morning and evening Jewish prayer services. In Jesus’ day, every observant Jew knew this verse by heart.

In the Gospel of Matthew, the first part of the command (“Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one”) is omitted. Also omitted was the last part of the command (“and with all your strength”). If we remember that the Gospel of Matthew was originally written to Jewish readers we should understand that the “shema” was so familiar to them that it was unnecessary to quote all of it. In the actual event, as recorded in Mark (written primarily to Gentiles), Jesus did quote all of it.

Mark 12:31a **The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’**

Matthew 22:39 **And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’**

The second command that Jesus quoted was from Leviticus:

Leviticus 19:18 “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.”

It is awesome to remember that Jesus Himself fulfilled the whole law. He kept both of these commands fully. He loves His neighbor (all of the human race including each one of us) as He does himself.

Mark 12:31b **There is no commandment greater than these.”**

Matthew 22: 40 **All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”**

These two broad commands deal with the two aspects of life which are the real purpose of all the rest of the Law.

The first commandment (“Love the Lord your God”) deals with our proper relationship with God. Many of the other commandments of “the Law” (which includes all of the Old Testament) related to understanding and coming to love the LORD. For example, the purpose of the commandments related to the original Tabernacle worship was to allow the people to come to understand the LORD and His mercy, love, and grace.

The second commandment (“Love your neighbor as yourself”) deals with our proper relationship with our fellow man. That relationship should consist of serving the long-term interests and welfare of our fellows. The whole range of behavioral prohibitions were an expression of what a society, and the individuals in it, should do to protect their neighbors from the deadly consequences of those behaviors. Those prohibitions included, among other things, theft, murder, adultery, eating unclean animals, exposure to dead bodies, and unsafe disposal of human waste.<sup>18</sup>

**Mark 12:32-33 “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”**

Only Mark recorded this response of this Pharisee to Jesus. At least that Pharisee, among all the other Pharisees, saw that the ritual of the Law was meaningless without the reality of faith. A true love of God, however small, will always coexist with a faith in God.

**Mark 12:34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.**

The first commandment (“love the Lord your God”) encompasses that which energizes the plan of God in our lives, beginning with salvation. Jesus took on Himself humanity and the form of a servant to illustrate to God’s creatures why He is truly worthy of our love and worship.

The second commandment refers to the working out of God’s plan in our lives when we understand what the One we love is like. Paul described that dynamic in Philippians:

Philippians 2:5-6 “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!”

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<sup>18</sup> *Also included were self-destructive and socially destructive sexual practices.*

This Pharisee responded to Jesus with understanding and wholehearted agreement. Jesus told him “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” I cannot help but believe that this was one of those Pharisees who later believed in Jesus (Acts 15:5). This was not the way most of the Pharisees wanted the questioning of Jesus to go, so they didn’t ask Him any more questions.

**Matthew 22:41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,**

**Mark 12:35a While Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, he asked,**

**Luke 20:41a Then Jesus said to them,**

Although the Pharisees were still gathered in front of Jesus (evidently along with the Sadducees), they weren’t willing to ask Jesus any more questions. Instead, Jesus asked them a question.

**Matthew 22:42a “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?”**

**Mark 12:35b “How is it that the teachers of the law say that the Christ is the son of David?**

**Luke 20:41b “How is it that they say the Christ is the Son of David?**

The Pharisees believed from the Psalms and the Prophets <sup>19</sup> that the Messiah (Christ) would be the King of Israel and Son of David. Jesus referred here to this correct belief.

**Matthew 22:42b “The son of David,” they replied.**

The Pharisees confirmed that was what they believed.

**Matthew 22:43-44 He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.””**

**Mark 12:36 David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared: “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.””**

**Luke 20:42-43 David himself declares in the Book of Psalms: “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.””**

Jesus quoted from Psalms 110, which was one of the Scriptures that the Pharisees claimed to believe and understand. Jesus said that it was the Holy Spirit speaking through David. The Holy

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<sup>19</sup> *Since the Sadducees didn’t accept the Psalms or the Prophets as authoritative, they had no view on the matter.*

Spirit was speaking things through David that David himself couldn't possibly know. Clearly, the phrase "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet" referred to the Messiah.

**Matthew 22:45** **If then David calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?"**

**Mark 12:37a** **David himself calls him 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?"**

**Luke 20:44** **David calls him 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?"**

Jesus here proved from scripture that the Messiah, the "son of David," was also the "Son of God." The Pharisees were willing to tolerate the argument that Jesus might be the Messiah. After all, they had the genealogical records in the Temple that proved Jesus Himself was descended from David on both His supposed father's side (Joseph's side)<sup>20</sup> and on His mother's father's side.<sup>21</sup> He was "a son of David."

However, when Jesus had gone to the Feast of Tabernacles six months earlier, they had tried to stone Him for saying "before Abraham was born, I am!" They had never understood or considered all the passages in scripture which indicated that the Messiah (or Christ) would also be "the Son of God." Here, Jesus took the occasion to teach one of those passages.

The Sanhedrin had been willing to tolerate listening to the claims of many people who had come in the past claiming to be the Messiah. After all, all Jews understood that a Messiah was going to come to restore a sovereign Jewish Kingdom. Although they didn't like it, they couldn't accuse such a person who made such a claim as being guilty of heresy. However, they weren't willing to tolerate the idea that such a Messiah was to be "the Son of God." It was on this point that they finally condemned Him at His trial.<sup>22</sup>

**Mark 12:37b** **The large crowd listened to him with delight.**

**Matthew 22:46** **No one could say a word in reply, and from that day (*time*)<sup>23</sup> on no one dared to ask him any more questions.**

As translated by the NIV, Matthew's words, "from that day", implies that there were other days during that week when the Pharisees might have challenged Jesus. This in turn implies that there was another succeeding day when Jesus appeared in public. That could only have been the next day, which was Tuesday. There is no record in scripture of anything that Jesus said in public on Tuesday or where He said it. It might also be argued that one of the subsequent days

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<sup>20</sup> *The Genealogy recorded in Matthew 1:1-16.*

<sup>21</sup> *The Genealogy recorded in Luke 3:23-38.*

<sup>22</sup> *Matthew 26:63-64, Mark 14:61-62, Luke 22:70.*

<sup>23</sup> *The Greek word here is ἡμέρα {hā-me'-rā}. It can also be translated "time."*

to which Matthew might be referring would be the trial of Jesus two nights later, which by Jewish time keeping was two days later.<sup>24</sup> At that time they refrained from questioning His doctrine as well.

At this point I think it would be useful to study the whole of Messianic Psalm 110 from which Jesus taught here.

### **Psalms 110**

We know that Psalm 110 is Messianic. It is quoted three times in the Gospels by Jesus Christ Himself. At those times Jesus quoted it as referring to Himself. Verse 1 is quoted in all three synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) by Jesus. Jesus quoted them when refuting the Pharisees who attacked him for claiming to be David's promised son and the Son of God. Matthew 22:41-44 "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" "The son of David," they replied. He said to them, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet." The only answer to this was that David's greater son was also Lord and God.

The Pharisees, of course, would not answer the question. They did not seek to kill him for claiming to be the Messiah (although they brought that charge before the Roman Governor unsuccessfully). However, that charge would not have served their purpose in front of the Jewish masses who were looking for a revolutionary leader. They needed to charge Jesus with a religious crime, not a political crime. In their own court the only religious "crime" they could establish was that He said He was the Son of God. If they had read Psalm 110 honestly (as well as many other passages) they would have had to admit that the Messiah had to be the Son of God. This episode is also recorded in Mark 12:35-37 and Luke 20:41-44.

Also, in the New Testament, in Hebrews 1:13, Psalms 110:1 is quoted as an argument for the supremacy of Jesus Christ: Hebrews 1:13 "To which of the angels did God ever say, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?"

Hebrews 5:6 also quotes verse 4 ("You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek") as being addressed to Jesus Christ: Hebrews 5:5b-6 "But God said to him, 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'<sup>25</sup> And he says in another place, 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.'"

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<sup>24</sup> *Each new Jewish day starts just after sundown.*

<sup>25</sup> *Quoting Psalms 2:7.*

Thus, we can say with assurance that this short Psalm is incontrovertibly Messianic. It speaks of Jesus' ascension, His death on Mt. Zion, His priesthood, and His return in triumph.

***Psalm 110***  
*Of David. A psalm.*

The superscription tells us only that it was written by David. We also know that its truth was breathed into the mind of David and breathed out onto the page by the power of the Holy Spirit. In this particular Psalm David wrote things that he could not have possibly known through his own human experience or understanding.

**Psalms 110:1a The LORD says to my Lord:**

The Hebrew word translated in all capitals as “LORD” is יהוה {yeh·ho·vä'}. It is a word which always speaks of God. In this context it is speaking of God the Father. The Hebrew word translate “Lord” is אֲדֹנָי {ä·done'}. It is a word which connotes authority and can be used to speak of God, or of a man. In this context it is speaking of Jesus, the Son of God. He was also David's Lord.

**Psalms 110:1b “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”**

We know that the position at the right hand of the Father is ascribed to Jesus:

Matthew 26:63b-64 “The High Priest said to him (*Jesus*), ‘I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.’ ‘Yes, it is as you say,’ Jesus replied. ‘But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

The same position is described in Mark 14:62, Mark 16:19, Luke 22:69, Acts 2:33, and many other passages.

**Psalms 110:2a The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion;**

The Hebrew word translated “scepter” here is the word מַטֵּה {mat-teh'} which is the word used for staff or rod. It is the same word used for Moses' staff, which was a powerful symbol of the Cross in the Old Testament. That scepter (or staff) would be extended from Zion. Mt. Zion was where Jesus was crucified, so this was a prophecy of from where His power would come. It would come from the Cross. It was the power of love and self-sacrifice. That spot on Mt. Zion is also where the Lord will reign and from which the River of Life will flow when He returns.

**Psalms 110:2b-3a you will rule in the midst of your enemies. Your troops will be willing on your day of battle.**

This seems to refer to the great battle at the end of the Tribulation when the Lord Jesus will return with His host of Angels to destroy His enemies, both fallen angels, and human.

**Psalms 110:3b Arrayed in holy majesty, from the womb of the dawn**

The womb of the dawn is the east, where the sun rises. Other scriptures also tell us that the Lord will come from the East like the rising sun. Zechariah 14:3-4a “Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem.”

Also see Habakkuk 3:4, Ezekiel 43:1-4, Malachi 4:2 among others.

**Psalms 110:3c you will receive the dew of your youth.**

What is the meaning of the phrase “the dew of your youth”? We know it is speaking about Jesus Christ. Dew is usually associated with the time, just before daybreak in the morning. Perhaps the connection is found in Psalms 133:3 which in the KJV is translated: “It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the LORD ordained his blessing, life forevermore.” Here, dew is associated both with Mt. Hermon where the disciples (Peter, James, and John) first saw the Lord Jesus in His heavenly glory, and Mt. Zion where Jesus won for us eternal life with Him. Also remember that when the Lord was on Mt. Hermon, a cloud (dew) enveloped Him. I think it is fair to say that verse 3 is implying that at Jesus’ Second Advent, the full promise of His First Advent will be fulfilled.

**Psalms 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”**

This verse is quoted in Hebrews 5:6 as referring to Jesus Christ. It speaks of the fact that Jesus’ lineage from His fathers was not from the line of priests (Aaron). On the legal side (Joseph) Jesus was descended from Judah. On the biological side (Mary’s father) His patrimony was also from Judah.<sup>26</sup> That was the line of the Kings. However, like Melchizedek, the ancient King of Salem, Jesus was to be both King and Priest (Genesis 14:17-18). His priesthood became functional when He went to the Cross.

**Psalms 110:5 The Lord at your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.**  
**KJV**

Here the Psalm switches from a report of the conversation between Jesus Christ (the Lord) and the Father (the LORD), to a promise of what the victory of Christ means to the believer. Remember, the “Lord” here is יהוה {ä·done’}, which is speaking of the Son, Jesus Christ. This is

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<sup>26</sup> However, Jesus’ mother Mary’s mother was from the line of the Aaron (the line of the Priests). We know this because Mary’s aunt Elizabeth was from that line (Luke 1:5).

saying the Lord Jesus Christ who is at the right hand of any believer to protect him is the same one who will come to claim His Kingdom.

Below are other verses which show us that God is always at our right hand.

Psalms 73:23 “Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.”

Psalms 121:5 “The LORD watches over you-- the LORD is your *protection* at your right hand.

The Lord who protects us is the same one who will ultimately wrest His rightful Kingship from the rulers of this world.

**Psalms 110:6 He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.**

This verse is still speaking of the Lord’s Second Advent, which is called “the day of His wrath” because that is when He will cleanse the earth of all those who have still rejected Him after seven years of intense revelation by both miracles and powerful preaching.

**Psalms 110:7 ~~He will drink from a brook beside the way; therefore he will lift up his head~~ He will drink from the flood on the way; therefore he will exalt the head.**

The NIV translation is fairly typical of the various translations I looked at. However, I ran into a problem. If verse seven was to be taken literally, I couldn’t quite understand why Jesus’ source of drinking water would lift up or exalt His head, or anyone else’s head. However, if it was to be taken as a figurative expression, it would make perfect sense as speaking of Christ’s humility in coming as a simple human being who had to kneel down and drink from a brook. However, that seemed a bit thin as related to Christ’s mission. However, when I investigated the meaning of the word translated “brook”, the Hebrew נַחַל {nakh'·al}, I found that it could also be translated “flood, river, torrent, or stream.” A flood, or a torrent is often used as a figure for judgment. This began to make more sense, particularly considering the figurative use of Christ drinking in the New Testament:

John 18:11 “Jesus commanded Peter, ‘Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?’”

Matthew 20:22 “‘You don’t know what you are asking,’ Jesus said to them (*James and John*). ‘Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?’”

Thus, we see that the figure of Christ drinking from the flood referred to His taking on himself the judgment that was due to us.

I have also changed the translation of the last phrase because the Hebrew word which the NIV translates “will lift up” here is רָוַם {rüm} which is more on the order of “to exalt by lifting up.” In English “to lift up the head” is often taken to mean “to encourage” and in this context it means something more profound.

Also, there is no “his” in the original Hebrew or in the Greek of the Septuagint. About half the English versions have put in “his” instead of “the.” I can’t help thinking they have done it that way because it would conform with what they think the verse should be saying.

If we correct the questionable translations of the three words noted, the verse looks like this. “He will drink from the flood on the way; therefore he will exalt the head.” The flood is often used to speak of judgment. I think His drinking of the flood is speaking of His decision to drink the cup of judgment for the sins of mankind. Because of this, He, and all of us in Him have our heads exalted.

The figurative concept of drinking of the Flood was also graphically presented at Jesus’ baptism in “the flood” of the River Jordan by John the Baptist at the very place the Ark had made the way for the people of Israel to enter the land through “the flood” (Joshua 3).