

THE CONFLICTS IN MARK 11-12*

between Jesus and various Jewish leaders regarding Jesus' identity

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A. Five Jewish groups arguing (and losing) with Jesus in Mark 11-12:

- 1) Chief Priests and Elders (11:27) ~ the religious leaders of Israel
- 2) Pharisees (12:13) ~ those who took God's law seriously & believed in heaven
- 3) Herodians (12:13) ~ those who cooperated with Rome & were thus "corrupt"
- 4) Sadducees (12:18) ~ did not believe in the whole Old Testament or in heaven
- 5) Scribes (11:27; 12:28; 12:35) ~ the teachers of the Scriptures

B. Parallel structure between the conflicts in Galilee and in Jerusalem:

IN GALILEE (Mark 2-3)	IN JERUSALEM (Mark 11-12)
1) Healing paralytic ~ authority to forgive sins, thus claiming to be God (2:1-12)	1) Cleanses Temple ~ authority to do so as God (11:27-33)
2) Eats with tax collectors ~ Jesus came not for the "righteous," but sinners (2:15-17)	2) Paying taxes ~ Jesus' kingdom not of this world (12:13-17)
3) Disciples not fasting ~ Jesus as the heavenly bridegroom (2:18-22)	3) No marriage in heaven ~ God of the living (12:18-27)
4) Healing on Sabbath ~ Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath; a day to do good (2:23 - 3:6)	4) Great Commandments ~ love God & neighbor (12:28-34)
5) Is Jesus Demonic? ~ He casts out demons as the "strong man" from God (3:22-30)	5) Is Jesus the son of David? ~ son of David & Son of God (12:36-7)

C. Another structural possibility: Rabbinic Passover dialog

First century Jewish Rabbis were sometimes asked four types of wisdom questions surrounding the Passover feast (as suggested by D. Daube):

- 1) Rabbinic Law ~ paying taxes to Caesar? (12:13-17)
- 2) Mocking or testing questions (*boruth*) ~ marriage in heaven? (12:18-27)
- 3) Interpretation of difficult Scriptures (*haggadic*) ~ son of David? (12:35-37)
- 4) Conduct or Morality (*darekh eres*) ~ the greatest commandments? (12:28-34)

* OR PASSOVER TEACHINGS (see Lane, page 421 and Johnson, 196)