

# Bible Study 2023-2024

## Class #20

3/5/24

# Synoptics 23 – 24

- Matthew 22 (Cont)

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- **Matthew 22:23-28** *“That same day the Sadducees came to him,...For they all had her”*
  - The Sadducees’ belief that there was no resurrection will become important later in the **Book of Acts**
  - They only believed in the Pentateuch (1<sup>st</sup> five books)
  - On the other hand, the Pharisees believed in the resurrection and the Pentateuch, Wisdom literature, and the writings of the prophets
  - Father asked that we consider **Wisdom 2\*** and **3**, where we will find an image of the immortality of God

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- He also referenced **Daniel 12** and **Ezekial 37** (and **Job**), where we find references to the resurrection
- Even though there are no references to it in the Pentateuch, there certainly are references to it in many Old Testament books
- Furthermore, the Pharisees held that some day the dead would rise
- With all this in mind, we see the Sadducees giving this conundrum in a ridiculous parable to Jesus to poke fun at the Pharisees
- They were attempting to trap Jesus by making a mockery of the teaching of the Pharisees

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- **Matthew 22:29-30** *“But Jesus answered them,...Are like angels in heaven”*
  - Jesus told the Sadducees that they were wrong on two counts
  - First, he told them that they did not know their scriptures (**Tobit 6:13** speaks of seven husbands for one bride)
  - **Tobit** would have been one of the books that the Pharisees accepted as canonical

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- The Sadducees, on the other hand, rejected and made fun of this story
- So, Jesus told them that they did not know the scriptures, nor did they know the power of God who can do anything
- Then, Jesus went back to His first condemnation by asking them if they had read how God claimed in the Pentateuch to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- **Matthew 22:31-33** *“And as for the resurrection of the dead,...they were astonished at his teachings”*
  - Jesus then quoted from the Pentateuch
  - Father pointed out that when Jesus spoke to the Sadducees, He quoted from the Pentateuch
  - But, when speaking to the Pharisees, He quoted from the rest of the canon because otherwise they would not listen to Him
  - Because of these differences, Jesus asked the Sadducees if they had read that God is the God of the living to include Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (**Exodus 3:6**)

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- Obviously, they were long dead, yet (according to Jesus) were still in existence
- So, Jesus finds in the text of the Pentateuch at least a hint of the concept of immortality
- Of course, after this exchange, **the Sadducees were silenced**, so the Pharisees took this moment to challenge Jesus again



# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- **Matthew 22:34-46** *“But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees they came together....nor from that day did anyone dare ask him any more questions”*
  - The response in this verse was from **Deuteronomy 6:4**, any rabbi of that time would agree
  - Next Jesus quoted from **Psalms 110:1** (He could not have done this with the Sadducees, but the Pharisees because they believed that the Psalms were inspired)
  - The questions were: How could the Lord (Yahweh) say to my Lord, sit at my right hand and deliver my enemies under our feet?

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- If David called him Master, how is he his son?
- Since the **Pharisees could not answer** these questions, they were silenced, and stopped asking Jesus questions
- Father pointed out that this was a conundrum, which will be answered in **Matthew 23**, based on **Psalms 110**
- This Psalm must have made sense in the time of the original Davidic text
- David was still alive at the time Solomon became king, and Solomon was even more powerful than David

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- David knew that his son Solomon would be greater than he was, and might even do things greater than he had done
- Thus, we can see that David's dynasty inherited the priest Melchizedek (as also being greater than David)
- If the Pharisees were reading **Psalms 110** messianically, this would provide further evidence that they were reading all of this information in the Old Testament in reference to the coming of the great and final Messiah

# Matthew 22 (Cont)

- This was why they could not answer Jesus' question
- Father pointed out that if one reads this text as a reference to the great and final Messiah that we have a conundrum
- The answer is that Jesus was not only the son of David, but He is also God!
- He is not just the human king, but is also the divine king, and therefore greater than David
- We will now turn to **Matthew 23**

# Synoptics 23 – 24

- Matthew 23

# Matthew 23

- **Matthew 23:1-5** *“Then said Jesus to the crowds and his disciples,...And there fringes long”*
  - Many of us have seen pictures of modern Jews at the wailing wall wearing their phylacteries strapped around their forehead and hand
  - These are small leather boxes containing a scripture quote from **Deuteronomy 6** or **Exodus 13** stating that one must keep the Law of God on their forehead or hand
  - According to the Torah, this was done because we think with our head and do work with your hand

# Matthew 23 (Cont)

- We also see this in **Revelation 13:16-17** where we see the mark on a person's forehead and hand
- This, the Law of God, contrasted Roman Law
- In addition to phylacteries, Matthew discussed the fringes on the long garment worn by the Pharisees

# Matthew 23 (Cont)

- **Matthew 23:6-12** *“and they love the place of honor at feasts...Humbled himself will be exalted”*
  - *Rab* in Hebrew means the one above you (like your teacher)
  - In this passage, we see a connection between rabbi and teacher
  - Jesus is saying that His apostles should not exalt themselves above others, but rather be their servant
  - On their way to Jerusalem, we have already seen their bickering over who was to be the greatest in the Kingdom



# Matthew 23 (Cont)

- Jesus responded by pointing out how the world handled things like this
- He told them that if they wanted to be in the Kingdom (the church), one should be the servants of all
- Unfortunately, many Protestants seem to have taken this passage out of context, claiming that Catholics violate this passage in Matthew, by calling our priests “father”
- Father Sebastian pointed out that we call many people, teacher, and professor in school, and certainly we call the head of our households, “father”

# Matthew 23 (Cont)

- When we read this passage in its context, we find that Jesus was speaking about how the Pharisees (who obviously knew more about the Law than a commoner, but failed to follow it) exalted themselves over the people
- Jesus was calling the people to be humble and not like the Pharisees
- He said that the leaders of the Kingdom were to use their authority over others in humility, as servants among their brethren

# Matthew 23 (Cont)

- He was not calling them not to use the title of father or teacher, or master, or they would be breaking this rule all the time
- When we read both the Old and New Testaments, we find people like Paul calling himself a “spiritual father” of Timothy
- He also saw himself as the “father” of the church at Corinth (obviously, he was not contradicting the teaching of Jesus)
- Thus, Matthew was giving us the story of Jesus’ teaching within the context of 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jewish culture