

The gospel of Mark

A Commentary on the Greek Text

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Greek Glossary

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Preface

Mark's gospel presents as the earliest record of the apostolic oral tradition. There may have been an earlier written record, a proto-Mark of some sort, even other attempts to document the tradition, but Mark presents as the first full-blown record of the apostles' account of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ - the gospel, the *keregyma*.

My first real encounter with Mark's gospel came when I purchased the Torch commentary by A.M. Hunter. The great A.M. has this innate ability to break open the Bible, both its text and theology, and so he successfully hooked me. I still have this paperback stitched edition, purchased at a cost of \$1.15 new! The later perfect-bound editions have proved to be less than perfect.

My Greek studies in College and beyond were greatly aided by Cranfield's edition of Mark in the Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary series, 1966, a renewed Greek text series that never really got going. I was also particularly aided by the Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Mark, published by UBS. The go-to commentary at this time was Vincent Taylor's Macmillan commentary on the Greek text, first published in 1952. So, for me, the Greek text of Mark was far more accessible than many other New Testament books.

When I retired in the year 2,000, I started preparing my studies and exegetical notes for the Web. My blog lectionarystudies.com appeared in 2,001 and the exegetical notes on the Greek text of the NT appeared a year or two later. This commentary is a compilation of those notes. The scant number of commentaries from my early years was slowly countered by a growing number of excellent commentaries on Mark, all of which greatly aided my work: Guelich and Evans in the Word series - insightful in their treatment of the Greek text; Gundry - a detailed treatment of the Greek text; Marcus in the Anchor series - a great commentary; France in the NIGTC series - a top-notch commentary, although not really focused on the Greek text; Edwards in the Pillar series - a commentary I have often returned to. Most of my notes on Mark were on the Web when Rodney Decker's edition of the Baylor Handbook on the Greek Text was published in 2014 - what a great series, not forgetting, of course, the EGGNT series, possibly greater!!! Of course, as is always the case, when Baylor produce a new edition of the Handbook, I am forced to correct my all-too-often flawed Greek syntax; so thank you for that Rodney!

It is my hope that these notes aid your task of knowing the mind of Christ.

Bryan Findlayson, 2021.

Notes

Commentary Intention: This exegetical commentary aims to provide a foundation for expository preaching, assisting fellow pastors with *rusty* Greek to come to grips with the text. The Greek level is college years 2/3, with a focus on syntax to aid an understanding of the text - accents are only used where necessary. Highly technical issues are avoided, with the exposition primarily guided by the expressed views of respected published commentators. Where possible, the commentary is structured to conform with the readings of the Revised Common Lectionary.

Format: RCL study units - synopsis, context, structure, interpretation, homiletical suggestion and exegesis: the Greek word or phrase; a limited parsing; the English text (NIV and/or NIV11); a literal English translation (TNGEL, Accordance, Louw & Nida); syntax where necessary; comment, often with a published translation.

Copyright: No copyright provision covers this commentary, nor is citing expected. Where citing is required for academic purposes; Findlayson, *The Gospel of Mark; A Commentary on the Greek Text, 2021*.

Abbreviations: See Series Addendum.

Print: Format; A5. For mono laser "render colour black."

Greek: Nestle-Aland / UBS 4 Greek New Testament.

Greek Glossary: See Series Addendum.

Inclusive language: Numerous older translations and paraphrases are used throughout the studies to enhance the meaning of the text. Latitude is given to sexist language, although alterations are sometimes made to the original text.

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Author: Findlayson, Bryan. Anglican Diocese of Sydney, Australia. b 1942. MTC. ThL 1970, MC Dip (Hons) 1971; P 1972 by Abp Syd; C Narrabeen 1971; C Cronulla 1972-1975; C Engadine. 1975-1978; CIC Helensburgh 1978-89; Sabbatical 1989-1990; R Cronulla 1990-1999; Retired.

Dedication: To my children, Marelle, Paul and Justyne.

Typos: Forgive me! I keep finding clangers.

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Commentaries on the Gospel of Mark

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Cahill, *trans. of, 600AD, Jerome??*, Oxford University Press, 1998. T
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Taylor, Macmillan, 1952. 5D

Key:

Level of complexity: **1**, non-technical, to **5**, requiring a knowledge of Greek.

Deceased: **D**. For publications no longer in print, search bookfinder.com

Other identifiers: Recommended **R**; Greek Technical **G**; Theology **T**

The above is a selection of some of the English Bible Commentaries on the Gospel of Mark

Analysis

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

The children of Israel, in the 15th Century BC., set out from Egypt under the mighty hand of God. They soon discovered their special place in God's purpose as they struggled in their journey to meet the Lord at Mount Sinai. God made their way straight, overcoming their enemies, even making nature submit to his plan. In like manner, Jesus, the Son of God, set forth from the river Jordan into the wilderness, a way made straight, a way to follow.

This first section in Mark's gospel answers the question "Who is this man Jesus?".

1. Introduction, 1:1-13

- i] The forerunner John the Baptist, 1:1-8
- ii] Exodus in the wilderness - Jesus' baptism and temptation, 1:9-13

2. Jesus the Son of God, Messiah, 1:14-45

- i] The call to undertake the journey to the promised land, 1:14-20
- ii] A day in the journey - New teaching, 1:21-28
- iii] A day in the journey - Jesus brings release, 1:29-39
- iv] Popularity - A leper cleansed, 1:40-45

3. Conflict in the journey, 2:1-3:6

- i] Authority to forgive sins, 2:1-12
- ii] Call and response, 2:13-22
- iii] Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, 2:23-3:6

4. True Israel defined, 3:7-35

- i] The new Israel of God, 3:7-19
- ii] Satan defeated, 3:20-35

5. The Word - the good news of the kingdom, 4:1-34

- i] The parable of the Sower, 4:1-25
- ii] The parable of the growing seed and mustard seed, 4:26-34

6. The powers defeated, 4:35-5:43

- i] Nature - calming the sea, 4:35-41
- ii] Demons - Gerasene demoniac, 5:1-20
- iii] Sickness - Jairus' daughter and an ill woman, 5:21-43

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

The children of Israel, filled with distrust and discontent, reach Mount Sinai and receive God's law. Jesus, in like manner, made his way to the mountain, surrounded by disbelief. To a remnant who saw (believed), he revealed God's word.

This section of Mark's gospel is marked by a growing awareness of who Jesus is. Amazement and bewilderment lead to either disbelief, or belief.

1. Growing division, 6:1-8:21

- i] Jesus' countrymen are astonished and take offence at him, 6:1-6
- ii] The twelve are sent out, 6:7-13
- iii] John the Baptist's end, 6:14-29
- iv] The feeding of the 5,000 - Manna for all in the wilderness, 6:30-44
- v] Jesus walks on the water - Lord over the darkness, 6:45-56
- vi] The religious leaders are also without understanding, 7:1-23
- vii] Israel's blindness drives Jesus to the Gentiles, 7:24-37
- viii] Feeding the 4,000. Jesus again reveals his true identity, 8:1-21

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

- i] Jesus heals the blind - the disciples begin to see, 8:22-30
- ii] Jesus teaches suffering and discipleship #1. Deny self, 8:31-9:1
- iii] The transfiguration - God's revelation on the mountain, 9:2-13
- iv] The healing of a possessed boy - by grace through faith, 9:14-29
- v] Jesus teaches suffering and discipleship #2. Humility, 9:30-37
- vi] Partners in discipleship, 9:38-50
- vii] Ideals and principles, 10:1-16
- viii] The rich young ruler - Saved by grace through faith, 10:17-31
- ix] Jesus teaches suffering and discipleship #3. Service, 10:32-45
- x] A blind man sees through faith and follows his master, 10:46-52

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:20

Under Joshua, the children of Israel march into Canaan to execute God's judgement on an evil people, to overcome God's enemies in preparation for the establishment of the kingdom. Jesus, the warrior king, Son of God, in like manner, enters Jerusalem with sword in hand.

The blindness of Israel is developed in this section, and is associated with conflict and judgement themes. This conflict prepares for Jesus' ultimate conflict with the powers of darkness at Calvary.

1. Judgement in symbol and parable upon Israel, 11:1-12:12

- i] The entry into Jerusalem, 11:1-11
- ii] The temple cleansed, 11:12-26
- iii] The controversy over Jesus' authority, 11:27-33
- iv] The parable of the defiant tenants - Judgement on Israel, 12:1-12

2. The blindness of Israel exposed, 12:13-44

- i] The question concerning paying taxes, 12:13-17
- ii] The question concerning the resurrection, 12:18-27
- iii] The question concerning the greatest commandment, 12:28-34

iv] Jesus' question concerning David's son, 12:35-37

v] The religious poverty of Israel, 12:38-44

3. Prophecies concerning the kingdom of Israel, 13:1-37

These prophecies concern the destruction of historic Israel, but at the same time, they serve as a paradigm for the end of the age. Israel, God's historic people, are blind to the truth and will be judged for their evil - for their lack of faith. Unfaithful Israel will soon be destroyed, but believers also need to take the warning to heart - "Watch!".

i] The beginning of the birth pangs, 13:1-13

ii] The desolating sacrilege, 13:14-23

iii] The coming of the Son of Man, 13:24-27

iv] Jesus answers the disciples' question, 13:28-31

v] Be prepared for the coming day, 13:32-37

4. Victory, 14:1-16:20

As David overcame Goliath, so Jesus the Son of God overcomes Satan upon the cross of Calvary. With the enemy destroyed, and the prisoners released from their bondage of sin and death, the king enters his rest. The new age has dawned, the kingdom has come with power.

i] The anointing, 14:1-11

ii] The last supper, 14:12-25

iii] Gethsemane, 14:26-52

iv] Peter's denial, 14:53-72

v] The trial of Jesus before Pilate's tribunal, 15:1-20

vi] The crucifixion of Jesus, 15:21-41

vii] The Resurrection of Jesus, 16:1-8

{viii] The ascension, 16:9-20}

Grammatical Note

This corrected edition uses a descriptive classification for a genitive of source, rather than an ablative classification. See *A Note on the Genitive* in the **Series Addendum**, page 69.

Introduction

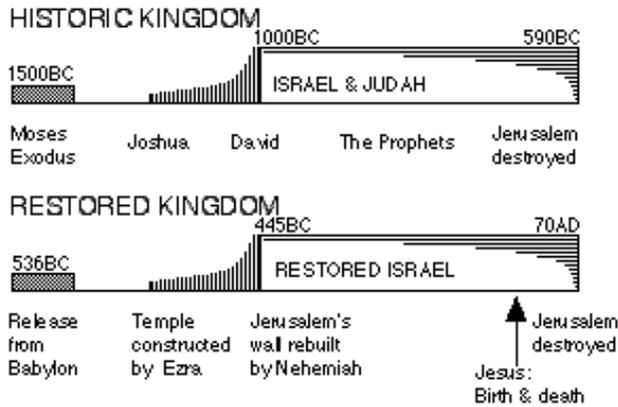
"Very possibly the oldest written account of Jesus' ministry that we possess, the Gospel of Mark is a vivid and fast-paced writing that holds the interest of the popular reader and the biblical scholar alike. When Christians first began discussions about drawing up a list of writings that would be regarded as authoritative for Christian faith, the Gospel of Mark was among the first writings selected for inclusion in this list and is today, of course, still regarded as one of the four 'canonical', or authoritative, written portraits of Jesus in the New Testament", Larry Hurtado.

The structure of Mark

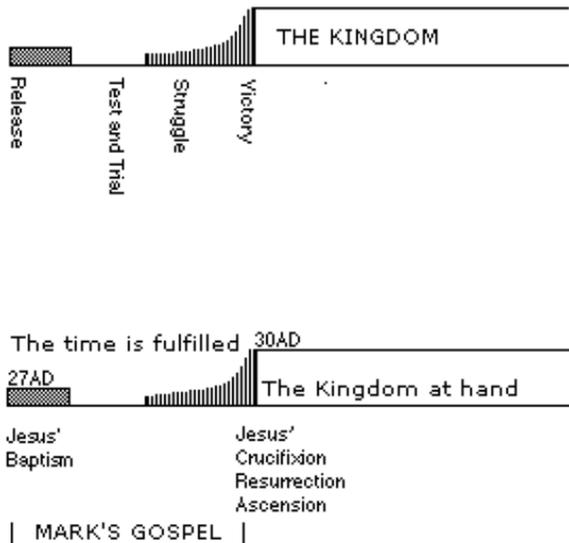
Mark's gospel proclaims that *the time is fulfilled*; it reveals the preliminary events that inaugurate the kingdom. So, Mark's account begins at Jesus' baptism (imaging the Exodus) and concludes with the cross and empty tomb, (imaging Davids ultimate conquest of the promised land - victory, the enemy subdued). As the women leave the empty tomb, amazed and trembling with fear, the only conclusion a reader can draw from the events that Mark has described, is that *the Kingdom of God is at hand*, the reign of God in Christ has begun.

In forming his gospel, we can only guess at Mark's intended arrangement of the apostolic oral tradition preserved within the early Christian church. Theories abound, but it is more than likely that Mark aligns his gospel with the sequence of events established in the life of the people of Israel, a sequence that Jesus himself plays out.

As illustrated below, the historic people of Israel map the history of the nation in linear fashion (Greco-Roman is cyclical): from the Exodus through to the ultimate possession of the Promised Land under David and Solomon, through to the demise of the kingdom in 590BC. As the promise of a Kingdom withered before the eyes of the people, the prophets foretold of another kingdom, established at the hand of a Davidic Messiah - an eternal kingdom. For a moment, the people of Israel thought that they were witnessing the realisation of this eternal kingdom at the hands of Ezra and Nehemiah, but the Restored Kingdom was little more than a faded image of the Historic Kingdom. Yet, it was in that fading that the Messiah came to free his people.



Mark records the realisation of the Kingdom of God, both thematically and sequentially, as illustrated below. Jesus, through the waters of his baptism, through the wilderness test and trial, through his struggle with the powers of darkness, culminating in his victory on the cross, realises the Kingdom of God, God's reign in Christ is begun



So, Mark covers the preliminary events leading up to the establishment of the Kingdom of God; these are the "the time is fulfilled" events, events which proclaim that "the kingdom of God is at hand", both inaugurated and realized. The prophets foretold that prior to the establishment of the kingdom of God, certain events must take place. All these are fulfilled in the life of Jesus the Son of God. Unlike Israel of old, Jesus did not put God to the test in the wilderness. Moses led the people into the desert and they grumbled, even when God supplied bread from heaven. The people heard God speak to them from the mountain, but they quickly forgot and worshipped the gods of Egypt. Moses led them to the borders of the promised land, Canaan, but they refused to enter and take the land. They were afraid. So, they were cursed to wander in the desert until all those who had doubted God were dead. Then they entered the promised land under the leadership of Joshua, and finally, under David, they captured the land.

Mark depicts Jesus as the faithful son of God, the Israel of God; he depicts the journey of the faithful son of God, of the new Israel:

Through the waters of release;
Standing the test and trial of the wilderness;
Struggling against the powers of darkness;
Finally winning the victory;
Entering into his rest, into blessing.

Jesus, as the representative Israel, the faithful son of God, is the people, the prophet like unto Moses", the priest like Aaron, the pure sacrifice, the Lamb of God, the king like David and Solomon, the Davidic Messiah. As the faithful people of God, he is the bearer of truth and master of all. And so we proclaim: the kingdom has come; God's divine rule in Christ begun.

Interpretation

Mark encapsulates the gospel: "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the gospel." "The time is fulfilled" is the announcement that Jesus in his life, death and resurrection, has completed the events that were prophesied in the Old Testament, events that were to proceed the establishment of God's kingdom. Thus, "the kingdom is at hand", it is a present reality which may be entered at this very moment, and at the same time, a reality yet to be realised. The kingdom amounts to God's righteous reign over his people, and this with its associated blessings - new life in Christ. Note the pattern in 1Corinthians 15:3-8. Mark uses this literary form to shape his gospel.

Although Mark paints Jesus' life as a replay of the Old Testament history of Israel from the Exodus to the establishment of the kingdom under David and Solomon, his gospel is not just a collection of fulfilment stories. Mark also reveals the realisation of the kingdom, both in Jesus' actions and words. Mark certainly

doesn't do so with the same systematic teaching format as in Matthew, but none-the-less, the reader is confronted by profound truths impressed upon the disciples, and through Mark, impressed upon us:

Illustration #1. For those in Christ, the *exodus* journey of Jesus is our journey - tests, trials, struggle ..., victory - life is all this, a life lived with Jesus beside us.

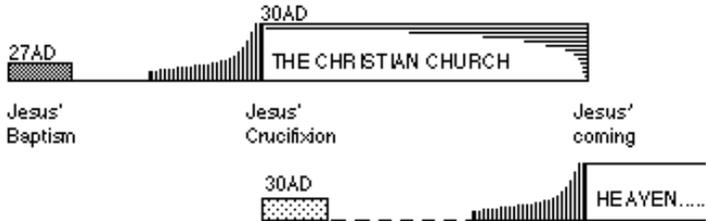


Illustration #2. For those in Christ, the kingdom is a *now / not-yet* reality; it is realised and inaugurated. Believers eternally reign with Christ, seated with him in heaven, but at the same time, we dwell in an earthly shadow land.

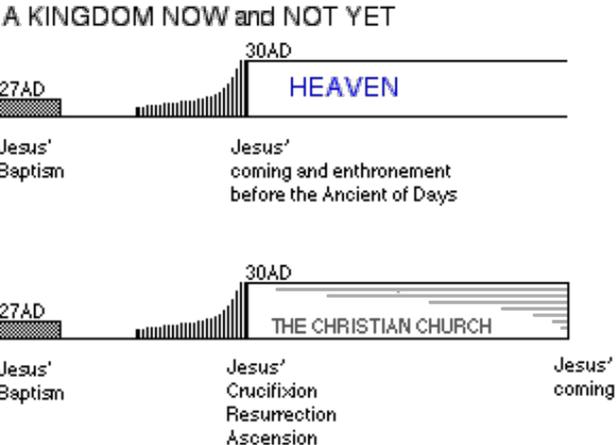
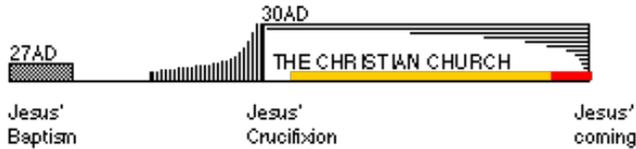


Illustration #3. These are the last days, a moment of grace for repentance and preparation



Authorship

Tradition strongly points to Mark, the friend, disciple and interpreter of Peter, as the author of this gospel. Possibly it is the same Mark mentioned in Acts and Paul's Epistles. Eusebius, a Christian Bishop and historian around AD. 300, quotes from a paper written by Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis AD. 140 as follows: "Mark, who became Peter's interpreter, wrote accurately, though not in order, all that he remembered of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had neither heard the Lord nor been one of his followers, but afterwards, as I said, he had followed Peter, who used to compose his discourses with a view to the needs (of his hearers), but not as if he were composing a systematic account of the Lord's sayings. So, Mark did nothing blameworthy in thus writing some things just as he remembered them; for he was careful of this one thing, to omit none of the things he had heard and to make no untrue statement therein."

The author of the *Anti-Marcionite Prologues to the Gospels*, AD. 160+ identifies Mark, Peter's interpreter, as the author of the gospel, written after Peter's death. Irenaeus, AD 180, also identifies Mark, a disciple and interpreter of Peter, as the author, suggesting he used Peter's sermons as his source.

Of course, the title of the gospel, "Mark", is a later addition, so we don't really know who wrote the gospel. None-the-less, the tradition is strong that it was penned by Mark (John Mark = Marcus), son of Mary who first hosted the church in Jerusalem, Acts 12:12, associate of Paul, Acts 13:5, 13, 2Tim.4:11, and friend of Peter, 1Pet.5:13.

Sources

Where did Mark get his information?

- i] If Papias is right, Peter is obviously the main source.
- ii] Interviews with the disciples and other eye witnesses could be Mark's source, although were any of the apostles still alive at the time of composition? It looks as if Mark himself was not an eye witness, although the

reference to the young man who followed Jesus after his arrest, could be taken as a personal experience - was this Mark? Mk.14:51-52.

iii] Oral tradition is likely to be Mark's main source. The apostles are the foundational source for the life and teachings of Jesus. After Jesus' ascension, the apostles, under the guiding hand of the Spirit, recalled and retold the teachings and events in Jesus' life, and it seems likely that this tradition takes on a structured oral form which was shared throughout the Christian community, eg., miracle stories, pronouncement stories, thematic collections of sayings, parables, Some of this tradition may have been written down as time went on, although there would be nothing unusual if it was retained as the common oral tradition of the first century church. It is likely that Mark uses this material to compose his gospel.

The synoptic problem

The problem we face with the synoptic gospels is that they are strikingly similar, but at the same time distinctly different. It was long held that Matthew was the first to write his gospel and that Luke and Mark used it to write their gospels. Some scholars still hold to this theory (see Mann), but most believe that the gospel of Mark, or possibly a proto-Mark document, was the first documented gospel account, and that it was used by both Matthew and Luke to construct their gospels. As well as working off Mark, it remains unclear whether Luke works off Matthew, or Matthew works off Luke.

The form of the stories and sayings in the synoptic gospels, evidence an oral source. The use of particular story forms (miracle stories, conflict stories, pronouncement stories), along with the poetic form of the sayings of Jesus, indicate a highly sophisticated form of oral communication long evident in ancient societies. This oral tradition, originally taught and confirmed by the apostles, took on the shape of the *kerygma*, the apostolic gospel, as outlined in the apostolic sermons in Acts, eg., 10:36-43.

The *kerygma* is as follows: God's promise of a long-expected messiah is now realised in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. He came and performed wondrous works of God, he "died for our sins, as the scriptures had foretold, that he was buried and then, as the scriptures had foretold, he was raised to life again one the third day", 1Cor.15:3-4. He will soon come again in judgement and so now is the time to repent for the forgiveness of sin.

As the years passed and the remaining apostles died from old age, the necessity to record the apostolic tradition prompted the need for the production of an accurate record of the *kerygma*. Mark (possibly along with a proto-Mark document) assembles the oral tradition in the form of the *kerygma*, not as a story as such, but a compilation of the individual stories and sayings, episodes /

pericopes of Jesus preserved within the Christian community. It is impossible to know how much extant oral tradition Mark used, but we do know that large slabs, especially of the sayings of Jesus, never made it into his gospel. Some of this extra material is found in the other synoptic gospels, Matthew and Luke. A widely accepted theory is that many of the sayings of Jesus come from an unknown source / document called Q, to which is added material from both Matthew's and Luke's own sources

Although it is widely accepted today that both Matthew and Luke build off Mark's gospel, it is possible that all three worked independently of each other, drawing from an established oral tradition. The oral transmission of information was a highly developed skill in ancient societies where communication by writing was both elitist and expensive. None-the-less, it is likely that Matthew and Luke had Mark, but at the same time the oral tradition of the Christian church was fully available to them, such that little in Mark would be new to them. This probably accounts for many of the differences evident in the synoptic accounts.

Date

Conservative commentators tend to the view that the gospel was probably written just before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD. 70, and after the death of Peter. Tradition has it that Peter died in Rome during Nero's persecution of Christians around AD 64. A later date is possible, but even so, the impetus to write the gospel, both an arduous and expensive task, was obviously driven by the loss of the apostolic witness through the ravages of time and persecution. The apostles, during their life, were able to verify, and correct where necessary, the oral tradition of Jesus' life and teachings. With the loss of the original apostolic testimony, the need to record that testimony became apparent before it was tainted by time.

Place of writing

The weight of tradition points to Rome.

Authenticity

From the beginning, there are no doubts as to the apostolic authenticity of this gospel, ie., the early church held that this gospel was a faithful record of the apostolic tradition and its link with Peter. We are too far from the events to be able to make any sound judgement ourselves, and so must rest on the judgement of the first century Christians, none-the-less, in comparison with the later apocryphal gospels, Mark reads like the genuine article.

Mark's purpose

Numerous suggestions are proposed:

i] To write an historic record of the life and teachings of Jesus. The original eye witnesses had now virtually all passed away and therefore it was imperative to record their testimony about Jesus. Yet, there is far too much missing in the gospel for it to be just a historic account.

ii] To write an evangelistic tract. Yet, the cost would be prohibitive.

iii] To write an evangelistic / exhortatory manual for new Christians - Pre-baptismal instruction. Yet, the book is much too subtle for such a limited perspective, although it could be used in this way.

iv] To record Peter's sermons for posterity. Literary form implies something other than a compilation of homilies.

v] To produce a piece of exhortatory writing, even theology, for use by Christians.

Message

Mark lets us into a secret, a mystery, a secret that is revealed in the gospel. It concerns the kingdom of God (God's righteous reign, his gathered and blessing a people for himself) and the relationship of Jesus and ourselves to it. The mystery that Mark sets out to unlock for us, is that Jesus, in his person, work and word, ushers in the new age of God's long-promised kingdom. Jesus himself is faithful Israel, the servant of the Lord, obedient unto death. Thus, as representative Israel, he fulfils the preliminary events as prophesied in the Old Testament, and so enters his rest and receives his reward. By aligning ourselves with Jesus, we are similarly accepted as God's sons (faithful Israel), and so we follow in the footsteps of one who has gone before and who has opened the way into the kingdom. The way that we must travel may bring hardship and strife, it will certainly require dedication, for the way is narrow that leads to life and there are many things that would draw us aside from our reliance on the one who went before. Yet, victory is ultimately assured, by grace through faith.

Key words

1. Son of God. The title given to Jesus by:

- (a) the demons/evil spirits;
- (b) Mark 1:1;
- (c) God the Father 1:1, 9:7;
- (d) the Gentile soldier at Jesus' crucifixion and
- (e) accepted by Jesus.

The possible meanings are:

- a) Messiah - common Old Testament usage.

- b) King - David was "Son of God".
- c) Actual father / son relationship.
- d) Israel / people of God.

Although not common Old Testament usage, it is likely that Mark wants us to understand the term in a corporate messianic sense - Jesus represents corporate Israel. We become the faithful children of God in union with Christ.

2. Son of Man. Jesus' title for himself. The title has two aspects:

a) Glorified Son of Man. A messianic title found in Daniel and referring to the one who comes to the Ancient of Days to take up his heavenly rule, Mk.14:62. It is not a common title for the messiah, so Jesus was able to use it and still keep his identity secret.

b) Suffering Son of Man. This describes Jesus' lowly role - humiliated, despised. Note: whenever he says the "Son of Man must suffer", he always follows the statement up with a call to true discipleship. A disciple must be willing to wholly identify (through faith) with a rejected messiah.

3. Response words. A person's initial response to Jesus is one of "awe", "fear", "amazement", "wonder" and "astonishment". This is the result of being "without understanding" or having "hardened hearts".

This initial response leads to either:

- a) "Offence", "unbelief", or
- b) "faith", "belief".

Mark emphasises people's response to Jesus because he wants us to respond correctly, i.e., in "faith". The gospel begins with people astonished and questioning ("What is this?") and finishes with the women "wondering" and "afraid" at the empty tomb. We must move beyond "wonder" to "belief".

4. Movement words. Words such as "immediately" give a sense of speed and movement to the gospel. They give us a sense of journey similar to the journey of Israel from Egypt to Canaan. Such words image the necessary movement of the Son of Man toward his victorious overcoming of evil upon the cross.

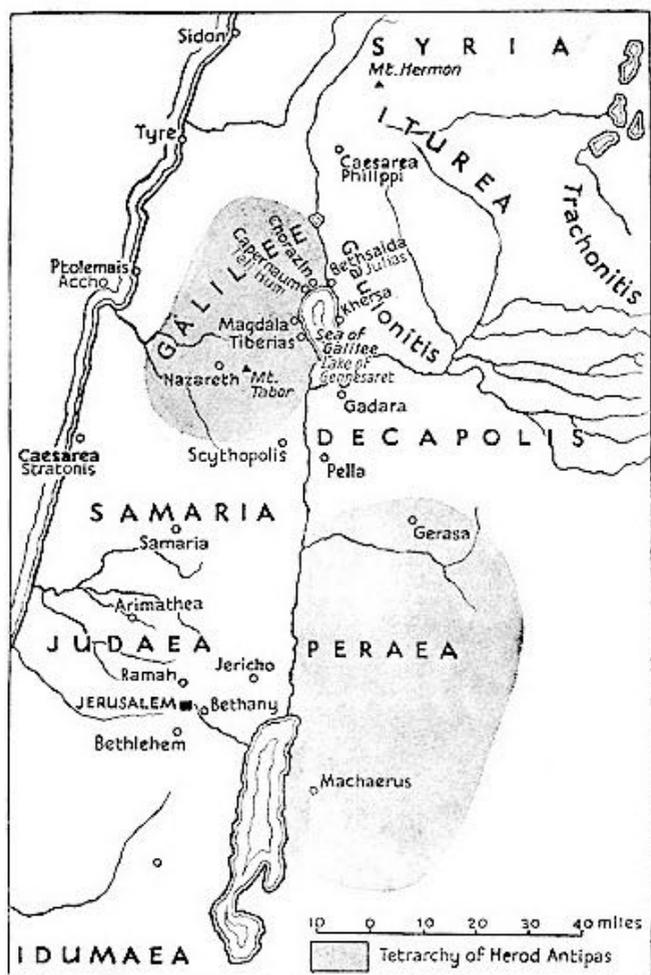
The apostolic preaching and Mark's gospel

The structure of Mark's gospel follows very closely the sermons in Acts (especially Peter's sermons), but minus the Old Testament support texts. Obviously Mark is writing to Gentiles and therefore doesn't need to show that Jesus has fulfilled prophecy. Yet, he is faithful to the structure of the gospel.

The sermons in Acts stress "the time is fulfilled"; they recount the preliminary events fulfilled by Jesus, and given that these events stand proved, then the "times of refreshing" (the kingdom) has come. Mark similarly stresses

"the time is fulfilled" and so proclaims that the "times of refreshing" have come, calling on those who hear to "repent and believe."

Palestine in the 1st. century A.D.



Map: The Clarendon Bible, Oxford University Press. Used with appreciation.

Commentary

1:1-8

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

1. Introduction, 1:1-13

i] The forerunner, John the Baptist

Synopsis

Mark's gospel opens with a prologue that consists of the first 13 verses. It introduces us to John the Baptist and to Jesus, both of whom appear in the wilderness in fulfilment of prophecy, both summoned there by God. In the first eight verses we meet "the voice of one crying out in the wilderness", the one whose task it was to prepare for the coming of the messiah.

Teaching

The Messiah, the Son of God, has entered into human history, and this in the fulfilment of prophecy. This fact is confirmed by the ministry of John the Baptist, a great man in his own right, but not comparable with "the one more powerful", the one who will baptise with the Holy Spirit.

Issues

i] Context: Mark's gospel proclaims that *the time is fulfilled*; it reveals the preliminary events that inaugurate the kingdom of God. So, Mark's account begins at Jesus' baptism (imaging the Exodus) and concludes with the cross and empty tomb, (imaging Davids ultimate conquest of the promised land - victory, the enemy subdued Solomon's completion of the Temple). As the women leave the empty tomb, amazed and trembling with fear, the only conclusion to draw from the events that Mark has revealed is that the kingdom of God is at hand, it is *now*. So, Mark's gospel aligns with the sequence of events established in the life of the historic people of Israel.

Mark covers the preliminary events, "the time is fulfilled", which establish the truth that "the kingdom of God is at hand". Faced with the failure of the Historic Kingdom, the prophets foretold that there would be a new journey of a faithful child of God culminating in a glorious day of the Lord which would entail a complete victory over the powers of darkness, ushering in an everlasting kingdom.

Mark depicts Jesus as the faithful son of God, the Israel of God; he depicts the journey of the faithful son of God, of the new Israel:

Through the waters of release;

Standing the test and trial of the wilderness;
Struggling against the powers of darkness;
Finally winning the victory;
Entering into his rest, into blessing.

Jesus, as the representative Israel, the faithful son of God, is the people, the prophet like unto Moses", the priest like Aaron, the pure sacrifice, the Lamb of God, the king like David and Solomon, the long foretold Davidic Messiah, and so consequently, the kingdom of God is at hand.

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43.

The opening verses of Mark's gospel, v1-13, serve as an introduction / prologue to the book. They serve to confront the reader with a divine intrusion into everyday life, a mystery which will slowly reveal itself in the following narrative. Yet, even at the end of the book, like the women at the empty tomb, the mystery will remain, couched in amazement and fear.

Jesus, as a corporate figure, the only true remnant of Israel, re-enacts the seminal events of Israel's salvation history, but does so free from rebellion against God. The children of God in the 15th Century BC., set out from Egypt under the mighty hand of God. They soon discovered their special place in God's purpose as they struggled on their journey to meet God at Mount Sinai. The Lord made their way straight, overcoming their enemies, even making nature submit to his plan. Similarly, Jesus, the Son of God, sets forth from the river Jordan into the wilderness, his way also made straight. This first section in Mark's gospel answers the question "Who is this man Jesus?"

1. Introduction, 1:1-13

The forerunner John the Baptist, 1:1-8

Exodus in the wilderness. Jesus' baptism and temptation, 1:9-13

2. Jesus the Son of God, Messiah, 1:14-45

The call to undertake the journey to the promised land, 1:14-20

A day in the journey - New teaching, 1:21-28

A day in the journey - Jesus brings release, 1:29-39

Popularity - A leper cleansed, 1:40-45

3. Conflict in the journey, 2:1-3:6

Authority to forgive sins, 2:1-12

Call and response, 2:13-22

Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, 2:23-3:6

4. True Israel defined, 3:7-35

The new Israel of God, 3:7-19

Satan defeated, 3:20-35

5. The Word - the good news of the kingdom, 4:1-34

The parable of the Sower, 4:1-25

The parable of the growing seed and mustard seed, 4:26-34

6. The powers defeated, 4:35-5:43

Nature - calming the sea, 4:35-41

Demons - Gerasene demoniac, 5:1-20

Sickness - Jairus' daughter and a sick woman, 5:21-43

ii] Structure: *The forerunner, John the Baptist:*

The preface, v1

The messiah promised, v2-3;

The one who prepares the way, v4-6

The Baptist's function, v4-8.

iii] Interpretation:

In comparison to the other gospel writers, Mark's introduction goes straight to the point. As Hunter puts it, Mark "puts down a dozen blunt, important words by way of superscription and forthwith plunges into his narrative." "The body of the narrative takes place in the everyday world, in the villages of Galilee and Jerusalem, with ordinary people: crowds and disciples, priests, scribes and Pharisees. The prologue, however, begins in a transcendent, offstage setting, then narrates what transpires in the 'wilderness' with an extraordinary cast: God, Isaiah, 'the Lord', John the Baptist, Holy Spirit, Satan, wild animals, and angels ... and .. the Lord Jesus himself", Boring.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.3:1-12, Lk.3:1-9. The brevity of Mark's account marks it out.

See the introductory notes on *The Synoptic Problem* for an overview of the relationship between the three synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke.

v] Homiletics: *A wilderness gospel*

The challenge of John to his own generation is reported by Mark in such a way as to force the reader to respond to the challenge. All humanity, like the people of Israel of old, are locked into the bondage of sin, death and judgement. If we want to share in this last day's salvation, we must repent, we must leave Egypt and pass through the waters into the wilderness to meet with our God. There, in the wilderness, God will visit us through Christ, forgiving us of our sins and washing us with his eternal presence - a peace that passes all understanding.

What a tremendous gospel challenge, but then, of course, that's what Mark is all about. He takes the gospel and fills it out, just for us.

The Christian church has given John the Baptist an important place in gospel tradition. His memory is affirmed in the Christian church on St. John the Baptist's Day, June 24. Churches are even named after him. The reason for this attention is that he was the forerunner of gospel proclamation. His call to the people of Israel was the same call as that of Jesus and his disciples, and it is the call Jesus gives to us.

The imagery presented in this passage is very powerful. There is value in seeing our own life in the terms of a move from Egypt, from the bondage of sin and death, out into the wilderness to meet with our God. It is in this shadow-land of daily existence that we experience, through Christ, the gift of his forgiveness and his eternal presence. We then, under his guidance, take up the journey toward the promised land, day-by-day struggling to serve our Lord, and then, to finally cross the river Jordan into the promised land, that place beyond the sunset.

The homiletic suggestions are precis designed to aid the task of sermon construction. They assume additional exposition of the relevant Biblical verses, the preacher's own personal illustrations, and local application. Unless indicated, I have tried to use free-to-the-web images and will happily remove any image covered by copyright on notification.

Text - 1:1

The Title and Prologue, v1-15: i] The preface, v1. The "gospel" (the word means "important news") consists of a message from God concerning human salvation. It is "about Jesus Christ," ie. it is a divine communication concerning Jesus. Jesus is the long-foretold messiah who, through his life, death and resurrection, provides a way for lost humanity to be gathered into the presence of God for eternity. So, Mark sets about to fill out the gospel account of Jesus' life and teachings, describing the beginning of his book as "the beginning of the gospel."

αρχη [η] "the beginning" - FIRST, BEGINNING. Nominative absolute. Possibly as to the content of the book (rather than the first verse or the first section), but possibly of time. So, best understood as "this is the starting-point (of the gospel)", TH.

του ευαγγελιου [ov] gen. "of the gospel" - OF THE IMPORTANT MESSAGE. The genitive is adjectival, partitive, or reference / respect. The word is used of the type of communication carried by a messenger relaying important news, eg., news of a victory, or loss in battle. Probably referring to Mark's gospel itself, but possibly the preached message. Commonly understood as "this is the good news

about Jesus Christ", CEV. The problem with a word like "good" is that the gospel is only good news for those who are being saved. There is another side to "the news" which is not good for those who stand outside the grace of God in Christ.

Ιησου Χριστου gen. "**about Jesus Christ**" - OF JESUS CHRIST. The genitive is usually treated as adjectival, verbal, either subjective, Jesus preached the gospel, or objective, Jesus was preached as the gospel, ie. the gospel preached about Jesus in Mark's account, as NIV. As for the word "Christ", it is a title which means "anointed one", or possibly "appointed one", ie., the messiah.

θεου [ος] gen. "**[the Son] of God**" - [SON] OF GOD. Genitive in apposition to Jesus Christ. The phrase is not found in a number of manuscripts, but is most likely original. Mark may be duplicating the idea of messiah, anointed one, for this was the common meaning of the phrase. The demons speak of Jesus as "Son of God", as do Gentiles. The phrase probably does not go so far as to imply a filial relationship with God the Father, but it may imply divinity, or at least godlikeness.

v2

ii] The coming messiah as promised in the Old Testament, v2-3. In Exodus 23:20, v2b, God promised to send his messenger before the people of Israel as they journeyed through the wilderness to the promised land. Years later, the prophets spoke of the coming day when there would be another journey through the wilderness and another (Moses, Elijah?) who would lead the way, Isa.40:3, v3. John is this "messenger", and so he calls the "Lord", "the Son of God" (corporate Israel), out into the wilderness.

The voices are adjusted in the quotation to link the players - Jesus, the Baptist, God, ie., the quotes are interpretive and are not just straight quotations. In these composite quotes, the author of the larger quote is the one identified, which in this case is Isaiah, v3. The first quote assimilates two quotes: a) Exodus 23:20, "Behold, I (God) send my messenger (the Baptist) before your (Jesus') face (to keep you by the way)"; b) Malachi 3:1, "(behold I send my messenger [Elijah, 4:5 = the Baptist]) who will prepare your (Jesus'. orig. "my" = the Lord's) way."

καθως "as" - AS, JUST AS. Technically comparative, expressing the sense "in accordance with", but at the same time, part of an idiomatic citation formula.

γεγραπται perf. pas. "**it is written**" - IT IS WRITTEN. Formula introduction to a scripture reference. The perfect tense is used to express a static action in past time with ongoing consequences.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [ISAIAH]. Local, expressing space; "found in."

τω προφητη [ης ου] dat. "**the prophet**" - Dative, standing in apposition to "Isaiah".

ιδου "-" - behold, look, pay attention. Emphatic interjection; "Behold", AV.
αποστελλω pres. "**I will send**" - Probably a futuristic present, "I will send",
so NIV, although here possibly a present fact, "I am sending", Barclay.

τον αγγελον [ος] "**messenger**" - THE ANGEL, MESSENGER [OF ME].
Accusative direct object of the verb "to send." Angel = messenger. Here of the
forerunner of the messiah, an Elijah type, cf., Mal.4:5ff.

προ + gen. "**[ahead of] you**" - BEFORE [FACE OF YOU]. Temporal used of the
preposition. Possibly "in front of you / in your presence", TH, but more likely
Semitic temporal terminology = "ahead of you" = "before you arrive in person",
Decker.

ὅς + fut. "**who**" - Nominative subject of "will prepare." This relative
pronoun, introducing a relative modifier, in this context expresses purpose; "I
will send in order to prepare ..."

την ὁδον [ος] "**way**" - [WILL PREPARE] THE WAY [OF YOU]. Accusative direct
object of the verb "will prepare." The imagery reflects the road-building activities
of the great powers, eg. the Assyrians. The making of roads made transport
possible, so easing the way for travel.

v3

The second quote comes from Isaiah 40:3 and follows the LXX except that
αυτου, "of / for him", replaces του θεου ἡμων, "of / for our God". Presumably
Mark wants us to read "Jesus" for the divine title "Lord", although he probably
doesn't want us to read "Jesus" for "God" (contra Edwards). The LXX fits Mark's
intention better than the MT text, in establishing that "the desert" is the place
where "a voice" sounds (the ministry of the Baptist), rather than the place of God's
preparation (on which interpretation religious communities were founded in the
desert).

βοωντος [βοαω] part. gen. "**of one calling**" - [A VOICE] OF *the one* CRYING
OUT, SHOUTING, CALLING OUT. Although anarthrous (without an article), the
participle serves as a substantive, "*the one shouting*", while the genitive is
adjectival, possessive; "the voice of one (that belongs to the one) who cries in the
desert", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE WILDERNESS, A DESOLATE AND ABANDONED PLACE].
Local; expressing space.

κυριου [ος] gen. "**for the Lord**" - [PREPARE, MAKE READY THE WAY] OF
the LORD. The genitive "Lord" is adjectival, probably attributive, limiting "way",
"the way which the Lord *will travel*." Often genitive constructions become
idiomatic and this is a likely example. Is Mark referencing Jesus or God? See
above. "Get the road ready for the Lord", CEV.

ευθείας [ευθύς] adj. "**straight**" - [MAKE] STRAIGHT, PROPER, RIGHT. Accusative complement of the direct object "way, paths", standing in a double accusative construction; "make his paths straight", ESV. When used with ὁδός the "immediate way" becomes the "straight way", ie., the pathway that is quickest to travel. The straight nature of the pathway is emphasised in the text illustrating the speedy coming of the messiah.

τάς τριβούς [ος] "**paths**" - THE WAY, PATHS, ROAD, HIGHWAY, FREEWAY... Accusative object of the imperative verb "make, do".

αυτου gen. pro. "**for him**" - OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possibly possessive, "make his paths straight", AV, or verbal, objective, as NIV; "make straight paths for him *to travel*."

v4

iii) Mark now identifies the one who prepares the way of the Lord, v4-6. The people of Israel were waiting for the appearance of the prophet like unto Moses. He would usher in the "last days"; the turning point in history when salvation would extend to all humanity - the day of the coming of the kingdom of God. John appears, and calls the people out into the wilderness. He calls on them to abandon their bondage in Egypt (repent of their sins) and walk through the waters of the Red sea (baptism - outwardly expressing their repentance, their leaving Egypt) and come into the wilderness to meet with their God and receive the covenant promise of their renewed relationship with God of Israel and all its attendant blessings (the forgiveness of sins).

Mark's description of the Baptist is quite precise in comparison to Matthew or Luke. This precision is particularly evident when it comes to the content of the Baptist's preaching. Mark records none of his ethical teaching, but focuses on his call for repentance, given the greater-one who follows.

βαπτίζων [βαπτίζω] pres. act. part. "**baptising**" - [JOHN BECAME, HAPPENED, CAME TO PASS] IMMERSING. Possible variant articular participle serving as a substantive standing in apposition to "John", "John the one baptising" = "John the Baptist", obviously trying to emulate **Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτιστής**. Taking the participle as anarthrous, it may well be adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of John's coming, he comes "baptising" and "preaching". John comes as the divine "messenger" proclaiming a message which calls for repentance. Although a matter of debate, water baptism probably serves as a visible expression of repentance.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE WILDERNESS]. Local, expressing space. Referencing Isaiah 40:3. "Desert" simply means an uninhabited part of the country.

κηρυσσων [κηρυσσω] pres. part. "**preaching**" - [AND] PREACHING, PROCLAIMING, COMMUNICATING. The participle, as with "baptising", is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of John's becoming / appearing on the scene.

μετανοιας [α] gen. "**of repentance**" - [A BAPTISM] OF A TURNING ABOUT, CHANGING DIRECTION, REPENTANCE (not just a feeling sorry). The genitive is best taken as adjectival, attributive, limiting "baptism", a "repentance" type of "baptism" / "which is characterised by repentance", although in use it would be idiomatic. John's baptism is a "baptism *which is characterised by repentance*", probably, as above, in the sense of it being a visible expression of repentance, an outward way of enacting an inward decision.

The term "preaching a baptism of repentance" has prompted some debate. How can baptism be preached? Obviously repentance, outwardly expressed in water baptism, can be preached. There is some evidence that "immersing" (The Gk. sense of "baptism"), in the literal sense of flooding with water, and the particular figurative sense of "immersing in the name" / preaching the gospel for repentance and the forgiveness of sins, coalesce. When Jesus tells his disciples to go and make disciples "baptising them in the name", it is very unlikely that he is promoting an ecclesiastical rite. The sign is obviously part of the package, but it is the preaching of the gospel, "immersing in the name", that is all important. So, "preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" = "preaching the gospel."

εις "**for**" - TO, INTO. Here expressing "toward a particular end", i.e., expressing purpose = "for", so BDAG, 291.5, although Decker suggests reference; "with reference to."

αφεσιν [ις εως] "**the forgiveness**" - RELEASE, FORGIVENESS. Clearly, the purpose of the preaching was not baptism, but "repentance in the face of the threat of divine judgment", France. Repentance, and its consequence "forgiveness", is that which makes "straight paths" for the coming of the messiah.

ἀμαρτιων [α] gen. "**of sins**" - OF SINS. The genitive is usually taken here as adjectival, verbal, objective, where "sins" receives the action of "forgiveness".

v5

και "-" - and. Here as a connective and not translated.

πασα "**the whole [Judean countryside]**" - [*the* ENTIRE JUDEAN COUNTRY AND] ALL [THE JERUSALEMITES]. As with "all the people of Jerusalem", Mark is exaggerating, but none-the-less, the exaggeration serves to illustrate John's popularity. This popularity is confirmed by the historian Josephus. John's popularity / magnetism serves to prepare us for the even greater popularity of the one who follows.

εξεπορευετο [εκπορευομαι] imperf. "went out" - WERE GOING OUT. The imperfect, being durative, expresses a continuous flow of people to witness John's ministry by the Jordan river.

προς + acc. "to" - TOWARD [HIM]. Spatial, of movement toward a goal.

εξομολογουμενοι [εξομολογεω] pres. part. mid. "confessing" - [AND] CONFESSING, AVOWING [THE SINS OF THEM]. Attendant circumstance participle identifying action accompanying the verb "were being baptized". The Gk. order is, "they were baptized, confessing their sins."

εβαπτιζοντο [βαπτιζω] imperf. pas. "they were baptized" - THEY WERE BEING IMMersed. The passive indicates they were allowing themselves to be immersed in water. This is supported by the preposition ὑπο, "by [him]", expressing agency. In Jewish proselyte baptism the initiate baptises themselves, but here John is performing the rite. The imperfect again expresses durative action describing an ongoing stream of initiates; "the people came one by one and were baptized by John", TH.

ὑπ [ὑπο] gen. "by" - BY [HIM]. Expressing agency.

εν + dat. "in" - IN [THE JORDAN RIVER]. An important preposition for those who argue for baptism by full immersion, but it is simply local, expressing space, and does not indicate how the water was applied. It could just mean "at the river Jordan."

v6

The description given of John, paints him as a man of the wilderness. The reference to the belt probably aligns him with that other man of the wilderness, namely, Elijah, 2Ki.1:8.

ἦν ... ενδεδυμενος [ενδυω] perf. mid. part. "wore clothing" - [AND JOHN] HAD BEEN CLOTHED WITH. Periphrastic pluperfect possibly emphasising aspect, here durative action = it was John's accustomed dress. Mark's description of John's clothing and food, serves to further the image of the "one calling in the wilderness", an image with powerful Old Testament precedents. John is a man of the desert, an ascetic, a Nazarite. Note that his dress is similar to that of Elijah. The divine revelation is encountered in the wilderness and so this is where John operates, and so he dresses accordingly.

καμηλου [ος] "camel's [hair]" - [*the* HAIR] OF A CAMEL. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "hair", "camel hair"; "hair *which come from* a camel." Such a garment would be very prickly.

και "with" - AND [A LEATHER BELT, WAISTBAND]. Coordinate use of the conjunction. Mark leans toward a zeugma here where the accusative object "hair" of the verb "clothed with" works, while "clothed with a leather belt" doesn't. Translations handle the problem by supplying an appropriate verb; "and wore a

leather belt around his waist", ESV. John's loose cloak was held together around his waist by a waistband. This is not a thin belt, but a wide leather waistband that would have compartments for holding John's basic requirements.

περι + acc. "**around**" - AROUND [THE WAIST OF HIM] . Spatial; "around".

εσθιων [εσθιω] pres. part. "**he ate**" - [AND] EATING [LOCUSTS AND WILD HONEY]. Taylor thinks this attendant participle is still controlled by the opening verb to-be ἦν so producing a periphrastic imperfect, although it is not listed by Howard as an example of this construction. A durative aspect is being expressed, such that his diet was regularly made up of Still to this day a food source used by the poor.

v7

iv] The Baptist's function: to herald the coming of the messiah, v7-8. Mark gives us a summary of John's message. John announces the coming of a greater one, so great in fact, that John is less than a slave to him. Even a Hebrew slave is not required to untie his master's sandals. So, this coming-one exposes our unworthiness; he is a coming judge. John may be referring to the coming of the messiah, but also possibly a visit from God himself to his people. When he arrives in the wilderness, this coming-one will confront his people with the Spirit-empowered presence of God. The Spirit of God guided the people through the desert and sustained them and gave them rest. So again, as the people come out into the wilderness, they will meet with their God.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "**[and this was his message]**" - [AND HE WAS PREACHING] SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant. Usually viewed as a Semitic construction, often serving to introduce direct speech - a common construction in the synoptic gospels. Matthew tells us that the Baptist proclaimed the same gospel message as Jesus, ie., "the kingdom of God is at hand", cf. 3:2. Mark, in v4, identifies forgiveness as the heart of the gospel message proclaimed by the Baptist and now he records that John's preaching references forward to the coming of "the one more powerful." The Baptist probably did proclaim the coming kingdom, but Mark obviously wants to leave the announcement of the kingdom to Jesus. For Mark, the Baptist's message is a call for repentance in the face of the coming one.

πισω + gen. "**after**" - AFTER [ME]. Temporal use of the preposition. The NIV has "after" in a chronological sense, but John could be saying that the messiah follows on from his ministry, in the sense of taking up where he leaves off.

ερχεται [ερχομαι] pres. "**will come**" - IS COMING. Possibly a futuristic present tense, as NIV; "after me one who is mightier will come", Moffatt. At least it "sounds the note of immediacy", Taylor.

ὁ ἰσχυροτερος comp. adj. "**one more powerful**" - THE ONE STRONGER. This comparative adjective serves here as a substantive. "Stronger", in what sense? Marcus suggests that the term "stronger one" was an epithet for the messiah, the one "powerful in the Holy Spirit", cf., Davies and Allison, ICC.

μου gen. pro. "**than I**" - OF ME. The genitive is ablative, of comparison, as NIV.

οὗ gen. pro. "-" - OF WHOM. The genitive is possessive, "of whom", or reference / respect, "with reference to whom."

ικανος adj. "**worthy**" - [I AM NOT] WORTHY, QUALIFIED, SUFFICIENT, ABLE, FIT. Predicate adjective. A Hebrew slave would not be expected to undertake the menial task of untying the master's sandal, but John, even though he is God's messenger, is not worthy to undertake even this menial task when it comes to the messiah. Possibly "I am not qualified."

κυψας [κυπτω] aor. part. "**to stoop down**" - STOOPING DOWN, BOWING DOWN. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the infinitive "to loose / untie"; "I am not worthy to stoop down and to untie", as NIV.

λυσαι [λυω] aor. inf. "**and untie**" - TO LOOSE [THE STRAP OF THE SANDALS OF HIM]. The infinitive is epexegetic, specifying what the Baptist was not worthy of / qualified to do, namely "to untie"

v8

εγω ουτος "**I he**" - The use of unnecessary personal pronouns; Semitic form.

βαπτισα [βαπτίζω] aor. "**I baptise**" - I IMMERGE [YOU]. An interesting use of the aorist (punctiliar aspect), rather than the present tense (durative aspect). Cranfield suggests it stands for a Semitic perfect with present meaning; "I have baptized you with water", Knox. Possibly the aorist is used to express an expected end to John's ministry with the coming of the one greater. France thinks that it is the "correct tense for John to use when addressing those who have just been baptized by him." Decker suggests the aorist is used to encompass John's entire ministry.

ὕδατι [ὕδρατος] dat. "**with water**" - IN WATER. In v5 we are told that John baptized people εν, "in", the river Jordan. It is therefore not unreasonable that we have here a simple local dative serving instead of εν, "in", but it may well be instrumental, of means, "by means of water"; see Gundry 39. See also εν below, re Holy Spirit.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point.

εν + dat. "**with [the Holy Spirit]**" - IN, ON, BY [HOLY SPIRIT]. A variant exists without this preposition, although not well attested. The dative of "water" and "Holy Spirit", with, or without εν, may be instrumental, expressing means,

"with", as NIV, or local, expressing space / sphere "in", where Mark is just comparing the ministry sphere within which John and Jesus operates. The preposition here may be adverbial, modal, where Mark summarises the manner of Jesus' and John's "baptism" ministry. John's ministry may be summarised as one of preaching a water baptism illustrating repentance, while Jesus' ministry may be summed up as one of involving the powerful operation of God's Spirit. In Mark there is no giving of the Holy Spirit to the disciples, rather Jesus receives the Spirit and manifests the Spirit in messianic signs and in proclamation, ie., Jesus is a Spirit-user, not a Spirit-giver, cf., Gundry. For Mark, baptising with the Holy Spirit is not a giving of the Spirit, but a baptising with messianic spiritual power, a power which Jesus possesses in the Spirit; "the eschatological power of God effective through the Spirit", Boring. The power presumably is active in forgiveness and the Christian walk, which the Baptist pre-empts and which Jesus enacts. Note that Luke adds **και πυρι** "and in fire", ie., with suffering (whose suffering?).

1:9-13

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

1. Introduction, 1:1-13

ii] The Exodus in the wilderness - Jesus' baptism and temptation

Synopsis

Mark moves quickly on from his description of the forerunner, John the Baptist, and gives us a shorthand description of the baptism of Jesus and his testing in the wilderness. In this passage we are introduced to Jesus the son of God, messiah, who stands in the place of God's failed son Israel.

Teaching

These two episodes proclaim two great truths:

- Of the baptism, Adolf Schlatter says, Jesus "associates himself with sinners and ranges himself in the ranks of the guilty, not to find salvation for himself, not on account of his own guilt in his flight from the approaching wrath, but because he is at one with the church and the bearer of the divine mercy";
- Of the temptation, William Lane says, "Jesus' obedience to God is affirmed and sustained in the wilderness, the precise place where Israel's rebellion had brought death and alienation, in order that the new Israel of God may be constituted."

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8

ii] Structure: *Jesus' baptism and temptation*:

The baptism of Jesus, v9;

A theophany, v10-11;

the proclamation of a divine word.

iii] Interpretation:

The debate, as to why it was necessary for Jesus to undergo John's baptism, a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, is inconclusive. Jesus' enigmatic commentary in Matthew 3:15, "it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness", does little to clear the air. These notes take the line that Jesus, as corporate Israel, underwent a flawless act of repentance, symbolised in water baptism, on behalf of those who will come to believe in him. The Exodus symbolism of Israel passing through the waters and moving out into the wilderness to be tested, does

seem to be reflected in the gospel narrative, and this symbolism intern reinforces the idea that Jesus is undertaking a corporate act on our behalf.

iv] Synoptics:

The baptism of Jesus, v9-11. Matt.3:13-17, Lk.3:21-22. Mark's account is compact when compared with the other synoptic gospels.

The temptation of Jesus, v12-13. Matt.4:1-11, Lk.4:1-13. Mark certainly makes the point that Jesus now faces eschatological warfare with the powers of darkness, but it is interesting how Matthew and Luke draw on their source tradition to expand Mark's account into what is a classic three-point sermon.

v] Homiletics: *1st. Sunday in Lent - a reflection*

During Lent, there is a sense where we identify with Jesus' wilderness experience. On Ash Wednesday we hear the words "turn away from sin and rely on the grace of God." So, in the old English Collect we pray "Forgive the sins of all who are penitent; create and make in us new and contrite hearts." So, during Lent we strive to turn away from our godless independent self-reliance, and turn again to the living God in dependent reliance - a turning away from self to Jesus. So, Lenten penance is all about refocusing on Jesus, getting the weight of our life back on Jesus.

To help with this shift, we focus on at least one element of our life that we don't often look at. So, for example, we may focus on gluttony, one of the seven deadly sins. Some years ago, my brother-in-law chose to give up chocolate for Lent; for me that would be a work of supererogation.

God's creation is a wondrously beautiful thing, a grand experience. Yet, there is a wilderness to it. When things go wrong, sickness and worries abound, then the horror and loneliness of the wilderness is close at hand. It is then we sense the ravenous animals about us. It is for this reason that the ancient liturgical service for Ash Wednesday carries the words, "remember, O man, you are dust and to dust you will return", Gen.3:19. Oh yes, the touch of "father time." So, as we refocus our lives on Jesus, we are reminded of the "old Adam" in us - our sinful self. When we return to the desert we feel Satan's touch.

In our repentance, our recommitment to Jesus, the angels will attend us, or as Jesus put it, "I will be with you always, even to the end of the age."

Text - 1:9

The Exodus in the wilderness, v9-13: i] The baptism of Jesus, v9-11. Verse 9 parallels verse 5. John, the forerunner, calls on Israel to gather at the water's edge in preparation for the coming of the Messiah - the day of reckoning is come;

the day of judgement is at hand. It was in leaving Egypt, through the waters of the Red Sea, that the children of Israel met the living God at Mt. Sinai, and where they were confirmed as God's unique people. From Nazareth in Galilee, a place of lawless Judaism, secularised, synchronised, comes a true Israelite. He heeds the call and comes to John by the river Jordan. Although he, of all those who came to John, has no need to undergo a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, he none-the-less faces God on behalf of a broken people. On behalf of the "lost", he undertakes a repentance acceptable to God. In the perfection of this one true Israelite there will grow a new Israel, gathered to him by grace through faith.

εγενετο [γίνομαι] "-" - [AND] IT CAME TO PASS. Used to introduce a new episode. "Now it was in those days", Moffatt; "it happened", NAB.

εν + dat. "**at [that time]**" - IN [THOSE DAYS *that*]. Temporal use of the preposition; "it was then that Jesus came from Nazareth into Galilee", Barclay.

Ιησους [ους ου] "**Jesus**" - Anarthrous: the only example of "Jesus" used in Mark without an article.

απο + gen. "**from**" - [CAME] FROM. Expressing source / origin. Jesus' coming "from" Nazareth to John at the Jordan river parallels v5.

τή Γαλιλαιας [α] gen. "**in Galilee**" - [NAZARETH] OF GALILEE. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / locative; "Nazareth *which is located in* Galilee."

ύπο + gen. "**by [John]**" - [AND WAS IMMERSERD, WASHED] BY [JOHN]. Expressing agency.

εις "in" - INTO [THE JORDAN *river*]. Local; space, arrival at: "in the river Jordan", expressing here the sense of **εν**, "in".

v10

The Exodus theme continues as the reader is given an insight into the divine confirmation of Jesus' unique sonship; he is the only faithful one, the true Israel, the messiah. As the people of Israel gathered before Mt. Sinai on that day when the heavens were rent and God spoke, so again the heavens are torn asunder and God speaks. Now, a new son is confirmed, a son faithful through and through. In Jesus, the new Israel, God's new community (represented by the dove) will be built in the power of God's Spirit. "Because you are my unique Son, I have chosen you for the task upon which you are about to enter", Stonehouse.

ευθως adv. "**Just as**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY, THEN. Temporal adverb. Mark uses this word some 40 times, sometimes to tie together two related episodes, "next", at other times to provide dramatic movement; "and straightway", AV.

αναβαινων [αναβαινω] pres. part. "**was coming**" - COMING UP, GOING UP. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, "when", Barclay; "as soon as Jesus came up out of the water", CEV.

εκ **"out of"** - FROM [THE WATER]. Expressing source / origin; "from out of." Variant is απο, "from".

τους ουρανοϋς [οϋς] gen. pl. **"heaven"** - [HE SAW] THE HEAVENS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to see." "Heaven", the abode of God, BAGD, although often referring to the sky; "he saw the sky parting asunder", Weymouth. The plural "heavens" is idiomatic. Mark is recording a personal revelation to Jesus, so "he saw" = "Jesus saw."

σχιζομενοϋς [σχιζω] pres. pas. part. **"torn open"** - BEING RENT APART, SPLIT, DIVIDED, OPENED. The accusative participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "heavens", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "the heavens." Probably passive, as NIV, rather than middle; "opening themselves."

καταβαινον [καταβαινω] pres. part. **"descend / descending"** - [AND *he saw* THE SPIRIT] COMING DOWN, DESCENDING. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "the Spirit", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "Spirit".

εις **"on"** - TO, INTO [HIM]. Spatial, expressing movement toward and arrival at. The variant επ, "upon him", is to be preferred, although the preposition εις can be taken as "upon". None-the-less, "came down and entered into him", BAGD, is possible, so Gundry.

ωϋ **"like [a dove]"** - LIKE, AS. Comparative; either, descending as a dove would descend, or descending, looking like a dove, in which case "like a dove" modifies "the Spirit." Probably the latter alternative.

περιστεραν [α] **"a dove"** - A PIGEON, DOVE. An elusive image. Either the divine is being represented as a bird-like creature coming to rest on Jesus, or the dove, as a common symbol of Israel at the time, serves to identify Jesus as the new Spirit-filled corporate Israel. The second option seems best.

v11

The notion of Jesus as corporate Israel is reinforced by taking the divine words in this verse as an allusion to Genesis 22:2. If this allusion is intended, Jesus is being identified as the true son of Abraham. It should be noted that the quotation from Mark is very close to the LXX version of Gen.22:2. These divine words are usually regarded as a melding of Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1, and serve as a divine confirmation that Yahweh's suffering servant is the conquering messiah. These divine words do not appoint Jesus to the role of God's servant, a role he already possesses and continues to hold. The words are a public confirmation of Jesus' messianic credentials for all who read this gospel. If the gospel account is representing Jesus as corporate Israel, then it is likely that the allusion is to Gen.22:2.

ἐκ + gen. "**from [heaven]**" - [AND THERE WAS A VOICE] OUT OF, FROM [THE HEAVENS]. Source / origin; "a voice from God's dwelling place", the voice of God sounding from above, from the rent clouds.

ὁ υἱός [ος] "**[my] Son**" - [YOU ARE] THE SON [OF ME]. Predicate nominative. Probably messianic rather than filial. See above.

ὁ αγαπητός "**whom I love**" - THE BELOVED. The attributive adjective modifies "Son"; "my beloved Son." The sense pushes toward the idea of "unique son / only son", given that the Hebrew "only" is often translated by the same Greek word in the LXX, but obviously in messianic terms rather than filial terms. "The beloved and only son", Barclay.

ἐν + dat. "**with**" - IN [YOU]. Here expressing association, "that toward which the feeling is directed", BDAG, "with", as NIV.

εὐδοκῆσα [εὐδοκῶ] aor. "**I am well-pleased**" - I AM WELL PLEASSED. A timeless aorist, therefore best represented with a present tense. Possibly, "I think it good", even "I am resolved", so "I have chosen you", or in gentler terms, "on you my favour rests", Barclay. If the meaning "well pleased" is adopted, Gundry suggests that the word carries enthusiasm. The divine is over-the-top with Jesus; "in you I take delight", REB.

v12

ii] The temptation of Jesus, v12-13. The faithful son, the new Israel, is now thrown into the midst of a cosmic struggle between Satan and God. Jesus is driven into the wilderness and there, like Israel of old, is tested. Mark implies that Jesus stands the test, yet unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark does not say that the test ends after the forty days. Nor does he give us any details, other than Jesus was "with the wild animals." The wilderness is Satan's realm, a place of horror, loneliness, where wild beasts roam. Jesus, the true Israel, must struggle through the darkness to the promised land. Yet, just as the angels ministered to Elijah during his forty days in the wilderness, so they minister to Jesus. For Mark, Jesus' wilderness struggle is but a foretaste of the coming three years which will involve an unending assault from demonic forces. As Jesus is sustained and affirmed in the wilderness, so he is sustained through the wilderness of his ministry. Thus is constituted the new Israel of God, a people who stand the test in Jesus.

ἐκβάλλει [ἐκβάλλω] pres. "**sent [him] out**" - [AND IMMEDIATELY THE SPIRIT] SENT OUT, THRUST OUT/FORTH, CAST OUT, DRIVE OUT [HIM]. The historic present tense of a very forceful word. "The Spirit drove him immediately into the desert", Moffatt; "compelled", Barclay; "impelled", Weymouth.

εἰς "**into**" - TO, INTO. Spatial, expressing the direction of the action and arrival at; "into".

την ερημον [ος ον] "**the desert**" - A DESOLATE PLACE, WILDERNESS. A place of testing and confrontation with the divine, but also often seen as a haunt for evil powers; "the wilderness", REB.

v13

εν + dat. "**in [the wilderness]**" - [AND HE WAS BEING] IN [THE DESERT]. Local; expressing space, "in"; "he remained in the desert", Zerwick.

τεσσαρακοντα "**forty**" - FORTY [DAYS]. Alluding to the forty years of Israel's wanderings in the desert prior to entering the promised land. Unlike Israel of old, Jesus, the new Israel, does not fail the test.

πειραζομενος [πειραζω] pres. pas. part. "**being tempted**" - BEING TESTED, TEMPTED. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner in which the action of the main verb "he was / remained" is accomplished, as NIV, but possibly final, expressing purpose, "in order to be tested." Satan puts Jesus to the test as Israel was tested in the wilderness, therefore "was put to the test", NJB.

υπο + gen. "**by [Satan]**" - BY [THE ADVERSARY, DEVIL]. Expressing agency, "by", as NIV.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - [AND HE WAS] WITH [WILD BEASTS]. Expressing association. It is unclear whether Jesus is living peacefully with the animals, as if in a pre-fallen world, or living with them with one eye on the nearest tree to climb for safety.

αυτω dat. "**him**" - [AND THE ANGELS WERE WAITING ON, MINISTERING TO] HIM. Dative of direct object after the δια prefix verb "to minister to", which verb is possibly an inceptive imperfect, "they began to minister to", but is more likely used because it provides background information following Jesus' having been "driven out" (present tense).

1:14-20

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

2. Jesus the Son of God, Messiah, 1:14-45

i] The call to follow Jesus

Synopsis

The divine coming-one has been announced and empowered with the Spirit and now sets out to proclaim the day of the coming kingdom. For this task, Jesus gathers a band of ordinary men to follow him. They will be with him all the way to the cross and from there, they will take the message concerning the coming kingdom to the ends of the world. To this end, Jesus calls Simon and his brother Andrew, and James and his brother John, all of whom are fishermen.

Teaching

The righteous one, empowered by the Spirit and with a team of called-out disciples, enters Satan's domain to do battle, proclaiming the dawning of the new age of the kingdom.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1:1-8. Divisions within this gospel are somewhat arbitrary, so it is not possible to be definite when segmenting Mark's work. There is much to be said for treating 1:1-15 as the prologue, with 1:16 as the commencement of the gospel proper, but it is equally possible to argue that the gospel proper begins at v14. Either way, Jesus' calling of his first disciples introduces the early Galilean ministry, 1:14-3:6.

ii] Structure: *The call to follow Jesus*:

A summary of the preaching ministry of Jesus, v14-15;

The calling of two groups of disciples:

Simon and his brother Andrew, v16-18;

James and his brother John, v19-20.

iii] Interpretation:

The opening sentence, v14-15, provides us with "the gospel in a nutshell", Edwards. The gospel announces that the long-promised righteous reign of God over his called-out, and blessed people is about to begin / has begun (the *now / not yet* dichotomy again!).

The rest of the passage deals with an invitation to discipleship, first to Simon / Peter and Andrew, v16-18, and then to James and John, v19-20. In these verses we read how Jesus gathers partners in his quest; they turn out to be a group of fallible men who will be with him all the way to

Gethsemane. Although slow in understanding the full import of Jesus' person, and inevitably failing him in the face of danger, they will carry his word beyond the confines of Palestine to the ends of the world.

iv] Synoptics:

Jesus proclaims the gospel, 14-15. Matt.4:12-17, Lk.4:14-15. Only Matthew and Luke hint at the early Judean ministry (John is specific), with Jesus' Galilean ministry following the arrest of John the Baptist.

The call of the first disciples, v16-20. Matt.4:18-22, Lk.5:1-11. Matthew follows Mark's narrative order here (or is it the other way around???)

v] Homiletics: *An effectual call*

One of the subjects of perennial debate in a theological college is the function of the gospel in salvation. Everyone agrees that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation", but how does this power work? Students tend to break up into two groups. Some feel that it is a power available for the seeker - for the person who is seeking God, the gospel serves as the key to unlock the grace of salvation. This idea emphasises the notion of human freewill in the process of salvation. Others feel that the gospel is a pre-emptive power which acts on a person who has already experienced the sovereign in-working of the Spirit. This particular idea emphasises the notion of God's sovereign will in the process of salvation.

Biblical truth is truth in tension. So, in our reading today, the Bible seems to affirm both God's sovereignty and human freedom. The call of the disciples illustrates both sides of the divide; the theological truth known as the "effectual call", and on the other side of the divide, human freewill. On the one hand, we could argue that the disciples had no choice in the matter. The call of Jesus left them with no option other than to leave all and follow him. Yet, their call was not out of the blue. They were already followers of John the Baptist and were looking for the coming messiah. They had thought through the issues and were ready and waiting when the net was cast.

This debate will go on forever, but the bottom line is that we possess a gospel with the same power that moved those fishermen all those years ago. Its effective power is the responsibility of God, while its personal touch is the responsibility of the seeker. All we are expected to do is communicate the Good News, and leave the rest to Jesus.

Text - 1:14

The proclamation of the reign of God, v14-15: i] "The Messiah announces that the decisive hour has struck", Hunter, v14. Mark separates the ministry of Jesus from that of John the Baptist, so only after the arrest of John does Jesus begin his ministry in earnest. John's function, therefore, is to prepare the way for Jesus' coming, 1:2.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

μετα .. το παραδοθηναι [παραδιδωμι] aor. inf. "**after [John] was put in prison**" - AFTER [JOHN] WAS DELIVERED OVER, HANDED OVER, TURNED OVER *to prison*. This preposition, with the articular infinitive, forms a temporal clause, subsequent time. The sense is obviously "handed over to be imprisoned / face trial." Mark clearly has Jesus' public ministry following John's. "After John was arrested", CEV.

εις + acc. "**into [Galilee]**" - [JESUS CAME] INTO [GALILEE]. Spatial, expressing the direction of the action and arrival at. Not only does Jesus commence his public ministry in his home province, but it also becomes the centre for his ministry.

κηρυσσων [κηρυσσω] pres. part. "**proclaiming**" - COMMUNICATING. Possibly an attendant circumstance participle identifying action accompanying the main verb "went", Jesus went and preached", but better treated as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of Christ's coming, "he came preaching", or final, expressing purpose, "he came in order to preach." The ministry of Jesus, as with the ministry of John, is constantly defined as one of communicating a message - a ministry entrusted to Jesus' disciples.

το ευαγγελιον [ον] "**the good news**" - THE IMPORTANT NEWS. Accusative direct object of κηρυσσων. The word was used of an important message, such as news reported from a battlefield. The message may be good news, or bad news, either way, it is important; "God's important message to humanity."

της βασιλειας [α] "-" - OF THE KINGDOM. This variant is widely attested, but often not read: "the important message of the kingdom". In modifying the noun "important news" the genitive is best taken as adjectival, possessive, "*belonging to*", or idiomatic / attributive, "which is all about", or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*originating from* ..." Possibly adverbial, reference / respect, "*concerning* ..." Reminding us of the content of the message, namely, the coming kingdom - the dawning of God's promised righteous reign.

του θεου "**of God**" - OF GOD. The genitive may be classified as adjectival, possessive, "God's good news", Barclay, or verbal, subjective, "the good news *from* God", Cranfield (descriptive, idiomatic / source, agent, "*originating / proceeding from* God"), even verbal, objective, "the Good News *about / concerning* God", Decker, or more obtusely, plenary / full, so Wallace.

v15

ii] Mark now outlines the actual message communicated by Jesus, v15. Matthew has John communicating the same message, cf. Matt.3:2, although the Baptist's message is qualified by the fact that the inauguration of the kingdom is in the hands of the coming messiah. John's task is to prepare Israel for the messiah's coming. Mark emphasises John's preparatory role and leaves Jesus to communicate the divine message.

The word "gospel" actually means "important message" and it is either good news, or bad news, depending on how we respond to it. There are three parts to Jesus' message and Mark gives us a summary:

- "The time has come / is fulfilled / completed". All that the prophets foretold concerning the coming of the messiah, the anointed Davidic leader, is coming to fruition in and through the person of Jesus, the Son of Man / God.

- "The kingdom of God is near / at hand / bursting in upon us." The glorious day when God will fulfil his promises to Abraham, gathering a people to himself to eternally live secure under his rule of peace, is bursting into this world. This reality is actualised in the person of Jesus who both inaugurates the kingdom in the present moment and will realise it at his second coming - it is a *now / not yet* reality, realised and inaugurated.

- "Repent and believe". The message demands a response. The call for repentance is similar to John's call. Membership in the coming kingdom demands a turning toward the living God. It is a turning back to God, a conversion. The response also involves belief: faith, dependence on, firm reliance on, a reliance on the promise of salvation in Christ / grace. Both John and Jesus link "repent and believe" with "forgiveness". Our response to the gospel involves both a turning to God and a reliance on God for mercy, for God's free grace of forgiveness in Christ.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "**he said**" - [AND] SAYING. Coordinate attendant circumstance participle with the participle "preaching", v14, "went preaching saying."

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement, direct speech.

ὁ καιρος [ος] "**the time**" - OPPORTUNE TIME, APPOINTED TIME. Nominative subject of the verb "has been fulfilled." "A specific quality of a particular period of time", Cullmann.

πεπληρωται [πληρωω] perf. "**has come**" - HAS BEEN FULFILLED, FILLED UP TO OVERFLOWING. The sense "completed" is best, in that the prophecies concerning the coming of the messiah and the inauguration of his kingdom, have

now come to fruition in the person and work of Christ, therefore, the kingdom is upon us, is "now". The perfect tense underlines the idea of completion. "The time, prophesied long ago, has come at last."

του Θεου "of God" - [THE KINGDOM] OF GOD. The dynamic reign of God through Christ, the realisation of which brings eternal peace and for which those of faith yearn, is a now / not yet reality. Taken as "the righteous reign of God", the genitive "of God" would be classified as verbal, subjective. Addressing "kingdom" in time / space terms we would classify "of God" as adjectival, possessive, or idiomatic / source, "*from* God." The "kingdom" is best defined as the righteous reign / rule / kingship of God, now open to all people, in and through the ministry of the messiah. The gathering of this people, and the exercise of this reign, is inaugurated, and comes to fruition, in the person and work of Jesus. Its reality is imaged in the Old Testament, particularly in the historic kingdom of Israel, before finding its fulfilment in Jesus. For the people of Israel, the term "the kingdom of God" was highly charged, in that it encapsulated the messiah's establishment of the eschatological reign of God over Israel, in defiance of all secular powers, which powers will bow in adoration before God's mighty intervention in human affairs. There is, of course, debate over whether the kingdom is a time / space reality, or just a descriptor of divine rule. The kingdom as "the righteous reign of God" has more going for it, but as Wanamaker points out, the kingdom is both "domain and dominion."

γγικεν [εγγιζω] perf. "is near" - HAS COME NEAR, APPROACHED, DRAWN NEAR. Drawing near expresses motion toward, so the perfect tense is probably expressing the idea that the motion is time related, such that the realisation of the kingdom has virtually reached its completion, therefore "at hand", "near", "imminent", possibly, "upon", "rubbing up next to." Of course, the word leads to the great debate over the *now / not yet* shape of the kingdom. Without in any way denying that the kingdom of God is yet to be fully realised in the return of Christ, there is still much to be said for Dodd's version or realised eschatology. France puts it nicely when he argues that it has burst on the scene "recently and is now here", ie., the kingdom is both inaugurated and realised. "The kingdom of God is bursting in upon you."

μετανοιετε [μετανοεω] imp. "repent" - CHANGE [YOUR DIRECTION]. The word carries the sense, "turn around", so the first imperative, in response to the gospel message, is "turn from your opposition to / abandonment of, God", "turn to God", "be converted." Of course, the word "repent" means something quite different in modern language, so we are best not to use it; "turn back to God", CEV.

πιστευετε [πιστευω] pres. imp. "**believe**" - [AND] BELIEVE. The sense of the second imperative, in response to the gospel, is "believe": "to put one's weight on", "rest firmly on", rather than "give intellectual ascent to."

εν + dat. "in [the good news]" - IN [THE IMPORTANT MESSAGE]. Local; the sense being "believe in (the sphere of) the gospel", Moule IB, or better, "believe the message." Specifying "the content that is believed, or the person who is to be trusted", Decker.

v16

The call of the first disciples, v16-20: i] Peter and Andrew, v16-18. Early in Jesus' ministry, he gathers around him a group of very ordinary people to serve as his disciples. "The story of Jesus is the story of community, and there is no Christology apart from ecclesiology and discipleship", Boring. The two fishermen, Simon and Andrew, are called first. John tells us that they were disciples of John the Baptist and were therefore well prepared for the call, Jn.1:35-42. They are called to be "fishers of men." The term has Old Testament significance. In the day of judgement God will cast his net over the sea of humanity and gather some for life and others for damnation. The disciples are called to gather in the lost before the dawning of that terrible day.

παραγων [παραγω] pres. part. "**As [Jesus] walked**" - [AND] PASSING BY. The variant "walking" gives the same sense as "passing along / by." The participle is adverbial, probably temporal; "when (while) Jesus was walking along the shore", Barclay.

παρα + acc. "beside" - ALONGSIDE [THE SEA, LAKE]. Spatial; "alongside." The sea of Galilee is more properly a lake, although Mark calls it a sea. Jesus focuses his ministry on the Jewish towns around the lake, making his headquarters in Capernaum.

της Γαλιλαιας [α] gen. "**of Galilee**" - The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / locative; "the sea *which is located in the region* of Galilee", also bearing the name Gennesaret or Tiberias."

Σιμωνος [ων] gen. "**his [brother Andrew]**" - [HE SAW SIMON AND ANDREW, THE BROTHER] OF SIMON. The genitive is adjectival, relational. **τον αδελφον**, "the brother [of him]", accusative in apposition to "Simon".

αμφιβαλλοντας [αμφιβαλλω] pres. part. "**casting a net**" - CASTING *their fishing nets*. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "Simon and his brother Andrew", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the direct object, namely that Simon and Andrew were fishing.

εν + dat. "into" - IN [THE LAKE]. Spatial; expressing space.

γάρ "for" - BECAUSE [THEY WERE FISHERMAN]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they were casting a net into the lake, namely, "because they were fisherman", "being fisherman", Cassirer. It is fascinating to note that common fishermen are called to serve as Jesus' apostles (the sent ones), although note that Zebedee employed "hired men", indicating that James and John were not at the bottom of the social scale, cf., v20.

v17

δευτε "come" - COME HERE. Plural form of the adverb serving as an imperatival interjection.

πισω + gen. "**follow [me]**" - AFTER [ME]. Properly an adverb, but in the NT it functions as a preposition. An invitation to take up an apprenticeship with the rabbi Jesus, although in rather stark terms; "Here! Behind me", France. It is likely that these disciples of John knew Jesus well, and now that John had been arrested, were given the opportunity to serve the one John had pointed to.

αυτοις dat. pro. "[Jesus said]" - [AND JESUS SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

και "and" - AND. Somewhat consecutive in force; "and *as a result*, I will make you fishers of men."

γενεσθαι [γινομαι] aor. inf. "- " - [I WILL MAKE YOU] TO BE / BECOME. The infinitive, with its accusative subject "you" and its accusative object "fishers of me", introduces an object clause / dependent statement of cause, indicating what Jesus "will make", although Decker classifies it simply as complementary. The sense of the verb **ποιησω**, "I will make" is "cause someone to do something", Cranfield, so "I will make you become in the future, after a course of preparation, ...", Grant.

ανθρωπων [ος] gen. "**[fishers] of men**" - [FISHERMEN] OF MEN. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "fisherman", descriptive, idiomatic / verbal, objective; "fishermen *who fish for* men." In Jeremiah 16:16, we read of God sending his servants to fish-out his people for judgment, either for blessing or cursing, cf., Amos 4:2, Hab.1:14-17, also Ezk.47:8-10. This image may well prompt Jesus' use of his fishing metaphor here, and so remind us again that the preaching of the gospel is like a two-edge sword, it both blesses and curses. If the Old Testament allusion is somewhat strained, we are bound to read back a knowledge of the Christian mission to make sense of the metaphor. The disciples will gather people into the kingdom through the preaching of the gospel; "I will make you fishermen who catch men", Barclay.

v18

ευθυς "at once" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. Mark expresses a speedy response to image Jesus' authority, although Decker opts for a more inferential sense, "so".

αφεντες [αφτημι] aor. part. "they left" - LEAVING, ABANDONING [THE NETS]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "followed", or adverbial, temporal, "so, when they had left their nets they followed him." The act of leaving their nets may serve to illustrate a renunciation of the world in service to Jesus, but since we know that the disciples retained their property, including fishing boats (cf. Jn.21:3), it is more likely that they packed up their gear for the time being in order to go on mission with their new rabbi. The word δικτυα can mean any net, although probably "casting net" is intended.

ηκολουθησαν [ακολουθεω] aor. "followed" - THEY FOLLOWED AFTER. A literal "following" is probably intended, "went with him", CEV, although a derived sense may be present, ie., "follow as a disciple", "became his followers", Barclay.

αυτω dat. pro. "him" - Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow".

v19

ii] The call of James and John, v19-20. James and John are called next. The context implies that they too will serve as messengers of coming judgement, gathering and separating. They, like Simon and Andrew, immediately accept the sovereign call of God in Jesus. Given the one who calls, they have no other choice. Their return to Galilee, at the end of Mark's gospel, serves to reaffirm and refocus this call to mission, 16:7, cf., John chapter 21. It has been argued that the call of James and John appears later in the oral tradition, but that Mark has moved it forward and stitched it to the call of Simon and Andrew, so Marcus.

προβας [προβαινω] pres. part. "when he had gone" - [AND] HAVING GONE ON. The participle is adverbial, best treated as introducing a temporal clause, as NIV.

ολιγον adv. "a little further" - A LITTLE [HE SAW JAMES]. The neuter of the adjective "small" is used as an adverb.

τον "-" - THE. The article serves here as a nominalizer, turning the genitive noun "of Zebedee" into the accusative substantive "the one = son of Zebedee" standing in apposition to "James."

του Ζεεδαιου [ος] gen. "son of Zebedee" - OF ZEBEDEE [AND JOHN THE BROTHER OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

και "-" - AND [THEM = THEY were]. Here somewhat epexegetic, specifying what αυτους, "they", ie., James and John, were up to, "namely that they were beside the boat mending their nets."

εν τῷ πλοίῳ **"in a boat"** - IN, WITH, BY THE = THEIR BOAT. The definite article probably serves as a possessive pronoun, "their", while the preposition **εν** probably expresses sphere of operation, "beside the boat", rather than "in", since the last place a person works on a net is in the confined space of a boat.

καταριζοντας [καταριζω] part. **"preparing"** - MENDING, RESTORING, STRENGTHENING [THE = THEIR NETS]. Given that the participle is accusative, standing in agreement with **αυτους**, "them", "James John", it probably serves as the accusative complement of the direct object of the verb "he saw", asserting a fact about the object, "he saw James John / them mending"; "who were in the boat mending their nets", RSV. As noted by Cranfield, obviously "preparing" their nets for the next day's fishing.

v20

ευθυσ **"without delay"** - IMMEDIATELY. Used also in v18 and possibly wanting to convey an instantaneous call and response, but probably here just expressing a sense of haste - a forward movement to the story. If the latter, then best not translated. Possibly inferential, "so"; see v18 - "he then called them", Guelich.

εκαλεσεν [καλεω] aor. **"he called"** - HE CALLED, SUMMONED, INVITED [THEM]. The stronger sense, as in "summon before a court of law", is reflected in the derived sense, "called to discipleship." The sense "invited" may be intended.

αφεντες [αφιημι] aor. part. **"they left"** - [AND] LEAVING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "followed"; "they left and followed ..."

ουτων **"their"** - [THE FATHER ZEBEDEE] OF THEM. Genitive of relationship.

εν + dat. **"in"** - IN [THE BOAT]. Locative, expressing sphere, as above; "beside".

μετα + gen. **"with"** - WITH [THE HIRED LABOURERS *and* DEPARTED AFTER HIM]. Expressing association / accompaniment. The hired labourers are not to be confused with servants or slaves; these men were employees of Zebedee.

1:21-28

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

2. Jesus the Son of God, Messiah, 1:14-45

ii] A day in the journey - New teaching

Synopsis

Chapter 1:21-34, represents a single day in the life of Jesus, or more properly, a Sabbath day and the evening of the next day, given that the new day begins at sunset. The events of the day include a visit to the Synagogue and to the home of Simon and Andrew at Capernaum. We see Jesus teaching, exorcising and healing.

Teaching

The "Holy one of God", the messiah, speaks with authority / power, such that even the demons are subject to his word. "If it is by the finger of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has burst in upon you", Lk.11:20.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8.

ii] Structure: *New teachings*:

Jesus teaches with authority, v21-22;

The powers of darkness subdued, v23-26;

A response of amazement, v27-28.

iii] Interpretation:

Mark seems to have crafted this *normal* day in the life of Jesus to illustrate his saving work, 1:21-34. We are introduced to messiah's redemptive work as Jesus casts out demons, heals and teaches. It may well be that this *day in the life of Jesus* was already established in the oral tradition, although Boring, referring to Schenke, notes that Mark may have added the introductory exorcism from elsewhere in the tradition, 1:21b-28.

In demonstrating the authority of Jesus, Mark first "shows that Jesus teaches with unique authority, unlike and indeed surpassing that of the scribes", Edwards, v21-22. Mark goes on to demonstrate the authority of Jesus over the powers of darkness, "showing us what happens when a man with an unclean spirit meets the One anointed with God's Spirit", Edwards, v23-26. Mark then records the amazement of the people and the spread of Jesus' fame, v27-28.

iv] Synoptics:

Luke 4:31-37. Matthew covers Jesus early Galilean ministry in 4:23-25.

v] Homiletics: *The power of God's Word*

In our reading today, we see the activity of God gaining control over a creation separated from him and now hostile to him, a creation subject to dark forces. These hostile powers are brought under God's rule by an authoritative word from the divine man, Jesus.

In grammar, the Mood denotes the way we should understand the action of a verb. The Imperative Mood gives a command, and the Bible is full of commands. For example, we are commanded to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, but how do we stay on the narrow way; how do we maintain our eternal standing before God?

We are kept in the game of faith by the power of the Biblical Imperative. The authoritative Word of Christ commands, and in the strength of the Spirit of Christ, those hostile powers that would undermine our faith, are subdued. We hear and are set free by the grace of Christ's authoritative Word. In simple terms, we hear Christ's command, and he empowers its intention. Our standing as a Christian, yesterday, today and tomorrow, rests on Christ's authoritative word, not on our feeble response.

Text - 1:21

A day in the life of Jesus, v21-34: i] Jesus teaches with authority, v21-22. In v29 we see that the "they" are the four fishermen who have "left their nets and followed" Jesus. Most likely they all lived in Capernaum, a town situated on the north-western shore of lake Galilee. The ruins at Tel Hum today probably represent this thriving town which became the centre for Jesus' ministry. In typical fashion, Jesus, a rabbi (teacher), attends the local synagogue and is invited to expound the scriptures to the congregation. At the outset, Mark identifies the focus of Jesus' mission, namely, divine communication.

εἰσπορευονται [**εἰσπορευομαι**] pres. **"they went"** - THEY ENTER, GO INTO. Historical present, used in narrative discourse to indicate a step in the narrative. The "they", meaning Jesus and his disciples, serves as the understood subject.

εἰς "-" - INTO [CAPERNAUM]. The repetition of the verb's prefix **εἰς** is stylistic.
εὐθὺς adv. "-" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. This temporal adverb is used here to express next in sequence, "then".

τοῖς σαββάσιν [**ὄν οὐ**] dat. **"when the Sabbath came"** - ON THE SABBATHS. The dative is temporal, as NIV, while the plural form is a reflection of the Aramaic, and does not mean Jesus is attending the synagogue on successive Sabbaths. "On the next Sabbath", CEV.

εισελθων [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "**went into**" - ENTERING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "teach"; "he entered and taught."

την συναγωγην [η] "**the synagogue**" - [INTO] THE SYNAGOGUE. Given that Capernaum is a substantial town with a population of around 10,000, the synagogue would be a major place of worship.

εδιδασκεν [διδασκω] imperf. "**he began to teach**" - HE WAS TEACHING *the people*. The imperfect is possibly inceptive, where the emphasis is placed on the beginning of the action; "began teaching", Phillips, as NIV. As Decker notes, Mark could have used αρχομαι, "began", if he wanted to stress the beginning of his teaching, in which case Mark's use of the imperfect may just be stressing durative action, Jesus "was teaching." Given synagogue protocol, Jesus would have been invited to preach, which means that he was at least known to the elders as a rabbi. Mark is clearly underlining the prime function of Jesus' messianic mission, namely, divine communication.

v22

The content of Jesus' teaching is most likely the gospel, a summary of which is found in v15. Obviously, the content, along with the authority with which it is delivered, disturbs the people. Jesus delivers his teaching, quite contrary to the rabbinic tradition where the scriptures were expounded in line with the tradition of the elders. Jesus' teaching-style is even more confronting than the prophets of old. Here was an authoritative revelation from God which served to amaze the congregation.

εξεπλησσαντο [εκπλησσω] imperf. "**the people were amazed**" - [AND] THEY WERE AMAZED, ASTONISHED, OVERWHELMED, FILLED WITH FEAR AND WONDER. The indefinite subject "they" is properly assumed to be "the people." The imperfect tense, being durative, links to Jesus' act of teaching in v21, possibly indicating that from the moment he began teaching, the people were astonished, so Gundry. It is worth noting that the gospel ends with the women overcome with trembling, amazement and fear, 16:8 - Cranfield identifies Mark's numerous references to the amazement of the crowds, as a "striking feature" of his gospel. This response to Jesus and his gospel is well short of faith and it seems clear that Mark wants to underline the need to move from wonder / amazement to faith. "The people were astonished at his teaching", NAB.

επι + dat. "**at**" - UPON, AT [THE TEACHING OF HIM]. Causal; in the sense of "on the ground of / basis of", possibly extending to "because of", even "by". Are the people amazed at how he taught, his bold presentation, or are they amazed at the content of his teaching, his radical ideas? Commentators are divided. How about both?

γάρ "**because**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the people are amazed.

ην ... διδασκων [διδασκω] verb to-be + pres. part. "**he taught**" - HE WAS TEACHING. Periphrastic imperfect. Here a true periphrastic construction and therefore, probably best treated as a simple imperfect, ie. it is used only for stylistic flair, although it is possible that Mark is using the periphrastic to underline aspect, ongoing action (durative), or for emphasis, "there he was, teaching them", France.

ὡς "**as**" - AS. Here the comparative is adverbial, expressing manner, "in the manner of"; "he is teaching as one who has authority teaches", Burton.

εχων [εχω] pres. part. "**one who had**" - *one* HAVING. Although the participle does not take an article here, it does seem that it is serving as a substantive; "as *one* having authority."

εξουσιαν [α] "**authority**" - AUTHORITY, POWER, ABILITY. Jesus possessed divine power and this is recognised by the people. It is noted in his use of "I say unto you", rather than "thus says the Lord", and in his knowledge and debating skills. "He taught like a teacher who needed no authority other than his own", Barclay.

οἱ γραμματεῖς [υς εως] "**the teachers of the law**" - [AND NOT AS] THE SCRIBES *taught*. Nominative subject of an assumed verb "to teach." Recognised theological authorities.

v23

ii] Jesus exercises his authority over the powers of darkness, v23-26. A man, possessed by an evil spirit, then enters the synagogue. His personality is so damaged that the powers of darkness now rule his will. Faced with the danger of God's son, the demon screams in terror and rage.

εϋθυς adv. "**just then**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. Again, this temporal adverb is used to express dramatic movement - also present in v21, "immediately after Jesus had finished teaching", Marcus, but it may just serve as a transitional marker, "then".

εν + dat. "**in**" - [THERE WAS] IN. Local, expressing space. Probably here meaning, "came into / appeared in". "When Jesus had finished teaching, a person, possessed by an evil spirit, entered the synagogue and began screaming."

αυτων gen. pro. "**their [synagogue]**" - [THE SYNAGOGUE] OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. Is Mark telling us that this was the synagogue usually attended by Jesus and his disciples?

εν + dat. "**who was possessed by**" - [A MAN = SOMEONE WITH [AN EVIL, UNCLEAN SPIRIT]]. Introducing a prepositional phrase which, although not articular, is most likely adjectival, attributive, limiting the noun "man", "a man

who was possessed with an unclean spirit", as NIV. Here the preposition reflects the Aramaic, expressing association, "with"; "under the influence of", BAGD.

ανεκραξεν [ανακραζω] aor. "**cried out**" - [AND] HE / IT CRIED OUT. Who cried out, the man or the unclean spirit? In demon possession, the personality of the demon is distinct from, and in control of, the host. So, it is probably the demon who is enraged at the presence of Jesus, rather than the man crying out for help.

v24

The demon proclaims the name of Jesus, his function and his title, "Holy One of God". He (it/they) does this to gain mastery over Jesus, for there is power in knowing the name. If the demon can precisely identify Jesus, he may be able to contain his power (or so was the belief of the day). The demon rejects Jesus' right to interfere with him; "what have we to do with you? (you have no business with us). The demon declares that he and his demonic friends know what Jesus is on about (judgement) and who he is (God's messiah).

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "- - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant, expressing action accompanying the verb "he cried out", v23.

τι ἡμιν και σοι "**what do you want with us?**" - WHAT TO / WITH US AND TO / WITH YOU [JESUS, *the NAZARENE*]? The dative personal pronouns ὑμιν and σοι serve as datives of respect; "what *is there* with reference / respect to us and to you?" This idiomatic saying has a number of possible meanings: "What have we and you in common", Classical Greek; "why do you interfere with us", cf., Taylor; "mind your own business", Cranfield; "go away and leave us alone", France. Note the plural "us"; meaning spirit and host, or numerous possessing spirits, or one spirit speaking for all his friends.....

ηλθες [ερχομαι] aor. "**have you come**" - HAVE YOU COME. Possibly a question, but the clause may also be a statement, "you have come into the world", so Taylor.

απολεσαι [απολυμι] aor. inf. "**to destroy**" - TO DESTROY [US]? The infinitive is expressing purpose; "in order to destroy."

τις ει "**who you are**" - [I / WE KNOW YOU], WHO ARE YOU. Variant "we know." The indirect question τις εἶ, "who are you?", explains σε "you", and constitutes what they know, namely "who you are", i.e., that Jesus is "the Holy One of God." It was believed that by knowing a person, power is gained over them. The demons know Jesus: his name, Jesus of Nazareth; his business, judgment; and his spiritual nature, messiah. "We know who you are *and so you have no power over us.*"

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [THE HOLY ONE] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, agent, or relational. "The holy one of

God" may mean "the holy man of God", but Mark probably intends the phrase as a messianic title.

v25

The evil spirit's knowledge is powerless before God's messiah. Without relying on some invocation to the divine (symbols, spells, techniques), Jesus tells him to "shut up" and "come out". When it comes to the powers of darkness, Jesus has absolute authority over them.

επειμησεν [επιτιμαω] aor **"said [Jesus] sternly"** - [AND JESUS] REBUKED, CENSURED, WARNED, SPOKE STERNLY. Probably here the sense is of an authoritative silencing; "Jesus commanded him / it to stop speaking / told him to shut up"; "silence!", Barclay; "hold your tongue", Phillips. Jesus is possibly just cutting short the unclean spirit's self-defence, but he may also be wanting to maintain the messianic secret which requires a subtle revelation of the Christ ("Son of Man"), for those with eyes to see, rather than the overt display of a popular messiah, and this with inevitable political complications.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - TO HIM. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to rebuke."

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant, expressing action accompanying the verb "to rebuke".

εξ + gen. **"from"** - [BE QUIET AND COME OUT] FROM [HIM]. Expressing source; "out from him." Jesus teaches with authority and this authority is demonstrated in his command over demons.

v26

Jesus came to confront the powers of darkness and strip them of their power. In the face of the authoritative judge, the powers shriek in defiance, but come out, silenced and broken.

σπαραξαν [σπαρασσω] aor. part. **"shook [the man] violently"** - [AND] HAVING CONVULSED, TORN APART, PUSHED AND PULLED [HIM]. The participle, as with "having cried out", is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "after throwing the man into convulsions ...", Weymouth. Possibly just an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "came out"; "the evil spirit shook him, shouted out with a loud voice and came out of him."

φωνησαν [φωνεω] aor. part. "-" - [AND] HAVING CRIED OUT, SHOUTED OUT [IN A LOUD VOICE]. The aorist tense of both participles, "having convulsed and having shouted out", links them together. The shaking and shouting probably illustrates resistance, although it is ineffectual. "The evil spirit convulsed the man, let out a loud scream and left him", Phillips. The dative "loud voice" is adverbial,

modal, expressing the manner of the spirit's coming out of the man; "uttering a loud cry."

ἐξ + gen. "[**came out**] of [**him**]" - [THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT CAME OUT] FROM [HIM]. Expressing source; "out from him." Although not as common as the repetition of εἰς, a verb with the prefix ἐξ [εκ], here ἐξηλθεν, "came out", is also sometimes repeated, as here; just stylistic.

v27

iii]The crowds respond to Jesus' ministry with amazement, v27-28. The congregation is astonished. They have never before witnessed such an authoritative word. Here is a rabbi who declares a word without reservation (not even "thus says the Lord", but "I say unto you"). When this authoritative word is directed toward demonic powers, they scatter in fear. "Here was a teaching qualitatively new in the authority with which it laid hold of men. And the people were alarmed", Lane.

ἐθαμβηθησαν [θαμβεω] aor. mid. / pas. "**were all so amazed**" - [AND EVERYONE] WAS ASTONISHED, AMAZED, ASTOUNDED. The middle voice is often used to express strong emotion. Taylor suggests that they were astonished because Jesus cast out the demon without the usual incantations and actions, i.e., it's a style issue. Yet, Jesus does it with a word of command. Of course, it is also quite possible that exorcisms were not commonplace, or at least successful ones weren't commonplace. "They were dumbfounded", Williams.

ὥστε + inf. "**that**" - SO THAT, SO AS [TO DISCUSS, QUESTION, DISPUTE WITH]. This construction is used to form a consecutive clause expressing result; "with the result that they questioned / discussed."

προς + acc. "**each other**" - TOWARD [EACH OTHER]. Here expressing association; "with each other"; "they discussed it with one another", Goodspeed.

λεγοντας [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant, expressing action accompanying the verbal infinitive "to discuss", accusative in agreement with the assumed accusative subject of the infinitive, "they".

τί pro. "**What**" - WHAT [IS THIS]? The interrogative pronoun is neuter, "what", not masculine, "who".

κατ [κατα] + acc. "**with**" - *this is* [A NEW TEACHING] ACCORDING TO [AUTHORITY]. Here adverbial, expressing manner, "with". 'New' in respect of quality, as distinct from 'new' as regards time", Taylor. Elliptical, with τουτο εστιν, "this is", implied; "*this is* a new teaching." "It's new teaching with authority behind it", Moffatt.

και "**even**" - AND. Ascensive, "even", emphasising that the authoritative word exercised over the demons is more amazing than Jesus' authoritative word

in teaching, which in itself is amazing. "Why, he even gives orders to", Phillips.

τοις πνευμασι τοις ακαθαρτοις dat. "**evil spirits**" - [HE COMMANDS] THE UNCLEAN SPIRITS. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to command."

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - [AND THEY OBEY] HIM. Dative of direct object after the **υπο** prefix verb "to obey."

v28

News of the disturbance spreads far and wide.

αυτου gen. pro. "**[news] about him**" - [AND THE REPORT] OF HIM. The genitive can be classified as verbal, objective, "the report about / concerning him", although Luke has **περι αυτου** with the preposition expressing reference / respect, so the genitive here could properly be classified as adverbial, reference / respect. "The story of what Jesus had done", Barclay.

ευθυς adv. "**[spread] quickly**" - IMMEDIATELY [WENT OUT EVERYWHERE]. It is unusual for this temporal adverb to follow a verb, but here it probably stands with the local adverb **πανταχου**, "everywhere", so "his fame spread everywhere quickly."

της Γαλιλαιας gen. "**[over the whole region] of Galilee**" - [INTO ALL THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE] OF GALILEE. The genitive may be treated as partitive / wholative, "into the whole surrounding region around Galilee", or epexegetic, "into the surrounding countryside, the region of Galilee." "Into every spot of the surrounding region", Gundry.

1:29-39

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

2. Jesus the Son of God, Messiah, 1:14-45

iii] A day in the journey - Jesus bring release

Synopsis

Mark's *day in the life of Jesus* moves from the synagogue to the home of Simon and Andrew where Simon's mother-in-law is sick. Jesus heals here, and then after tea, crowds gather and the healings continue. In the morning, Jesus sets off on his preaching mission, announcing that "this is why I have come."

Teaching

Jesus' authority covers the human condition, and is exercised through the news of the coming kingdom.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8.

ii] Structure: *Jesus Brings Release*:

During the day, v29-31;

After sunset, v32-34;

The next morning, v35-39.

iii] Interpretation:

In the passage before us Mark seeks to establish Jesus' authority, his popularity and the purpose of his mission. The healing of Peter's mother-in-law, although insignificant in itself, "asserts Jesus' solidarity and engagement with the common people and their common needs", Edwards. So, we witness again his authority over the human condition, but in particular, from Jesus' own lips, we learn the purpose of his mission, namely, to make known the news of the coming kingdom.

Mark's task in 1:21-34 is to show the reader a day in the life of the Lord; he wants to show us "what happens on the human scene when the Lord is present..... All that Jesus does on this day is salvific and redemptive: he teaches, casts out demons, heals", Boring. The healing of Peter's mother-in-law turns out to be a rather insignificant miracle. A miracle like this evidences a personal reminiscence, probably from Peter himself. The miracle, humble as it is, expands into healings for the "whole town." The movement of the passage then extends to the whole of Galilee with the preaching of Jesus given precedence over his miracles. "Jesus began the section (*a day in the life of Jesus*) by teaching and exorcising in

the synagogue of Capernaum, and he concludes it by preaching and exorcising in the synagogues of all Galilee", Guelich.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.8:14-17, Lk.4:38-44. Matthew does not record the note on Jesus' preaching, v35-39. Mark's account is vivid, compared to Luke.

v] Homiletics: *Two-thirds sky*

In an Australian documentary, "Two Thirds Sky, Artists in a Desert Country", the work of five Australian landscape artists was compared as they wrestled with images of the Australian desert. Idris Murphy, a committed Christian, was able to speak of his work in theological terms.

For Idris, the Australian desert is not unique, in that it is part of a world-wide landscape, but it is particular. Wrestling with its particularity is the task of Australian landscape artists who seek to communicate its essence. For Idris, the essence is the nature of God hidden in creation's design. As a startling sunset can communicate this essence, so the painting, serving in a sense as the Holy Spirit, seeks to communicate this essence to the viewer.

Jesus' miracles are like paintings. Although some see them as acts of kindness, or examples to follow, or proofs of Jesus' divinity, or even an authentication for Jesus' preaching, they have, in fact, an independent and therefore, far greater worth. Their essence communicates divine truth. The apostle says that the creation reveals God's "eternal power and divine nature", but Jesus' miracles actually communicate a more profound truth, that "the Kingdom of God has come upon you."



In our reading today, we see Jesus healing Simon's mother-in-law, healing the crowds and driving out demons. The disciples, understandably, see themselves as social workers and try to bring Jesus back to the coal-face of human misery. Yet, Jesus didn't come as a social worker, but came to communicate a mystery long hidden - "the incomparable riches of God's grace." So, Jesus must move on to other towns and villages to, as he says, "preach there also."

As the artist strives to distil the pure essence of a landscape on canvas, so should the believer distil the essence of grace on the canvas of their life. For Jesus, the casting out of demons, more than anything else, communicates the dawning kingdom and its gift of freedom. For we

children of the kingdom, set free by the grace of God, the pure essence of God's message of grace is distilled in one particular gracious quality, love. To love the unlovely, to forgive the unforgivable, to accept the unacceptable,, such is love, such is grace.

Text - 1:29

A day in the life of Jesus continues, v29-34: i] The healing of Peter's mother-in-law, v29-31. Mark sustains the sense of forward-movement in Jesus' mission, by telling us that he "immediately" moves from the synagogue to Simon and Andrew's home. Mark notes that the four newly called disciples are still with Jesus. Simon's mother-in-law's fever is obviously serious, given that she is unable to wait on her guests. A fever in the ancient world was often life-threatening and the complicated remedies and incantations of the time were next to useless. Mark notes the simple, but powerful, application of Jesus' healing power. On numerous occasions, Mark mentions the touch of Jesus, or as here, his grasp.

ευθως "as soon" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. As already noted, Mark may be using this temporal adverb to portray the dynamic activity of Jesus' ministry, but then again he may be using it for a sequential purpose, indicating the next element in the narrative, "then"

εξελθοντες [**εξερχομαι**] aor. part. "as they left" - COMING OUT. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, "when they came out."

εκ + gen. "-" - FROM [THE SYNAGOGUE]. Expressing source / origin, but a somewhat redundant use of the preposition given the **εξ** of the participle "coming out." Usually viewed as stylistic.

μετα + gen. "**with [James and John]**" - [THEY WENT INTO THE HOUSE OF SIMON AND ANDREW] WITH [JAMES AND JOHN]. Here expressing association / accompaniment; "with". The use of words here is somewhat strange. The "they" would surely include James and John, so what is Mark driving at? Marcus offers two possibilities: i] Referencing Zahn, who suggests that the story is sourced from Peter who would have said "and leaving the synagogue we went into my house with James and John"; ii] In the pre-Markan tradition, James and John are converted after this event and would not have been present, but Mark has brought their conversion forward and so includes them in this episode. It is interesting to note that excavations of the first Christian church, close to the Jewish synagogue in Capernaum, is taken to be an extended private home. The early believers initially worshiped in private homes and it has been suggested that the excavated home is that of Peter and Andrew.

v30

Σιμωνος [**ων ονομος**] "Simon's" - [AND THE MOTHER-IN-LAW] OF SIMON. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

κατεκειτο [κατακειμαι] imperf. "**was in bed**" - WAS LYING DOWN, ASIDE. The imperfect is possibly emphasising durative aspect; "she was laid up" - Indicating the severity of the fever. Of course, the imperfect is often used in a narrative to provide background information.

πυρεσσοῦσα [πυρεσσω] pres. part. "**with a fever**" - BEING FEVER-STRICKEN, SUFFERING WITH A FEVER. The participle is adverbial, best treated as causal; "she was laid up in bed because she had a fever." A high temperature was not necessarily dangerous, just as it is today, but it could be, eg., pneumonia. A fever was often viewed as a consequence "of divine punishment, or demon possession", Edwards.

λεγουσιν [λεγω] pres. "**they told**" - [AND IMMEDIATELY] THEY SPEAK. Possibly an impersonal plural here, so "Jesus was told that Simon's mother-in-law was sick", CEV.

αυτω dat. pro. "**Jesus**" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

περι + gen. "**about**" - CONCERNING [HER]. Reference / respect; "about / with reference to."

v31

προσελθων [προσερχομαι] pres. part. "**So, he went to her**" - [AND] HAVING COME TO, APPROACHED. Probably best treated as an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "he raised". The participle could though be adverbial, temporal, or consecutive expressing result, as NIV; "they told Jesus about her and (δε) so *as a result* he went to her."

ηγειρεν [ηγειρω] aor. "**helped her up**" - HE RAISED, LIFTED UP [HER]. The word is used a number of times for a healing and possibly alludes to the resurrection.

κρατησας [κρατω] aor. part. + gen. "**took her**" - GRASPING, GRABBING, TAKING HOLD OF. Again, best treated as an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "raised"; "he went to her, gripped her hand and lifted her up", Barclay. Although the Gk. word order has the raising up preceding his taking her by the hand, the sequence of events is obviously as Barclay. Descriptive of the hands-on approach of Jesus, an approach indelibly marked on the disciple's memory and carried into the oral tradition. The description further undermines the English Sunday School image of "gentle Jesus meek and mild." It is likely he was a carpenter-builder by trade, and not a fine-furniture craftsman

της χειρος [ηρ ρος] gen. "**hand**" - THE = HER HAND. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to take hold of."

διηκονει [διακονει] imperf. + dat. of persons. "**began to wait on**" - [AND THE FEVER LEFT HER AND] SHE WAS SERVING, WAITING ON. NIV opts for an

inceptive imperfect stressing the beginning of the action, although Mark may be implying nothing more than a past continuous action. Indicating the completeness of the healing; "she gave them something to eat."

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - Dative of direct object after the verb **διακονεω**, "serve" = "wait on".

v32

ii] Jesus undertakes a general healing session, v32-34. The "day in the life of Jesus" continues after sunset (after the Sabbath) with a descriptive episode of healings. Mark underlines the large number of people who press in on Simon and Andrew's front door, and goes on to explain that there were many healings of great variety, including exorcisms. The episode illustrates Jesus' power and authority. As for the demons, they knew who Jesus was and in accord with ancient belief, would have used Jesus' name to gain control over him, but Jesus has control over them and does not even let them speak.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

γενομενης [γινομαι] gen. aor. part. "-" - [EVENING] HAVING COME. The genitive participle with the genitive noun "evening" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal; "when evening came", Barclay. As an adjective **οψιας**, "late", would modify **ωρα**, "hour", which when dropped makes the adjective serve as a noun, "evening" = "late hour." The Sabbath was ended. Mark seems to be making the point that both Jesus and the crowd are obeying Sabbath regulations, although he may just be telling us that the crowd is keen to see Jesus and did so as soon as they were free to make a move.

οτε "**after [sunset]**" - WHEN [THE SUN SET]. Temporal conjunction introducing a temporal clause, as NIV; "when the sun had set", Barclay. Somewhat redundant, superfluous, although for a Jewish reader, a point of law is being underlined!

εφερον [φερω] imperf. "**the people brought**" - THEY WERE CARRYING, BRINGING. The imperfect is durative, or iterative (repeated action); "they kept bringing", Zerwick. Probably "all who were sick or had demons were brought to Jesus", CEV.

προς + acc. "**to [Jesus]**" - TOWARD [HIM]. Expressing movement toward.

τους ... εχοντας [εχω] pres. part. "**the sick**" - [ALL] THE ONE HAVING [BAD = ILL]. The participle serves as a substantive modified by the adverb **κακως**, "bad". "Those having it bad", ie. the sick - idiomatic.

τους δαιμονιζομενους [δαιμονιζομαι] pres. pas. part. "**the demon-possessed**" - [AND] THE ONES BEING DEMON-POSSESSED. The participle serves as a substantive.

v33

ὅλη ἡ πόλις "the whole town" - [AND] THE WHOLE CITY. Hyperbole = "a large crowd"

ἦν ... ἐπισυναγμένη [ἐπισυναγωγή] perf. pas. part. "gathered" - WAS HAVING BEEN GATHERED together, assembled. The perfect participle with the imperfect verb to-be forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction, "was gathering." The word derives from "synagogue", so Mark is saying something like "the whole town formed a congregation at the door", Boring.

πρὸς + acc. "at [the door]" - TOWARD [THE DOOR]. Expressing movement toward, so "pressed in at the front door."

v34

Decker notes how the six aorists move the story line onward, the two imperfects supply background information and the pluperfect even more remote background information.

πολλοὺς adj. "many" - [AND HE HEALED] MANY. The adjective serves as a substantive; "all *the ones*." The statement "Jesus healed many" is not implying that it was only "many" and not "all" who were healed, but rather that the "all" were "many". "He brought healing to many who were sufferers of various illnesses", Cassirer.

ἔχοντας [ἐχὼ] pres. part. "who had" - HAVING. The participle may be classified as a substantive in apposition to "all *the ones*", or adjectival, attributive, limiting "all *the ones* = many", as NIV. Modified by the adverb κακῶς = "[having] bad" = "who were ill."

νοσοῖς [οἷ] dat. "diseases" - IN = WITH [DIVERSE, VARIOUS KINDS OF] DISEASES. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect, or association / accompaniment; "many who were ill with various diseases", Berkeley. The modifying adjective, ποικιλαῖς, "various", indicates Jesus' ability to heal a full range of diseases.

λαλεῖν [λαλέω] pres. inf. "speak" - [AND HE CAST OUT, EXORCISED, MANY DEMONS AND HE DID NOT ALLOW THE DEMONS] TO SPEAK. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to allow".

ὅτι "because" - BECAUSE. Here introducing a causal clause explaining why Jesus would not let the demons speak.

ἤδεισαν [οἶδα] pluperf. "knew" - THEY HAD KNOWN [HIM]. The pluperfect here is intensive, expressing abiding results. Mark notes that Jesus silenced the demons. This may have something to do with the messianic secret. In the early stages of Jesus' ministry, he limited his self-revelation, both his person (used the title "son of man", an unclear and mysterious messianic title) and his work (the

suffering servant). Yet, it is more likely that by silencing the demons he was again demonstrating his power and authority over them. They knew who Jesus was and believed that they could control him with their words, but Jesus didn't even let them speak.

v35

iii] Mark now gives us a general summary of Jesus' ministry, 35-39. The summary shows that Jesus' "ministry extends beyond both the confines of Capernaum and the scope of the gospel narrative so far", Edwards. "This brief section weaves together important Markan concerns: presence and absence of Jesus, the purpose of Jesus 'coming', the disciples' commitment to and misunderstanding of Jesus, the lure of resting on past success and the call of future mission, Jesus' ministry of word and deed, and the divine / human character of the person of Jesus himself", Boring.

Early in the morning Jesus heads off to a solitary place for prayer. This may be his practice, or Mark may be illustrating how the press of the crowds, due to his popularity, is already forcing Jesus to adjust his personal behaviour.

αναστας [ανιστημι] aor. part. "**Jesus got up**" - [AND] HAVING ARISEN [EXCEEDINGLY EARLY IN THE MORNING IN DARKNESS]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verbs "went out" and "went away." The participle is modified by three temporal adverbs illustrating how early Jesus gets up in the morning, either as is his practice, or to avoid the crowds, or both. "Very early in the morning Jesus rose up and left, making his way to a solitary place", Cassirer.

απηλθεν [απερχομαι] aor. "**went off**" - [HE WENT OUT AND] WENT AWAY. Jesus went out of the house and out of Capernaum, and went away from the crowds. Mark uses this word in the sense of going away from people rather than going away from a place. He "went out and away", Moule.

εις "to" - TO, INTO. Spatial, indicating the direction of the action and / or arrival at.

ερημον adj. "**a solitary [place]**" - A DESERTED, DESERT [PLACE]. A wilderness image. "An isolated spot", TH.

προσηυχετο [προσευχομαι] imperf. "**he prayed**" - [AND THERE] HE WAS PRAYING. The imperfect tense possibly expresses durative action, probably up to the point where Jesus is found by his disciples, although again the imperfect may serve no other purpose than to indicate background information. So, Mark is describing what Jesus is doing when the disciples found him. "He was praying there when Simon and his friends tracked him down", cf., Barclay.

v36

The popularity of Jesus, his personal magnetism, is underlined in the statement of Simon. The authority of Jesus' teaching and his power over sickness and demons, is identified as the reason, v37.

μετ [μετα] + gen. "**[and his] companions**" - [AND SIMON AND THE ONES] WITH [HIM]. Expressing association.

κατεδιωξεν [καταδιωκω] aor. "**went looking for**" - HUNTED DOWN, SEARCHED, PURSUED CLOSELY, TRACKED DOWN, FOLLOWED AFTER [HIM]. The presence of the prepositional prefix **κατα** intensifies the verb. Gundry suggests that it does so in a positive sense - the disciples are driven to search after Jesus. It was obviously Simon and the other three disciples who tracked Jesus down. "Tracked him to his retreat", Swete.

v37

εῦρον [εὕρισκω] aor. "**when they found him**" - [AND] THEY FOUND [HIM]. Often translated as temporal, as NIV, although not indicated by the Greek. The Gk. sentence runs from v36; "Simon and his companions searched for him, found him and said to him"

λεγουσιν [λεγω] pres. "**they exclaimed**" - [AND] THEY SAY. Historic / narrative present tense expressing what was happening at that time.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "-" - that. Introducing a dependent statement, direct speech, expressing what they said.

παντες adj. "**everyone**" - ALL [ARE SEEKING YOU]. Emphatic position where "all" is placed before the verb to emphasise its completeness.

v38

This verse is surely the punch-line of the episode. Jesus came to proclaim (communicate with authority) the gospel (understood). The miracles visibly proclaim this message rather than verify it, cf., Matt.12:28. So, rather than stay and heal, Jesus must go and preach; his task is to proclaim the coming kingdom, to proclaim victory over the dark powers that enslave humanity and announce freedom for God's new Israel.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**[Jesus] replied**" - [AND HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

αγωμεν [αγω] subj. "**let us go**" - LET US GO [ELSEWHERE]. Hortatory subjunctive expressing an exhortation. "Elsewhere" serves as an adverb of place modifying the imperfect verb "to go."

τας εχομενας [εχω] pres. mid. part. "**nearby [villages]**" - [INTO] HAVING = NEIGHBOURING [VILLAGE, TOWN]. The participle is adjectival, attributive,

limiting "villages", while the middle voice has the meaning, "neighbouring", "next to"; "let us go to the towns which are nearby." Possibly a small village, although Jesus probably means other market towns like Capernaum, rather than just all the local villages.

ἵνα + subj. "so" - THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that".

καὶ "also" - AND = ALSO [I MAY PREACH THERE]. Here adjunctive, as NIV.

γὰρ "- " - FOR. Here more reason than cause, explanatory, as NIV.

εἰς "that is why" - TO THIS = FOR THIS PURPOSE. Here the preposition is adverbial, expressing purpose / end view.

ἐξηλθὼν [ἐξερχομαι] aor. "I have come" - I COME OUT, FORTH. Possibly came out from Capernaum, or came out on mission, or even, came forth from the Father. The second option is best. This statement is climactic, and although at one level it serves to explain why Jesus came out from Capernaum, at another level it serves to explain the purpose of Jesus' ministry. Like the prophets of old, Jesus proclaims the word of God. The choice of the word "come out" may well be expressing the idea of "come out to do battle", to do battle with Satan and his minions. Preaching and exorcism go hand in hand (note v39) - Jesus speaks the divine word with authority and the dark powers scatter before him. "I want to proclaim my message there too, for that is what I came to do", Barclay.

v39

Mark gives a thumb-nail sketch of the Galilean mission. Jesus covers the "whole" of Galilee, preaching as he goes. The preached word is associated with the sign of exorcism, and at this stage, much of the preaching is in the local synagogues.

The verse is somewhat awkward with the intertwining of two participles and two prepositional phrases: Gundry suggests that the prepositional phrases, introduced by **εἰς**, both modify the participle "preaching." So, Jesus came preaching (which preaching is visibly expressed in exorcism) into their synagogues and into the whole of Galilee. Plummer suggests that the first prepositional construction modifies the participle "preaching", and the second modifies the verb **ἦλθεν**, "to go, come", as NIV. Gundry's suggestion has a lot going for it.

ἦλθεν [ερχομαι] aor. "he travelled" - [AND] HE CAME, WENT. "Jesus went to Jewish meeting places everywhere in Galilee, where he preached and forced out demons", CEV.

εἰς + acc. "throughout" - INTO [*the* WHOLE *region of* GALILEE]. Spatial, expressing direction toward and/or arrival at; the first prepositional construction.

κηρυσσων [κηρυσσω] pres. part. "**preaching**" - PREACHING, PROCLAIMING. This participle, as for εκβαλλων, "driving out, casting out", is best treated as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his coming / going; "he went preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons", Berkeley. Most often used of preaching the gospel. The present tense indicating continued action: "continued to preach", Knox.

εις "**in [their synagogues]**" - IN [THE SYNAGOGUES OF THEM AND CASTING OUT DEMONS]. Spatial, as above. Introducing the second prepositional construction. The variant εν is probably not original, although εις often drifts in meaning toward εν. "He went into their synagogues", NAB.

1:40-45

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

2. Jesus the Son of God, Messiah, 1:14-45

iv] Popularity - A leper cleansed

Synopsis

Jesus' early Galilean mission continues in both word and sign. In this episode, Jesus heals a man with leprosy when asked "if you choose, you can make me clean." Jesus *chooses* to do so, but asks him to observe proper practice and go and show himself to a local priest to confirm that he is *clean* and thus able to return to his community. Jesus' preaching ministry continues to prompt popular enthusiasm, so much so, that he is forced into the open countryside due to the size of the crowds he is attracting.

Teaching

Jesus' ministry of word and sign may force him from the towns into the wilderness, and yet "the people still come to him."

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8.

ii] Structure: *Jesus cleanses a leper*:

A leper requests healing, v40;

Interaction with Jesus and immediate healing, v41-42;

Jesus gives a personal instruction, v43-44;

Jesus' popularity increases, v45.

The structure of this episode follows the standard form of a healing / miracle story:

The setting;

Healing;

Associated word;

Response.

iii] Interpretation:

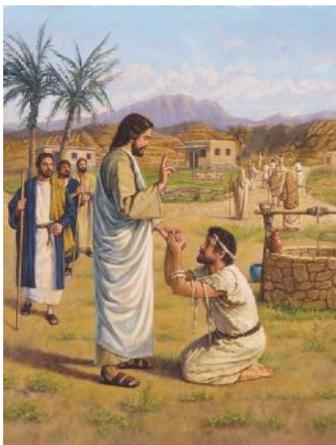
Jesus now moves out from Capernaum to travel throughout Galilee, preaching and healing. For Mark, the episode of the healing of the leper serves as an example of the impact of this mission. We are shown Jesus' popularity and acceptance - even an outcast seeks him out and is healed. In v45 there is a possible hint of future trouble, warning us of conflict ahead, conflict that is brought to the fore in the following five conflict stories, 2:1-

3:6. Although there is a hint of trouble ahead, v45 serves to describe the initial success of Jesus' ministry. The episode as a whole establishes that from the outset Jesus' mission is to Israel; Jesus respects the temple, priesthood and law - Jesus is no rabble-rouser.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.8:1-4, Lk.5:12-16. The accounts are similar, although Matthew and Luke provide some background information.

v] Homiletics: *Dynamic preaching*



Today, I want to speak on the issue of dynamic preaching - and I'd rather you didn't rate this sermon on a 1 to 10 "dynamic" scale, OK! Of course, having said that, some of you will do just that, but I don't hear how I rated! Our reading today has some really interesting twists and turns in it.

The first of these twists and turns comes when the leper asks Jesus "If you are willing you can make me clean." How he says these words is not easily expressed in English. The stress is not on the "willing"; that's just deferential. So, what he's saying is, "You are able to make me well", with a deferential "if you're willing" added. Jesus responds "I will"; "I choose to do so."

The second twist comes with the instruction to the leper to not talk to anyone, but go and show himself to the local priest. Does Jesus want to keep the healing a secret? Probably not. The purpose of confirming the healing is so the leper can re-join his local community - that's not hiding the healing; that's validating it.

The third twist comes with the "don't tell this to anyone", but in v45, "instead he went out and began to talk freely." The "don't tell anyone" is simply Jesus telling the leper to first have the healing confirmed before heading off for interviews with the local shock-jock. The "he went out and talked freely" is Jesus, not the leper. The wording in the Bible is not clear, but it is far more likely that the "one who goes out and begins to preach many things", "so that he is no longer able to openly enter into the local towns", is Jesus.

And how is that for dynamic preaching. Not only could Jesus not get into the local church to deliver his sermon; he couldn't even get into town because of the crowd. So, you can see how my rating is going in all this. If Jesus is a 10, then I'm a 1.

Every generation deserves to hear the gospel from fresh and lips. Hearts do grow cold and become unfruitful ground for evangelism. Such hearts are good only for parables, for riddles. It is often said that Western society is already resistant to the gospel. Yet, every generation listens with a new ear, and so requires a new storyteller. For the better part of the last century, evangelistic crusades led by such greats as Billy Graham, proclaimed the gospel to willing ears. Then there was the Jesus Revolution, followed by networking programs such as EE, or Christianity Explained. TV evangelists of varying worth touched another generation. Bill Bright led the move into video, and now generation X and Y waits to meet the digitally enhanced cosmic Christ in cyber space.

So, let us pray for a fresh voice to impact our new millennium.

Text - 1:40

A leper is cleansed, v40-44: i] Jesus encounters a leper who requests healing, v1. The authority of Jesus is again exhibited, on this occasion with the healing of a man with leprosy, a disease as good as death. There is a sense of urgency in the leper's "coming", as he immediately kneels before Jesus in recognition of his authority. This recognition is carried over to the leper's statement that if Jesus wanted to, he could easily heal him. The leper doesn't actually plead for healing, but rather recognises Jesus' ability to heal.

λεπρος adj. "**a man with leprosy**" - [AND] A LEPER [COMES TOWARD HIM]. The adjective serves as a substantive. A disease as good as death and therefore, its healing is a powerful sign. It should be noted that the word is also used of various kinds of skin diseases. The historical / narrative present "comes" is used to introduce the episode.

παρακαλων [**παρακαλεω**] pres. part. "**and begged**" - PLEADING FOR, ASKING WITH INTENT, BEGGING [HIM AND KNEELING DOWN]. As with "kneeling down", attendant circumstance participle identifying action accompanying the main verb "comes", "came, begged and knelt down". The leper doesn't actually ask Jesus to heal him, so the sense of the word here is possibly not "pleading". The "kneeling down" is a variant reading; an action which emphasises Jesus' authority.

λεγων [**λεγω**] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant, although it could be classified as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the pleading on bended knees.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "-" - Introducing a dependent statement, direct speech, expressing what the leper said.

εαν + subj. "if" - IF, *as may be the case*, [YOU ARE WILLING, *then*]. Introducing a conditional clause, 3rd. class, where the condition has the possibility of coming true. Better, "if you so will" in the sense of "want to." The "if" is probably not expressing doubt in Jesus' ability to heal, but deference, i.e., the leper is making a statement about Jesus' authority - "you are able to cleanse me, if you so desire"; "you have the power to make me well, if only you wanted to", CEV.

καθαρισαι [καθαριζω] aor. inf. "**make me clean**" - [YOU ARE ABLE] TO CLEANSE [ME]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to be able". Not declare clean, which is all the priest is able to do. Again, emphasising Jesus' authority. "Cure me", Barclay.

v41

ii] The leper is healed by both gesture and word, v41-42. The leper makes the point that Jesus has the power to heal him. Jesus agrees with this comment (something like "I am well able" would convey the sense better than "I am willing") and out of compassion touches him and says "be cleansed." Although the priests are able to declare ritual cleansing, only Jesus is able to cleanse, immediately and completely. Mark's addition of the words "the leprosy left him" describes the physical cure, while "he was cured" (better "cleansed") describes the restoration of the leper's covenant membership; he will no longer have to live beyond the camp, Lev.13:45-46.

σπλαγχνισθεις [σπλαγχνιζομαι] aor. pas. part. "**filled with compassion**" - [AND] BEING INWARDLY FILLED WITH TENDERNESS, COMPASSION, SYMPATHY. The participle is adverbial, possibly causal, "because he was filled with pity, he stretched" Descriptions like these highlight the goodness of Jesus and therefore, the evil of his crucifixion. A textual variant, οργισθεις, "indignant, filled with anger", is adopted by many commentators, eg., France. Although the variant has limited support, it is difficult to understand why "be filled with compassion" would be changed to "be filled with anger." Is Jesus angry at the damage done to this man, or the man's failure to recognise Jesus' willingness to heal?

εκτεινας [εκτεινω] aor. part. "**reached out**" - REACHING OUT, STRETCHING OUT. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "touched".

αυτου gen. pro. "**his**" - [THE HAND] OF HIM. The genitive is possessive.

ηψατο [απτομαι] aor. "**touched the man**" - HE TOUCHED, HELD, GRASPED *the man*. Again, the physical touch of Jesus is noted, and in this case, he is

touching an unclean leper, unconcerned with the possible communication of disease. "Stretched out his hand and placed it on the leper", Phillips.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [AND SAYS] TO HIM [I WANT, WISH, WILL]. Dative of indirect object. "I will" better reflects the sense "I am able", rather than "I am willing to heal you." "I am well able."

καθαρισθητι [καθαριζω] aor. pas. imp. "**be clean**" - BE CLEANSED. Divine passive (always a questionable classification). "Be cured!", Barclay. Decker notes that the use of an imperative in this context is for rhetorical effect.

v42

ευθυς "**immediately**" - The use here of this temporal adverb probably serves to highlight the instantaneous nature of Jesus' healing.

η λεπρα [α] "**the leprosy**" - Nominative subject of the verb "to go away." The word covers a multitude of skin diseases, not just leprosy.

απ [απο] gen. "**left**" - [WENT AWAY] FROM [HIM]. Here expressing separation. Describing the disappearance of the physical evidence of the disease.

εκαθαρισθη [καθαριζω] aor. pas. "**he was cured / he was cleansed**" - [AND] HE WAS CLEANSED, MADE CLEAN. The aorist is probably culminative, where the emphases is on the results of the completed action. The focus of the miracle is on cleansing, not physical cure, although Mark is probably making both points; the Leper is cured and cleansed.

v43

iii] Jesus draws out the sign value of the healing miracle, v43-44. These verses seem to imply that Jesus wants to keep the miracle secret, and it is for this reason that he instructs the leper to say nothing to anyone, other than to a temple priest. Jesus may want to limit the problem of a discipleship driven by either wonderworking hysteria, or messianic fervour. Yet, is this Jesus' intent, or is he actually promoting this sign of the coming kingdom? Jesus forcefully tells the leper to go straight to the priest for the inspection of his body, rather than to dilly-dally with his friends and neighbours. Once the priest has declared him clean, the leper can then offer the appropriate sacrifice as "a testimony (witness) to them" - evidence to his neighbours (not the priest) that he is indeed "cured", even better, "cleansed" in the sight of God.

εξεβαλεν [εκβαλλω] aor. "**[Jesus] sent [him] away**" - [HE] CAST OUT, DROVE OUT [HIM]. This is a rather strong word. Most translators opt for a softer "dismissed him", REB, "sent him away", although these words do not express the idea of forcible expulsion. Yet, why would Jesus drive him out of the synagogue? Note a similar problem with "strong warning" = "growling at him", see below. It is possible to argue that Jesus is behaving like a secular miracle worker using theatrical antics in his performance, but it is far more likely that the strength of

the words conveys a confrontation with evil powers, leprosy being a fearful weapon in the arsenal of darkness.

ευθυς adv. "**at once**" - IMMEDIATELY. The use of this temporal adverb again serves a dramatic effect.

εμβριησαμενος [εμβριμαομαι] aor. mid. part. "**with a strong warning**" - HAVING STERNLY WARNED, GROWLED AT. The participle is adverbial, possibly modal, as NIV, expressing the manner of the sending, or even temporal, "after warning him, he sent him away immediately." Although numerous possibilities have been suggested (eg., the man has dabbled in Satanic arts), there is really no reason for Jesus to be upset with the leper and so censure him, "growl" at him. Gundry suggests that Mark has used this particular verb to emphasise the forcefulness of Jesus' instruction that the leper should go immediately and show himself to the priest. The "strict injunction", Phillips, may be "don't tell this to anyone", v43, but is more likely "don't hang around here speaking about the healing, but go....." Jesus wants the leper to have his healing confirmed by the priest as quickly as possible so that he can return to his local community. Of course, we may be dealing with the *messianic secret* where Jesus downplays his miracles so as not to promote messianic fervour in the wider population, in which case, "don't tell anyone" is likely to be the sense of Jesus' instruction, cf., v45. On balance, it seems more likely that Jesus is encouraging the promotion of this sign by stressing the need to go to a local priest to confirm the healing. It is only after Israel rejects the gospel in word and sign, that Jesus resorts to preaching the gospel in riddles / parables, and attempts to lessen the impact of his miracles.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the **εν** prefix verb "to sternly warn."

v44

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [AND HE SAYS] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ορα [οραω] pres. imp. + subj. "**see that**" - Along with the negation **μη**, or its various forms, this construction serves to express a negative command; "See you say nothing to any man (to no one)", AV.

ειπης [ειπον] aor subj. "**you [don't] tell**" - [TO NO ONE] YOU SAY [NOTHING]. With the two negated adjectives **μηδενι μηδεν**, "to no one nothing", the verb serves as a subjunctive of emphatic negation, continuing the forcefulness of Jesus' instruction. The dative **μηδενι**, "to no one", serves as the dative of indirect object of the verb "to see."

αλλα "**but**" - Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not, but".

δειξον [δεικνυμι] aor. imp. "**show**" - SHOW [YOURSELF]. Lev.13:49. There is some debate over whether the leper is to show himself to a local priest, or a

priest at the temple in Jerusalem. A local priest seems likely, given that there were some 20,000 living throughout Palestine, but the issue hangs on the Law's requirement: "your offer for cleansing of which Moses commanded", cf., Lev.14:1-32. The restoration of a leper to his community involves rituals and sacrifices spread over eight days, performed at the temple in Jerusalem, but the decentralisation of minor religious requirements is not uncommon, particularly for the poor.

τῷ ἱερεὶ [εὐς εὼς] dat. "**to the priest**" - Dative of indirect object.

προσενεγκε [προσφέρω] aor. imp. "**offer the sacrifices**" - [AND] BRING, OFFER *the sacrifices* [WHICH MOSES COMMANDED]. Often "offer" in the terms of a sacrificial offering, so "the sacrifices" understood. For those who hold that offering a sacrifice is too specific, "take a gift to the temple as Moses commanded", CEV; "What Moses commanded", NRSV.

περὶ + gen. "**for**" - ABOUT. Here expressing reference / respect; "concerning, about, with reference to", but possibly advantage / representation, "for / on behalf of [your cleansing]."

σου gen. pro. "**your**" - [THE CLEANSING] OF YOU. The genitive is usually treated as verbal, objective.

εἰς "**as**" - TO = FOR [AN EVIDENCE OF WHAT IS WITNESSED OR SAID]. Here adverbial, expressing purpose; "in order to prove to them that you are cured." As already noted, the "witness", possibly "proof", Cranfield, is probably not to the priest, but rather to the leper's neighbours. The word is used elsewhere with a negative connotation; a witness against those who reject Christ, cf., 6:11, 13:9, but this is probably not the sense here. Jesus' instruction is all about due process. The priest inspects the leper's body for open sores etc., and if healed, declares the leper clean. The leper then offers a sacrifice as instructed in Leviticus, which serves as "a witness" to "them", i.e., the people, that he is clean and therefore may return to his community. "To prove to your neighbours that you are properly cured."

αὐτοῖς dat. pro. "**to them**" - Dative of interest, advantage, "a witness for his neighbours."

v45

iv] Jesus' ministry continues by word and sign with ever-increasing popularity, v45. It is usually understood that the miraculous healing of the leper achieves its intended end; he becomes an enthusiastic witness for Jesus. Yet, Mark may be telling us that it is Jesus who now heads off to proclaim the good news of the coming kingdom. Whoever is doing the preaching, the results are dramatic. The crowds that seek out Jesus are so large that the local towns cannot contain them. Jesus is forced to stay in the countryside, and even then the people

flock to him. So, Mark concludes this episode by again illustrating the personal magnetism and popularity of Jesus.

δε "instead" - BUT/AND. Usually treated as adversative, as NIV, although it is more likely transitional, indicating a step in the narrative; "now".

ὁ ... ἐξελθων [ἐξερχομαι] aor. part. "he went out" - THE ONE HAVING GONE OUT, THRUSTED OUT, BROKEN OUT. The article **ὁ** is usually treated as the subject of the verb **ἤρξατο**, "to begin"; "he began to preach = talk freely about his healing." In which case, the participle is attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the infinitival construction "began to preach"; "he went out and began to preach." Although it is nearly always presumed that the leper "went out", given that the grammar implies a change of subject, it is more than possible that Jesus is the subject, "now, the one going out began to preach much" = "now Jesus went out and began to proclaim / now Jesus, having left *the synagogue*, began to preach" With this translation, the participle serves as a substantive.

κηρυσσειν pres. inf. "to talk" - [BEGAN] TO PREACH, PROCLAIM. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin". If it is the leper who goes out and begins to spread the news, then, although he is doing what Jesus does, he is not obeying Jesus' instruction. Of course, the account may be condensed and so, having received his *medical discharge*, he is now "spreading the word with much preaching." None-the-less, the preacher here is likely to be Jesus, and not the leper.

πολλά adv. "freely" - MUCH. If Jesus is the preacher, the sense is possibly "many things", Guelich.

διαφημιζειν [διαφημιζω] pres. inf. "spreading" - [AND] TO PUBLISH OR SPREAD WIDELY, DISSEMINATE, COMMUNICATE WIDELY. The infinitive is complementary, "he began to preach much and to disseminate the word"

τον λογον [ος] "the news" - THE WORD. Accusative direct object of "*began* to spread around." The leper may just be speaking of his healing, but the word grouping implies the gospel, the message concerning the coming kingdom of God, the inauguration of the reign of God evidenced (signed) in the healing of a leper. Most commentators take the view that the leper is telling the "story / news", of his healing rather than proclaiming "the gospel". As noted above, it seems more likely that Jesus is the one "spreading the word / gospel far and wide."

ὥστε + inf. "as a result" - SO THAT [HE NO LONGER TO BE ABLE OPENLY]. This construction, **ὥστε** + the infinitive, forms a consecutive clause expressing result, "so that". The infinitive here is usually treated as an auxiliary, verb, "was not able / could not", along with its complementary infinitive "to enter"; "could no longer appear in any town", Barclay.

εισελθειν [εισερχομαι] aor. inf. "**enter**" - TO ENTER. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "he was [no longer] able".

εις + acc. "" - INTO [A CITY]. Spatial.

αλλ [αλλα] "**but**" - Adversative, standing in a counterpoint construction; "no longer, but".

εξω adv. "**outside**" - [HE WAS] OUTSIDE, OUT. Adverb of place.

επ [επι] + dat. "**in**" - UPON. Spatial, with the sense of εν, "in".

ερημοις [ος] dat. "**lonely**" - DESERTED, WILDERNESS, UNINHABITED [PLACES]. "Wilderness" imagery may be intended, evoking a memory of the Exodus, but possibly just meaning "out in the country", NRSV. Even here, the crowds came to Jesus, so indicating his popularity.

ηρχοντο [ερχομαι] imperf. "**the people still came**" - [AND] THEY WERE COMING [TOWARD HIM]. An imperfective / durative sense is intended; "people kept coming to him from all over", Barclay.

παντοθεν adv. "**from everywhere**" - ON ALL SIDES, EVERYWHERE, FROM EVERY PART. Locative / adverb of place.

2:1-12

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

3. Conflict in the journey, 2:1-3:6

i] The authority of the Son of Man to forgive sins

Synopsis

Jesus returns to Capernaum, possibly to Peter's own house, and in so doing, draws a large crowd which presses in and around the house. Jesus is preaching to the crowd when four men, carrying a paralytic on a stretcher, try to gain entry. They end up on the roof, cutting a hole and lowering the man down in front of Jesus. Observing their "faith", Jesus addresses the man and says "your sins are forgiven." Such *blasphemy* causes a stir amongst the religious authorities, and so Jesus asks a *which is easier?* question. In order that they may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins, Jesus orders the paralytic to stand up, pick up his stretcher and go home. To the shock of the crowd, he does just that.

Teaching

The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8. In 2:1-3:6 Mark presents a series of five conflict stories.

ii] Structure: *Jesus' authority to forgive sins*:

The setting:

A paralytic and his friends act out a request for healing, v1-4;

Healing:

Jesus provides forgiveness, v5;

Consequent healing, v11;

Response;

The paralytic gets up and walks and the crowd is amazed, v12.

The associated word - the conflict story proper, v6-10;

The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

Although this episode may be classified as a conflict story, it also follows a typical miracle story format. This is evident in the structure of the story: Setting; Healing; Response; Associated word.

Some commentators have argued for a linear structure, A, A₁, B, C, C₁, but it may well just be accidental. J.R. Edwards, in his book *Markan Sandwiches* proposes that 2:1-12 takes an A₁ - B - A₂, structure where each episode makes its own particular point, but together they also make a particular point.

iii] Interpretation:

Jesus' capacity to draw a crowd is again evidenced in a return visit to Capernaum. Yet, Mark's focus is not so much on the magnetism of Jesus, of his capacity to draw a crowd, but rather his authority. The healing of the paralytic reveals that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth.

Marcus notes that this first conflict story, in a series of five, is significant in that it is overtly Christological. The story focuses on Jesus' identity - he is the one with authority to forgive sins. Although this episode is primarily a conflict story concerned with the issue of the forgiveness of sins, it is also a healing narrative with all the typical elements found in such. The healing, of course, settles the issue of Jesus' authority to forgive sins. It is harder to pronounce forgiveness than to pronounce healing (or is it harder to pronounce healing than to pronounce forgiveness? See below), but by pronouncing healing, Jesus confirms his authority to pronounce forgiveness.

Source criticism: It is argued by a number of scholars that 2:1-3:6 evidences the blending of separate literary and oral sources and their adaptation / interpretation by Mark for his own literary purpose, cf., Boring. Note: i] the evidence of insertive elements, eg. "he said to the Paraclete" (such narrative elements are common throughout the synoptic gospels); ii] the thoughts of the Scribes are reported before Jesus reveals them (by no means an unnatural way to recount a story); iii] the unnatural reaction of the scribes, given that the Baptist was already calling for repentance for the forgiveness of sins (but was he pronouncing forgiveness?). Some commentators even question the inclusion of 2:1-12, eg., Pesch.

The debate is ongoing and not overly convincing, nor is it important for an understanding of the gospel. Mark obviously draws on the sources that are available at the time he crafts his gospel, and being the theologian he is, shapes that tradition to reveal the truth of the gospel as he understands it. Yet, there is little to suggest that he blasts off into creative la-la-land. The evidence is, as it is for Matthew and Luke, that Mark respects his sources. In the end, it is the final product that is God's word to us.

Edwards, taking a more conservative line, notes the use of the present tense in v3-11, evidencing a tradition of "eyewitness quality", possibly from Peter, and this framed in Mark's own narrative, v1-2, 12. The oral tradition of the church is the more likely source for Mark, but eyewitness accounts should not be discounted.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.9:1-8, Lk.5:17-26. The key concern of all three synoptic gospels is forgiveness.

v] Homiletics: *Faith and forgiveness*

It is quite rare in the synoptic gospels, the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, for the authors to make an editorial comment explaining the meaning of an incident. The authors will often give us clues, a word here or a word there, but an explanatory comment, particularly a theological one, that's very rare.

Those who authored the gospels seem honour-bound to respect the apostolic tradition of the church and so their own particular interpretation of an event is only ever subtly presented within the tradition. Of course, given that the tradition was firmly set by the time the gospels were penned, it is understandable that the authors would confine themselves to the tradition they and their fellow believers had received. In fact, Matthew, Mark and Luke could easily have written their gospels independently of each other, using what was, by 70AD, a fairly uniform oral tradition of Jesus' words and deeds. None-the-less, most scholars do argue that there was some collaboration, usually in the terms of Luke using Mark as his main source and Matthew using both Mark and Luke.

Anyway, in our reading today, it looks as if we have one such editorial comment, a theological comment by Mark, rather than a self-declaration by Jesus - "But know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." Mark is explaining the theological purpose of this story. In the story, Jesus claims the authority to forgive the paralytic's sins, and he enacts this authority in the form of a miraculous sign - the healing a paralytic. It's easy to claim the authority to forgive sins, but not so easy to claim the authority to heal. Mark draws from the story the general principle that Jesus has authority to forgive sins, everyone's sins, not just the paralytic's; a forgiveness that is for the here and now.

Of course, what we have here is the very basis of the good news about Jesus. Jesus has the authority to forgive our ongoing, weak, vacillating, foolish, rebellion against God; a rebellion sometimes intended, and at other times, unintended. Jesus can forgive all our sins, right here, right now, past, present and future. And why? Because Jesus has the legitimate divine authority to forgive sins, and he does it, just for the asking.

Text - 2:1

The healing of the paralytic / forgiveness of sins, v1-12: i] The setting for story of the healing of the paralytic, 1-5. Jesus returns to Capernaum, but enters

the town secretly. It takes only a matter of days before the population finds out where he is staying, which is most likely at the home of Simon and Andrew. Mark reminds us of Jesus' growing popularity by describing the townsfolk crowding into the house and out into the street. In response, Jesus uses the occasion as a preaching opportunity.

δι [διὰ] + gen, "**a few [days] later**" - BECAUSE OF DAY = AFTER *many* DAYS. Temporal use of the preposition with the sense "through in time" = "after a number of days." Not necessarily one or two days. The phrase may refer to Jesus' return to Capernaum, "after some time he returned.....", or it may refer to the time he was in Capernaum before the population got wind of his presence.

εισελθων [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "**when [Jesus again] entered**" - HAVING ENTERED. The participle is adverbial, possibly temporal, as NIV. The subject "Jesus" is supplied for clarity, the participle providing no subject, but rather "left hanging by anacoluthon", Cranfield.

εις + acc. "**[Capernaum]**" - [AGAIN] INTO [CAPERNAUM]. Spatial.

ηκουσθη [ακουω] aor. pas. "**the people heard**" - IT WAS HEARD. The wording carries on from 1:45 where Jesus no longer enters a town "openly". The point being, that Jesus has entered Capernaum secretly, although the population finally gets wind of his presence. "It was reported."

οτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what the people heard.

εν + dat. "**[he was home]**" - [HE IS] IN/AT [HOME]. Local, expressing space / sphere. Jesus is possibly back at Simon and Andrew's home if "in the home", although better, "at home."

v2

συνηχθησαν [συναγω] aor. pas. "**[so many] gathered / they gathered**" - [AND MANY] WERE GATHERING TOGETHER. Usually treated as a middle / passive, the sense being middle, ie., the crowd is not being gathered together, but gathers of its own volition. Mark again illustrates Jesus' magnetism.

ωστε + inf. "**that**" - SO THAT [NOT TO HAVE ROOM]. This construction forms a consecutive clause expressing result; "with the result that." "Such crowds gathered that there was no room", Barclay.

τα + acc. "**outside [the door]**" - [NOR] THE THING (= space) [TOWARD THE DOOR]. The article here serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "toward the door" into a nominal construction; "the *space*" at, around, on the other side of the door"; "Not even around the door", Barclay. The crowd is therefore bigger than on the last occasion where there was room to gather at the door, 1:33. Mark is illustrating Jesus' increasing popularity.

ελαλει [λαλεω] imperf. "**preached [the word]**" - [AND] HE WAS SPEAKING. Imperfect = action in progress, although it is often used with speech as a matter of form. The word "preached" today is mainly used in religious circles such that a more general word like "communicated" would be more appropriate.

τον λογον [ος] "**the word**" - THE WORD. Accusative direct object of the verb "to speak." A reference to communicating the gospel which Jesus will soon proclaim in sign through the healing of the paralytic. The gospel proclaims forgiveness and the healing will proclaim that Jesus has authority to forgive; "he was communicating the gospel to them."

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

v3

The lowering of the paralytic, virtually into Jesus' lap, is vividly preserved in the gospel tradition, v3-5. There are four men, indicating the serious condition of the paralytic. They are men of faith in that they obviously believe Jesus can heal their friend. Although blocked by the crowd, they scale the roof, make their way to Simon and Andrew's courtyard, cut through the pergola, most likely covered in vines, and lower the paralytic down in front of Jesus on a *camp stretcher*. The punch-line comes in Jesus' declaration of forgiveness, declared in his own right, by his own authority.

ερχονται [ερχομαι] pres. "**some men came**" - THEY CAME. Historic / narrative present. The "they" also being the object of the sentence, namely, the four friends of the paralytic, although note how the NIV has not specified the "they" as the particular four. The awkwardness of the sentence is improved by both Matthew and Luke, cf., Lk.5:18. Does this imply Markan priority, or that their oral source was more refined, or that they refined the oral source?

φορευτες [φερω] pres. part. "**bringing**" - BRINGING, CARRYING. The participle may be treated as attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the main verb "came", or adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their coming, as NIV.

προς + acc. "**to**" - [A PARALYTIC] TO, TOWARD [HIM]. Spatial, expressing movement toward. The man is unable to walk by himself.

αιρομενον [αιρω] "**carried**" - BEING LIFTED UP, CARRIED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "paralytic"; "a paralytic who was carried by four men." The description of four men carrying the paralytic serves to emphasise the seriousness of the disability.

υπο + gen. "**by [four of them]**" - BY [FOUR *men*]. Instrumental, expressing agency.

v4

μη δυναμενοι [δυναμαι] pres. pas. part. "**since they could not**" - [AND] NOT BEING ABLE. The participle is adverbial, possibly introducing a causal clause, as NIV, "because"; "as they could not get near Jesus", Moffatt, although temporal seems more likely, "when they could not ...", Barclay, Cassirer. Hort suggests that **μη δυναμενοι** reveals what is in someone's mind, "they saw that they could not."

προσενεγκαι [προσφερω] aor. inf. "**get**" - TO BRING, CARRY. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "being able". Lit. "not being able to bring (the paralytic) to him (Jesus) on account of the crowd", so "they couldn't get to Jesus (come near him) because of the crowd".

αυτω dat. pro. "**to Jesus**" - *the paralytic* TO HIM. The antecedent is unclear. If "Jesus" is the referent, as NIV, then the pronoun is a dative of indirect object with "him / paralytic" assumed, "they could not bring *the paralytic* to him." If the paralytic is the referent then the pronoun is a dative of direct object after the **προς** prefix verb "to bring in", serving as a verbal complement of the negated verbal participle "not being able", "they could not present him / the paralytic"; "they were not able to bring him in", NET. Decker prefers the second option.

δια + acc. "**because of**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF [THE CROWD]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the four men could not get the paralytic into the home.

οπου "**above Jesus**" - [THEY REMOVED, UNCOVERED THE ROOF] WHERE [HE WAS]. Local use of the conjunction; "above the spot where Jesus was", Weymouth.

εξορυξαντες [εξαρυσσω] aor. part. "**by digging through**" - HAVING MADE AN OPENING, DUG OUT, TORN OUT. The participle is adverbial, either instrumental, expressing means, "by digging through", or temporal, "when they had made an opening." This dramatic description serves to again illustrate Jesus' attraction, his magnetism. The digging is usually described in the terms of digging a hole through a flat roof constructed of branches caked with mud. Yet, Jesus is most likely in the open courtyard of the home and so they would be cutting through the vines etc. that made up a pergola around the edge of the inner courtyard. It would be rather bold to dig a hole in a person's roof, particularly if by doing so you collapsed the roof on those gathered below.

κραβαττον [ος] "**mat**" - [THEY LET DOWN, LOWERED] THE PALLET, BED, COT, MATTRESS [WHERE THE PARALYTIC WAS LYING] Accusative direct object of the verb "to lower." A form of camp stretcher used by the poor.

v5

ιδων [ειδον] aor. part. "**when Jesus saw**" - [AND] HAVING SEEN. The participle is adverbial, probably serving to introduce a temporal clause, as NIV, although also a touch causal.

αυτων gen. pro. "**their [faith]**" - THE FAITH [OF THEM]. The genitive is adjectival, usually treated as verbal, subjective, but possessive is also an acceptable classification. The faith of the paralytic is not mentioned. Although ambiguous, it would be natural to assume that the driving force behind the action is the desire of the paralytic to have Jesus heal him. There is no indication that the friends have dragged him to the house, and hauled him up onto the roof under protest. The implication is that the four men are helping the paralytic.

τω παραλυτικω [ος] dat. "**[he said] to the paralysed man**" - [JESUS SAYS] TO THE PARALYTIC. Dative of indirect object.

τεκνον [ον] "**son**" - CHILD. Vocative. A term of endearment.

αι αμαρτια [α] "**sins**" - THE ERRORS, SINS. The forgiveness is directed to the paralytic and to no one else, not even the men with faith. Are we to understand that Jesus would forgive the sins of a person who hasn't asked for forgiveness? This is unlikely, although as the occasion serves to reveal gospel truth, maybe the paralytic is caught up in a divine process that is independent of his will. The healing of the man born blind raises a similar problem, Jn.9:3.

σου gen. pro. "**your**" - OF YOU. The genitive is adjectival, usually taken as verbal, subjective, "the sins you *have committed*", but possessive will suffice, "your sins." Note Luke who has "(σου possessive genitive) your sins are forgiven for you (σοι dative of interest, advantage)."

αφιενται [αφιημι] pres. pas. "**are forgiven**" - ARE RELEASED, FORGIVEN. The present tense is probably aoristic, implying instantaneous action, "are forgiven" at the very moment when Jesus speaks. On the other hand, a durative tense is not unexpected in speech, as here. Some argue that Jesus is declaring God's forgiveness since he uses the passive voice, leaving the subject of the action undefined, but the sense of the passage (see v10) is that Jesus himself has the authority to forgive sins.

v6

ii] Jesus' conflict with the scribes over the issue of the forgiveness of sins, 6-10. In v6-7 Jesus acts as the divine man, taking to himself a divine prerogative. Not even the promised messiah has the authority to forgive sins, yet Jesus exercises this authority and does so with an air of legitimacy. The religious in the audience react with scepticism. As far as they are concerned, it is blasphemy.

δε **"now"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, here to a new scene.

των γραμματεων [εως εως] **"[some] teachers of the law"** - [THERE WERE CERTAIN] OF THE SCRIBES. Genitive is adjectival, partitive, limiting the "certain / some". They often pop up in these stories, indicating that they are watching Jesus and assessing the worth of his ministry.

ἦσαν καθημενοι [καθημαι] pres. mid. part. **"sitting"** - SITTING [THERE]. This participle, with the introductory imperfect verb to-be, forms a periphrastic imperfect construction, "and some of the scribes were sitting". Possibly emphasising aspect; the inactivity of the scribes is contrasted with the activity of the men of faith.

διαλογιζομενοι [διαλογιζομαι] pres. mid. part. **"thinking"** - [AND] REASONING, PONDERING, DEBATING, THINKING ABOUT *these things*. The participle as above, "and were thinking". "Inward deliberation or questioning", MM. Mark gives an editorial impression of the scribes' inward critical inactivity.

εν + dat. **"to [themselves]"** - IN [THE HEART OF THEM]. Local, expressing space, metaphorical. The "heart", for a Hebrew, is the centre of reasoning. "They started wondering", CEV; "but some of the scribes were sitting there silently asking themselves", Phillips.

v7

τί pro. **"why does"** - WHY *is*. Interrogative pronoun.

οὕτως adv. **"like that"** - [THIS ONE] THUS, IN THIS WAY [SPEAKING]? Modal adverb with reference to what precedes. The language is contemptuous; "why would he say such a thing", CEV.

βλασφημει [βλασφημew] pres. **"he's blaspheming"** - HE SLANDERS GOD, BLASPHEMES. Possibly a question, "Is he blaspheming?", but usually taken as a statement. In the eyes of the scribes, Jesus is blaspheming because he claims an authority that belongs to God alone. "Who is able to forgive sins except one, namely God?" Clearly Jesus does claim this divine prerogative which sets him apart as the divine man.

αφιεναι [αφιημι] pres. inf. **"forgive"** - [WHO IS ABLE] TO FORGIVE [SINS]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "is able (can)." Not "his sins", referring to the sins of the paralytic, but "sins" absolute.

ει μη **"but"** - EXCEPT. Expressing a contrast by designating an exception.

ὁ θεος **"God"** - THE [ONE *able to forgive sins*], GOD. "God stands in apposition to "the one" = "one", nominative subject of an implied δυναται αφιεναι ἁμαρτιας; "Can anyone but God forgive sins?" Barclay.

v8

Throughout the gospels Jesus demonstrates a canny perception of the thoughts of those he comes into contact with. This is not necessarily a divine ability, given that we are all capable of reading body language. Knowing what the scribes are thinking, Jesus asks a "which is easier to say" question. Obviously, it is easier to say "your sins are forgiven" than say "rise ..." It's impossible to verify a person's authority to forgive sins, but their authority to heal is easily verified.

ευθως adv. "**immediately**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. Temporal adverb. Giving movement to the narrative and so heightening the drama, although sometimes **και ευθως** is little more than sequential; "then Jesus, perceiving"

επιγινους [επιγινωσκω] aor. part. "**knew**" - [JESUS] HAVING KNOWN, PERCEIVED, RECOGNISED. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, but with a causal touch; "and immediately, when Jesus perceived ...", AV. "Conscious, at once, that they were arguing", Moffatt.

τω πνευματι [α ατος] "**in [his] spirit**" - IN THE SPIRIT [OF HIM]. The dative is locative; expressing space, metaphorical. Jesus knew within himself what they were thinking. This is often regarded as a divine attribute, although it is more likely a human quality which Jesus had in spades - Jesus was exceptionally perceptive. "Inwardly aware of what was going on in their minds", Barclay.

οτι "that" - Here introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Jesus knew, "Jesus knew that"

ουτως adv. "**this was what**" - THUS, SO, IN THIS WAY. Modal adverb, expressing manner.

διαλογιζονται [διαλογιζομαι] pres. "**they were thinking**" - THEY ARE DIALOGUING. Reasoning, either within oneself, or with others. The prefix **δια** probably intensifies.

εν + dat. "**in [their hearts]**" - IN [THEMSELVES]. Local, expressing space, "within themselves", but possibly with a distributive sense, "among themselves."

αυτοις dat. "**to them**" - [HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ταυτα "these things" - [WHY ARE YOU CONSIDERING] THESE THINGS [IN THE HEARTS OF YOU]? Accusative direct object of the verb "to reason, dialogue." Specifically referring to the thoughts of the scribes regarding Jesus' blasphemy.

v9

τι pro. "**which**" - WHAT. Interrogative pronoun standing in apposition to the two infinitival constructions which stand as the subject of the sentence; "to say to the paralytic, the sins are forgiven you / your sins are forgiven, or to say, rise up, take up your bed and walk, which is easier?"

ευκοπωτερον [ευκοπος] adj. comp. "**easier**" - [IS] EASIER. This comparative adjective is the predicate nominative of the two following infinitival clauses joined by **ἢ**, "or". Obviously, it is easier to say "your sins are forgiven" since it is not possible to verify whether Jesus legitimately has the authority to forgive sins. It is far more difficult to say "rise" for the authority to heal is easily verified. None-the-less, it can be argued that the purpose of the comparison is to identify forgiveness as the harder act. Healing someone is not impossible, but forgiving someone is, unless you are God. Guelich opts for the first sense, given that "verifiability determines degree of easier / harder." Most commentators agree, eg., Boring, France, ... Easier to say, because it can't be verified; harder to do because it can be verified. If Jesus can do the harder, the verifiable, v11, then he can do the easier, the unverifiable, v10. Jesus is presenting an *a fortiori* argument; "if the more *difficult* can be achieved, this guarantees the validity of the claim to do the *easier*", France. "Which is more easily done?" Cassirer.

ειπειν [ειπον] aor. inf. "**to say**" - TO SAY [TO THE PARALYTIC]. Introducing two infinitival clauses serving as the subject of the verb to-be **εστιν**; "To say to the paralysed man your sins is easier"

σου gen. "**your [sins]**" - [THE SINS] OF YOU [ARE FORGIVEN]. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, but see above.

αρον [αιρω] aor. imp. "**take**" - [OR TO SAY, RISE, STAND UP AND] TAKE UP, RAISE, PICK UP [THE MATTRESS OF YOU]. The one who was carried now carries. "Rise, lift your pallet and go", Moffatt.

περιπατει [περιπατεω] pres. imp. "**walk**" - [AND] WALK ABOUT, GO ABOUT? Jesus' extended instruction to the paralytic serves to display the miracle and thus proclaim his authority over sin.

v10

Although the words in v10 derive from Jesus, in this particular situation, they are more likely an editorial comment by Mark. Mark tells us that Jesus enacts this sign that we may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins.

δε "but" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, here to an editorial comment.

ινα + subj. "**that**" - THAT = IN ORDER THAT. introducing a purpose clause, "but in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." This is most likely an editorial comment by Mark and so should not be in inverted comers as in NIV. Mark is explaining to us that in light of Jesus' cross and empty tomb, this miracle demonstrates to us that Jesus has authority to forgive sins. Mark is encouraging us to rest confidently on this authority. It would be very unlikely that Jesus would reveal this authority to unbelieving "teachers of the law." This will be the only time in Mark when the title "Son of Man" is

used by other than Jesus himself. Also, it is the only time where the authority of the Son of Man is "over the earth"; his authority is usually expressed in eschatological terms. "Just to show you (ie. this act was performed and recorded for the reader) that the Son of Man actually has authority on earth to forgive sins, he said to the paralytic"

ειδητε [οιδα] subj. "**you may know**" - YOU MAY KNOW. The scribes and the crowd will know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins. They will know this through the authority of Jesus exercises in the healing.

οτι "that" - THAT. Here introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they may know; "but to let you see that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins", Moffatt.

ο υιος του ανθρωπου "the Son of man" - THE SON OF MAN. The genitive **του ανθρωπου**, "of man", is adjectival, relational. This title, derived from Daniel 7:13 and referring to the one who comes to the Ancient of Days to receive an eternal kingship, is Jesus' favourite messianic title. At this time, it was not a widely understood messianic title, in fact, in Aramaic it can be taken to mean just "man". It seems likely that Jesus chose the title to further the messianic secret so that only those with eyes to see can recognise the signs of the time. The use of an impersonal title, rather than the personal "I", is typical of a person who has status and authority.

επι + gen. "on [earth]" - [HAS AUTHORITY] UPON, ON [EARTH]. Spatial. The prepositional phrase "upon the earth" seems to limit / modify "sins", in which case it functions adjectivally, so Cranfield; "the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on the earth." Yet, as Decker notes, most prepositional phrases function adverbially, in which it would modify "forgive"; "the Son of Man has authority to forgive upon the earth sins."

αφιεναι [αφιημι] pres. inf. "**to forgive [sins]**" - TO FORGIVE [SINS]. The infinitive is expegetic, limiting by specifying the "authority".

τω παραλυτικω adj. "**to the paralytic / to the man**" - [HE SAYS] TO THE PARALYTIC. Dative of indirect object.

v11

iii] The healing of the paralytic, v11-12. Having addressed the scribes, Jesus turns to the paralytic and exercises his authority over sickness and disease in a healing word - "rise"

σοι dat. "**[I tell] you**" - [I SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object, while the position of the pronoun indicates that it is emphatic. "To you I say."

εγειρε [εγειρω] pres. imp. "**get up**" - RISE UP, STAND, [PICK UP THE MATTRESS OF YOU]. Boring suggests the word is used to echo the resurrection. Note that the next imperative **αρον**, "take up", is aorist, unlike "get up" which

takes a present tense. Obviously the third command in the present tense, "go home", is durative in nature, but what is the difference between "get up" and "take / pick up"? The choice of a present tense for the first command may be a discourse feature giving weight to the getting up over picking up.

εις + acc. "-" - [AND GO] TO [THE HOUSE]. Spatial, indicating the direction of the action, and/or arrival at. The paralytic is brought from his home and he is now to walk to his home.

σου gen. pro. "-" - OF YOU. The genitive is adjectival, possessive; "your house".

v12

In the presence of everyone, the paralytic gets up, picks up his camp-bed and heads home. The crowd responds in amazement at what they have seen, but not in faith at what they have heard. They fail to make the link between the forgiveness of their sins and the healing of the paralytic. Their praise to God is limited to what Jesus has done, namely, the exercise of his authority over sickness

και ευθυς adv. "-" - AND [HE GOT UP, AROSE AND] IMMEDIATELY. Temporal adverb, but best treated as sequential, "then / and" The man is not staggering around, rather, he gets up, picks up his mattress and is off.

αρως [αιρω] aor. part. "took" - PICKING UP, TAKING [THE MATTRESS]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "got up", "he got up and picked up ..."

εμπροσθεν + gen. "in full view of" - [HE WENT OUT] IN FRONT OF, BEFORE [ALL = EVERYONE]. Mark's emphasis here serves to verify the miracle. They all saw it.

ωστε + inf. "-" - SO AS. This construction forms a consecutive clause expressing result, "with the result that / so that they were all amazed."

εξιστασθαι [εξιστημι] inf. "this amazed [everyone]" - TO AMAZE, ASTONISH [ALL, EVERYONE]. This is an important word in the gospel of Mark. The common response of the crowd is amazement, but rarely faith. Amazement leads either to faith or unbelief, but sometimes just remains as amazement, which response leaves a person outside the kingdom of God. "Everyone watched in amazement", CEV.

δοξαζειν [δοξαζω] pres. inf. "they praised" - TO PRAISE, GIVE GLORY TO [GOD]. This second infinitive again introduces a consecutive clause; "and [with the result that] they praised God." The praise to God indicates that the crowd recognises that Jesus' possesses divine authority to heal. Such will evidence the injustice of Jesus' crucifixion.

λεγοντας [λεγω] pres. part. "**saying**" - SAYING. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing how they praised God, i.e., in words, but possibly instrumental, expressing means, by words.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement, direct speech, expressing what the crowd said.

ουδεποτε ειδομεν [ὄραω] aor. "**we have never seen**" - WE NEVER SAW. The crowd is focused on the miracle and not on the forgiveness of sins. The sign is a powerful one and proclaims that the Son of Man has authority to forgive, but the fickle short-sighted nature of the mob fails to make the connection between the paralytic's healing and the potential for their forgiveness. Crowds will continue to be amazed by the miracles, rather than respond in faith to the gospel. This will lead Jesus to proclaim the gospel in riddles (parables), and to do his miracles (signs) in secret.

οὕτως adv. "**anything like this**" - THUS, IN LIKE MANNER, IN THIS WAY. Adverb of manner. Here possibly serving as a substantive, so NIV, although Decker suggests a more technically correct approach with the addition of "something done"; "we have never seen *something done* in this way / in like manner / thus", i.e., the clause is elliptical.

2:13-22

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

3. Conflict in the journey, 2:1-3:6

ii] Call and response

Synopsis

On the road from Damascus, through Capernaum to the sea, Jesus comes across Levi at work in the government toll-house. Jesus calls him to follow as a disciple. As a disciple of Jesus, Levi will take the name Matthew. Later in the day, probably at Levi's home, although possibly at Jesus' family home, Jesus entertains Levi and his friends. The Pharisees are shocked that Jesus would dine with such irreligious folk, but Jesus reminds them that he didn't come to invite the righteous into the kingdom, but outcasts and strangers. In a scene change, Jesus is asked a question concerning fasting. The Pharisees, and the Baptist's disciples, follow normal practise and fast on special days, but Jesus and his disciples seem to ignore accepted piety. Jesus points out that in the dawning days of the messianic age, fasting is incongruous - you don't fast in glad times. Mark supports this story with the saying *something old and something new*.

Teaching

The reality of the kingdom of God cannot be contained in the structures of a fading world.

Issues

i] Context: See 2:1-12.

ii] Structure: *Our response to Gods*:

the call of Levi the tax collector, 2:13-14;

Jesus' eating with sinners, 2:15-17;

the question over fasting, 2:18-22.

How can the guests of the bridegroom fast
while he is with them? v18-20

New wine needs new wineskins, v21-22.

iii] Interpretation:

Mark presents Matthew's call in much the same terms as that of James and John, and Peter and Andrew, namely, a purposeful call to follow Jesus' in his itinerate teaching and healing ministry. In the next episode, depicting the reaction of the scribes of the Pharisees at Jesus' eating with sinners, we witness, as Edwards nicely puts it, "The Scandal of Grace", so revealing the underlying truth of the gospel. The third episode, the question about

fasting, 2:18-22, provides insight into "the eschatological newness of Jesus ministry", Marcus. In this episode we learn that the coming kingdom cannot be contained within the structures of a fading world; "Jesus is like expensive new wine that needs its own wineskin", Edwards.

This episode presents in four parts:

- The call of Levi: Levi, called Matthew in the gospel of Matthew, is a tax collector working for the Roman government and as such was a hated member of Jewish society, an outcast. His tax office in Capernaum was on the road from Decapolis. He obviously knew of Jesus and his teachings, and so when invited to follow Jesus as a disciple, he jumps at the chance.

- Eating with sinners: The form of this incident is quite common in the gospels. Jesus performs a significant act, it is challenged by the Pharisees, Jesus counters with a truth that they may well agree with, but he interprets it radically such that they are silenced. In this episode, the meal represents the messianic feast where forgiven sinners, outcasts, share in God's promised blessings. In the face of his critics, Jesus makes the point that it is the sinner who needs forgiveness, not the righteous, and therefore, it is proper for him to work with those who need forgiveness so they can share in the eschatological feast with the righteous. The Pharisees may well nod in agreement with Jesus' argument, but they fail to recognise that they are themselves sinners and are in need of forgiveness. This is evidenced by their failure to rejoice at the inclusion of the lost

- The question on fasting: The question over fasting serves to challenge Jesus' audience and so provide another opportunity for radical teaching. The Day of Atonement was the only designated fast day, but the Pharisees had developed a pattern of regular fasting, one also followed by the Baptist and his disciples.

- Something old and something new. Jesus may have used these short parables to illustrate the point he has just made, but they may well have attached to the story during oral transmission. It is even possible that Mark attached them for an illustrative purpose. None-the-less, Jesus does use teaching parables to draw out the point he is making; note the similar context in Matt.9:16-17, Lk.5:36-37.

The kingdom of God has dawned with a newness that cannot be contained within the structures of a fading world. The messianic banquet is now, and it would be totally inappropriate to fast in sad reflection as if the day is yet to come. The day is now, and to fail to see the day can only bring ruin.

Who are the "righteous" in v17? "I have not come to call (to repentance???) the righteous, but sinners." Numerous suggestions are proposed:

- The "righteous" are the self-righteous. The self-righteous / so-called righteous stand under judgement and are outside the mercy of God. Jesus does, on occasion, imply that the Pharisees are "righteous", in the sense of self-righteous, but that sense does not fit this context.

- The "righteous" are "the truly righteous" and therefore don't need to be called to repentance. Given Jesus' confrontation with the rich young ruler, 10:17-31, Jesus reveals that a truly righteous person does not exist through obedience to God's law, but there are many who are accounted righteous through their faith, a faith like that of Abraham. So, for example, Symeon was a "righteous and devout man on the outlook for the consolation of Israel", Lk.2:25. Zachariah speaks of righteous Jews entering the gates of the kingdom with Gentiles / outcasts holding onto their tassels, Zech.8:23. In the end, of course, there is only one righteous Jew, namely Jesus. Everyone else, Jew and Gentile alike, only sneak into the kingdom by holding onto the tassels of that one righteous man. So, by extension, there has always been a righteous remnant in Israel, a remnant accounted righteous through faith, and Jesus doesn't come to call them to repentance.

- The parallelism in the saying is used to emphasise a single point, namely that as the sick need someone to heal them, so sinners need someone to forgive them. It is because of this truth that Jesus associates with sinners and it is this truth that silences Jesus' critics. He must associate with the ritually impure who come to him if he is to lead them to repentance and forgiveness. So, in simple terms, "the saying is a defence of Jesus' outreach to the disreputable, not a suggestion that there are some who are exempt from his call", Edwards.

Option (b) seems best. When the messiah gathers the irreligious, outcasts and "the stranger within the gates", along with the righteous, then we know for sure that the kingdom is upon us. "I came, not to summon God's righteous remnant *to repent*, but sinful people."

Form: The five conflict stories, 2:1-3:6, are recorded together by all three synoptic gospels indicating their unity within the oral tradition of the early church. In the first story the conflict is muted, but by the fifth the authorities are plotting against Jesus.

iv] Synoptics:

The call of Levi (a Levite??): Matt.9:9-13, Lk.5:27-32.

The question on fasting: Matt.9:14-17, Lk.5:33-39. Matthew has the question coming from John's disciples. Mark's account is very similar to the Matthean tradition, other than v18a, a typically Markan note on the setting.

v] Homiletics: *Disarming the self-righteous*

A colleague of mine recently spoke of a meeting he chaired for the purchase of new carpet in his church. Anyone who has ever attended a church management meeting knows only too well, how such an issue can stir passionate debate. One youthful member demanded that Bible texts be woven into the carpet, therefore justifying the expense of such an extravagance. In the heat of the moment, my friend didn't know what to say. The following day, as is always the case, he thought of a wonderful line he could have used. At least he gave me the benefit of is afterthought. "I would consider writing the scripture on my door post, even on my forehead, but on the ground, to be trampled underfoot, never!"

Jesus' capacity to lay bare the conviction of human self-worth is a joy to behold. He disarms us before the grace of God. He acts provocatively, defends Biblically, and contends radically. If you like, he pokes the cocky, heads for the moral high ground, and throws water on the slippery slope of self-worth below. Having disarmed his critics, he opens the way to grace.

In our reading today Jesus exposes the self-righteous piety of the churchmen of his day. He points out that his ministry-focus is not on Israel's righteous remnant, given that their salvation is assured. No, Jesus associates with religious outcasts, the ones that need saving; they are the ones he summons to belief. All of a sudden, the high moral ground of the churchmen wasn't as high as they thought it was. Maybe they were in need of saving too!

May we all be disarmed before the sovereign grace of God.

Text - 2:13

i] The call of Levi demonstrates "Jesus' powerful word", Boring, v13-14. Mark does not record either Levi listening to Jesus' teaching, or responding in faith. We may properly assume that both are present, but the authoritative call to follow is the issue at hand. After the success of the healing of the paralytic, 2:1-12, Jesus again confronts the powers of darkness in the wilderness ("beside the lake" = desert). As usual, he does this through a word ("he began to teach them").

καί "-" - AND. We would expect a transitional **δε** to introduce a new passage / paragraph, but sometimes **καί** functions as a default conjunction. See also for v15, 18, 23,

παλιν adv. "**once again**" - AGAIN. Sequential adverb.

παρα + acc. "**beside**" - [HE WENT OUT] BESIDE [THE LAKE, SEA]. Spatial; "Jesus went out and again walked along the seashore", Barclay. Jesus' move is from Capernaum.

πας ὁ οχλος "**a large crowd**" - [AND] ALL THE CROWD. Possibly "all the people." Mark is again probably emphasising Jesus' popularity in describing the completeness of the crowd; "a large crowd gathered around him", CEV.

ηρχετο [ερχομαι] imperf. ind. act. "**came**" - WAS COMING [TO HIM]. Imperfect tense, being durative, may give the sense "kept coming", implying that the crowd came, wave after wave. Again, a popularity motif. The imperfect may also imply that the teaching was in successive groups, so Taylor.

εδιδασκεν [διδασκω] imperf. "**he began to teach**" - [AND] HE WAS TEACHING [THEM]. The imperfect is possibly inceptive, as NIV, or just "he was teaching them", ESV, the act of teaching being durative by nature.

v14

παραγων [παραγω] pres. part. "**as he walked along**" - PASSING BY. The participle is adverbial, temporal; "while he was on his way", Cassirer.

τον "the son" - [HE SAW LEVI] THE. Here the article serves as a nominalizer with "son" implied; "the *son* of Alphaeus."

του Αλφαιου [ος] gen. "**of Alphaeus**" - OF ALPHEAUS. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

καθημενον [καθημαι] pres. part. "**sitting**" - SITTING. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "Levi", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about "Levi"; "he saw Levi sitting."

επι + acc. "**at**" - IN. Locative.

το τελωνιον [ον] "**the tax collector's booth**" - THE TOLL OFFICE, CUSTOMS HOUSE, TAX BOOTH. Matthew is either a toll collector, or a customs and excise officer. Either way, it was a hated profession in that it suffered from *the open cooky jar syndrome* (corrupt) and served the Roman invaders.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - [AND HE SAYS] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ακολουθει [ακολουθεω] pres. imp. act. "**follow**" - ACCOMPANY, ATTEND, FOLLOW. Note the similarities of Matthew's call with the call of the other disciples. These incidents demonstrate the authority of Jesus' call - those who are called drop what they are doing and go after Jesus. "Follow me (in discipleship)", TH.

μοι dat. pro. "**me**" - ME. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow."

αναστας [ανιστημι] aor. part. "**Levi got up**" - [AND] GETTING UP, RISING UP. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "he followed", "he rose and followed", but it may be treated adverbially, temporal, "and when Levi got up he followed him", so Decker.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - [HE FOLLOWED, WENT ALONG WITH] HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow along with."

v15

ii] A festive meal at Levi's home turns into a conflict story (ending as a pronouncement story), at the conclusion of which Jesus declares that he has come "to call" sinners, v15-17. The use of the verb **καλεω**, "call", should not be confused with Jesus' call of the twelve disciples, the apostles, nor "call" in the sense of an "effectual call", a sovereign determination of the elect. Jesus' "call" here may be an "invitation" to become a disciple of Jesus, but more specifically, it is a "summons" to respond to the gospel in repentance and belief, a call to enter into a saving relationship with Jesus, a call "where people in general are *called* to repent and believe the good news", France. Jesus came to save the the broken and lost before God, and to this end he calls on everyone to "repent and believe", and so share together in the new age of the kingdom of God.

και γινεται "**while**" - AND IT HAPPENED, CAME ABOUT, CAME TO PASS. Common Semitic form used to introduce a new episode, similar to the LXX. "So it came about that Jesus sat down to a meal in this man's house", Rieu.

κατακεισθαι [**κατακειμαι**] pres. inf. "**dinner**" - [HE] TO RECLINE AT A TABLE. The infinitival construction, "he to recline in the house of him", properly serves as the subject of "it came to pass." The accusative subject of the infinitive is **αυτον**, "he", presumably refers to "Jesus". Reclining was the normal posture for eating a meal at a low table with cushions used for support; "dined", "having a meal", REB.

εν + dat. "**at**" - IN. Local; expressing space.

αυτου gen. pro. "**Levi's [house]**" - [THE HOUSE] OF HIM. The genitive is possessive. "His house" could mean Jesus' house, or better his family's house, given that he seems to act as the host, but Mark describes Jesus as a wandering teacher. The context implies "Levi's house."

αμαρτωλοι adj. "**sinners**" - [AND MANY TAX COLLECTORS AND] SINNERS. Used here most likely in the sense of ritually impure, outcasts, *the lost*, even *strangers*, rather than criminals and the like. Jesus has attracted a wide crowd of people who have nothing to do with the niceties of the moral and cultic law. Mark is again noting Jesus' magnetism. "Irreligious people", Taylor.

τω Ιησου [ος] dat. "**with him**" - [WERE RECLINING] WITH JESUS. Dative of association; "many tax collectors and sinners were his guests", Berkeley.

τοις μαθηταις [ης] dat. "**disciples**" - [AND] WITH THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. Dative of association. This is Mark's first use of the term to describe Jesus' followers.

γάρ **"for"** - BECAUSE. Expressing cause / reason; introducing a causal clause explaining why Jesus was eating with tax collectors and sinners, namely, because many of Matthew's friends and associates had come with him to his house and joined in the meal with Jesus and his disciples.

ἠκολούθουν [ἀκολουθεῶ] imperf. **"followed"** - [*there were MANY AND*] THEY WERE ATTENDING TO. The verb "to follow" is often used of Jesus' disciples, although here, the πολλοί, "many", here who followed = attended on this occasion are more likely Matthew's associates rather than Jesus' disciples. Mark does not describe Jesus as having "many" disciples. Jesus, at this stage in his ministry, had a popular following, but only a small number of followers.

αὐτῷ dat. pro. **"him"** - HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow."

v16

For the Pharisees, the purity of table fellowship was easily stained in the presence of a "sinner", and they were less than impressed by Jesus' failure to remain separate from the unclean.

τῶν Φαρισαίων [ος] gen. **"[the teachers of the law] who were Pharisees"** - [AND THE SCRIBES] OF THE PHARISEES. The genitive is adjectival, probably partitive, as NIV, but possibly attributive limiting "scribes / teachers of the law; "the pharisaic scribes." The addition of Pharisees to the religious spectators on this occasion serves to emphasise the religiosity of these critics, given that the Pharisees were the puritans of their day.

ἰδόντες **"when saw"** - SEEING. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV, but also a touch causal.

ὅτι "-" - THAT [HE EATS]. Introducing a dependent statement of perception, expressing what they saw; "when they saw that he eats ..."

μετὰ + gen. **"with"** - WITH [SINNERS AND TAX COLLECTORS]. Expressing accompaniment; "in company with."

τοῖς μαθηταῖς [ης ου] dat. **"[his] disciples"** - [WERE SAYING] TO THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object. The religious spectators approach the disciples rather than Jesus. Mark may be emphasising Jesus' authority in that his accusers cannot quite bring themselves to accuse Jesus, face to face.

ὅτι - THAT [DOES HE EAT WITH TAX COLLECTORS AND SINNERS]? This conjunction can introduce a question (interrogative), as in the NIV, so properly ὅτι, "because why" = δια τι, as in Matt. and Lk., "Why is it that your master eats", but it is possibly recitative (introducing a dependent statement, direct speech) and therefore producing the accusation "he is eating with toll-collectors and sinners."

v17

ακουσας [ακουω] aor. part. "**on hearing this**" - [AND] HAVING HEARD *this*. The participle is adverbial, temporal, but also with a causal touch; "when Jesus heard this he said to them", NJB. Jesus directly, or indirectly, hears the criticism, and then acts directly; "Jesus heard what they were saying", Barclay.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [JESUS SAYS] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement, direct speech. Variant reading.

οι ισχοντες [ισχυω] pres. part. "**the healthy**" - THE STRONG, HEALTHY ONES. The participle serves as a substantive. Here the "well and healthy" are intended. "The fit and flourishing", Phillips.

ιατρου [ος] "**a doctor**" - [HAVE NO NEED] OF A DOCTOR, PHYSICIAN, HEALER. The genitive could be classified adjectival, expegetic, specifying the "need", although the noun "need" naturally takes a genitive complement specifying the need, "need of"

αλλα "**but**" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "no need, but"

οι ... εχοντες [εχω] pres. part. "**the sick**" - THE ONES HAVING [BADNESS] = THE ILL, SICK. The participle and its modifying adverb **κακως**, "badly", serves as a substantive.

καλεσαι [καλω] aor. inf. "**to call**" - [I DID NOT COME] TO INVITE, SUMMON, CALL. The infinitive is adverbial, expressing purpose; "I have not come in order to call the righteous." The sense "summon", even "invite", is best, as the word "call" carries theological overtones of a divine, or *effectual* call, a proposition that is not implied here.

δικαιους [ος] "**righteous**" - THE RIGHTEOUS [BUT SINNERS, OUTCASTS]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to call, summon, invite." For the sense of the word "righteous", see Interpretation above.

v18

iii] The question on fasting, v18-20. In this next conflict story / pronouncement story, along with the attached independent saying, *something old and something new*, Jesus proclaims that the old religious framework of Israel is unable to contain the radical realities of the coming kingdom; it is not able to contain "of the eschatological newness represented by Jesus", Boring, a newness "which supersedes the traditional patterns of religion", France.

Ιωαννου [ης ου] gen. "**John's [disciples]**" - [AND WERE THE DISCIPLES] OF JOHN [AND THE PHARISEES]. The genitive is adjectival, of relationship.

νηστευοντες [νηστευω] pres. part. "**were fasting**" - FASTING. The present participle + the imperfect verb to-be **ἦσαν**, forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, possibly used to emphasise durative aspect, although not in the sense of "always fasting", or that they were in the middle of a fast at that moment, but that it was their custom to fast; they were regular in their observance of the required days of fasting. So, not "were observing a fast", Moffatt, but better "used to fast", AV. In the Law, fasting was required only once a year on the Day of Atonement, although the Pharisees fasted weekly on Mondays and Thursdays. Jesus again demonstrates his authority by superseding this important element of Jewish piety (prayer and almsgiving were the other key elements of Jewish piety). He turns "the sorrow of fasting into the joy of feasting", Gundry. The very presence of Jesus demands rejoicing. None-the-less, in the coming days, the horror of his death will lead his disciples to fast in sorrow.

ερχονται [ερχομαι] pres. "**Some people came**" - THEY CAME. Historical / narrative present, probably used with discourse intent, ie., indicating new subject matter. As an indefinite plural, the subject is unclear, but most likely it was the usual crowd, this time with a question concerning Jesus' authority. If John and the Pharisees require their disciples to follow Jewish piety, on what authority does Jesus supersede this piety, given that his disciples are obviously following his own example?

αυτω dat. pro. "**[asked] Jesus**" - [AND SAY] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

δια τι "why" - BECAUSE WHY. A causal interrogative construction; seeking an explanation.

Ιωαννου [ης ου] gen. "**John's [disciples]**" - [THE DISCIPLES] OF JOHN [AND THE DISCIPLES OF THE PHARISEES FAST]. The genitive is adjectival, possessive / relational.

δε "and" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative to a contrasting point; "why is it that John's disciples fast, while your disciples do not fast", Cassirer.

σοι pro. "**yours [are not]**" - YOUR [DISCIPLES ARE NOT FASTING]. Standing in the attributive position; "the disciples which belong to you are not fasting." "Your disciples eat and drink *all the time*", Lk.5:35.

v19

Verses 19-20 consist of a short teaching parable, which is both "figurative and cryptic", Gundry. It is usually interpreted in the terms of the realisation of the coming kingdom of God in the person of Jesus. The messianic age has dawned, a day of celebration, not a day of mourning. Of course, there will come a day of mourning, the **ἡμερα**, "day", when the "bridegroom" is taken from his people, the

day of crucifixion. In that day his attendants will mourn. The church will set days of fasting into the future, but Jesus is not addressing that issue here

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [JESUS SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

του νυμφωνος [ων ος] "[the guests] of the bridegroom" - [THE SONS = ATTENDANTS = GUESTS] OF THE WEDDING CHAMBER / WEDDING HALL = GROOM [ARE NOT ABLE]. The genitive is adjectival, relational. "Wedding guests", Weymouth, or possibly "groomsmen", "the bridegroom's attendants"; BAGD. "Surely the friends of the bridegroom cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them?", Rieu.

νηστευειν [νηστευω] pres. inf. "**fast**" - TO FAST. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "are able." This complementary construction is repeated in the following clause, "are not able to fast."

εν ω "**while**" - IN THE TIME WHICH, DURING THE TIME. Temporal construction denoting contemporaneous time, as NIV.

μετ [μετα] + gen. "**with**" - [THE GROOM IS] WITH [THEM]. Expressing association; "in company with."

οσος χρονον "**so long as**" - AS LONG TIME, HOW LONG TIME [THEY HAVE THE GROOM WITH THEM THEY ARE NOT ABLE TO FAST]. Accusative of time; a temporal construction expressing duration of time; "as long as", BAGD. "Fasting is out of the question as long as they have the bridegroom with them", Phillips.

v20

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument, here to a contrasting point in time terms; when the bridegroom is present and when he is taken away.

οταν + subj. "**when**" - [THE DAYS WILL COME] WHENEVER = WHEN. This construction (**οταν** = **οτε αν**) + subj. introduces an indefinite temporal clause future time; "when he is taken away."

απ [απο] + gen. "**from [them]**" - [THE GROOM IS TAKEN AWAY] FROM [THEM]. Expressing separation; "away from them." Idiomatic use of the preposition given that the verb **απαρθη**, "remove from", takes an **απο** prefix.

τοτε adv. "-" - THEN [THEY WILL FAST]. Temporal adverb. The "then" referring to when the bridegroom is taken away from them (from the disciples); somewhat redundant, but probably used to emphasise "that day.:"

εν + dat. "**on [that day]**" - IN [THAT DAY]. Temporal use of the preposition. The disciples will fast on the day when Jesus is taken away from them because it will be a day of great sorrow. This verse says nothing about an ongoing Christian tradition of fasting on Good Friday, Fridays, Lent, etc..., but then it also doesn't prohibit fasting. Luke's **εν εκειναις ταις ημεραις**, "in those days", being plural,

reduces the idea of a particular day, the day of Christ's departure. "Then they will go without eating", CEV.

v21

iv] Saying - Something old and something, v21-22. Most commentators take the view that these short parables serve to illustrate Jesus' teaching on the question of fasting. Jesus may have used them originally in this context, but then he may have used them independently as proclamations of the coming kingdom. If this is the case, then they were attached to the question on fasting during oral period, or by Mark himself, to illustrate the point Jesus is making. So, within the immediate context, the point is something like, the new age of the kingdom cannot be accommodated in the outworn forms of Judaism. I like the way Hunter takes the next step and proclaims that "you cannot combine Law and Grace." True, but I'm not sure these parables can sustain that argument. Anyway, as Moule puts it, "Jesus was introducing something so absolutely new and revolutionary that he could not be expected to accommodate it to the standard religious practices of the Jews."

Gundry develops the argument that Jesus' ministry is driven by the truth of the gospel. This truth, in substance the grace of God expressed in the forgiveness of sinners, causes Jesus to share table fellowship with outcasts and to overturn the practice of pious fasting with the joy that comes from forgiveness. The dynamism of this truth is illustrated in the situation of a patch of new cloth on old cloth and new wine in old wineskins. The power of expansion and contraction destroys the garment and the patch, in much the same way as fermenting new wine will split old wine skins. Following this line of interpretation, the point of the illustrations is that the truth of the gospel cannot be resisted - Jesus' word is powerful and authoritative and so transcends the niceties of prevailing piety.

C.H. Dodd, argues that the image serves to illustrate the realisation of the kingdom of God; it is upon us, it is here - the cloth is torn, the wineskins burst. So, rather than an illustrative / teaching parable, we have here a kingdom parable, a gospel riddle proclaiming that the kingdom of God is now. Within its contextual setting, joy and thanksgiving, rather than sadness and fasting, is the only viable response. The breaking of the fast by Jesus (assumed) and his disciples, heralds the realisation / inauguration of the kingdom of God. It is like new wine bursting out of old wine skins; "the kingdom of God is at hand." Dodd's approach carries weight, although it is not widely accepted.

αγναφου gen. adj. "of unshrunk" - [NO ONE SEWS ON, ATTACHES TO, A PIECE] OF UNRESSED, UNTREATED. Attributive adjective; "unshrunk cloth."

ῥακουσ [οσ] gen. "cloth" - CLOTH, RAG. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic, specifying the patch, "a patch which consists of unshrunk cloth."

επι + acc. "**on [an old garment]**" - UPON, ON, [AN OLD GARMENT]. Locative / spatial. Somewhat redundant given that the verb **επιραπτει**, "to sow upon", takes an **επι** prefix - idiomatic.

ει δε μη "**if he does / otherwise**" - BUT IF NOT = OTHERWISE. Usually serving to introduce an exceptive clause which establishes a contrast by designating an exception, although here more likely to introduce "hypothetical result", Guelich, ie. it expresses "what would happen if the preceding statement were true", Culy; "otherwise", Decker.

απ [απο] + gen. "**from**" - [THE PATCH PULLS AWAY *part*] FROM [IT]. Expressing separation, "away from". "Tears away", RSV.

του παλαιου gen. "**the old**" - [THE NEW *patch*] OF = FROM THE OLD *garment*. The genitive adjectival, partitive, or ablative, expressing separation, "away from"; "the new patch will take something off the old coat", Cassirer.

χειρον adj. "**worse**" - [AND A] WORSE [TEAR, RENT, BECOMES = RESULTS]. Predicate adjective. "A new piece would shrink and tear a bigger hole", CEV.

v22

εις "into" - [AND NO ONE POURS NEW WINE] INTO. Locative, indicating the direction of the action and arrival at. Possibly, "new wine is for new wine skins", as RSV, but "into", in the sense of "is put into" is best.

παλαιους adj. "**old**" - OLD [WINESKINS]. Attributive adjective.

ει δε μη "**if he does / otherwise**" - BUT/AND IF NOT = OTHERWISE. Here introducing a hypothetical result; see v21.

απολλυται [απολλυμι] mid. "**ruined**" - [THE WINE WILL RIP, BURST, THE WINESKINS AND THE WINE] IS DESTROYED, RUINED. Middle voice. "The wine and the wineskins will both be lost", Barclay.

αλλα "No" - BUT [NEW WINE *is poured* INTO NEW WINE SKINS]. Adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "No, people pour new wine into fresh skins", Cassirer.

2:23-3:6

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

3. Conflict in the journey, 2:1-3:6

iii] Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath

Synopsis

It is harvest time, around May, and while walking past a field of wheat or barley, the disciples, as allowed by the law, pick a few ears and eat. The Pharisees argue that the disciples are breaking the law because they are involved in the work of harvest - they are reaping on the Sabbath. Referring to a notable precedent, Jesus points out that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Mark follows this incident up with the healing of the man with the withered hand; a healing on the Sabbath. On this occasion Jesus is teaching in a synagogue and spotting the man in the congregation, he heals him, all within view of the religious authorities. Jesus rounds on the authorities, revealing the true substance of Sabbath law, as opposed to the accumulated debris of imposed regulations. The authorities immediately plan how they might destroy him.

Teaching

In the dawning of the messianic age, the age of peace and plenty, Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath.

Issues

i] Context: See 2:1-12. Mark now records the fourth and fifth controversy stories. Both of these stories concern Sabbath observance.

ii] Structure: *Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath:*

Reaping on the Sabbath, 2:23-28:

Setting, v23;

Question, v24;

Response, v25-28.

The example of David, v25-26;

Saying: "The sabbath was made for man", v27

Saying: "The Son of man is Lord", v28

Healing the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath, 3:1-6:

setting, v1;

question, v2-4;

healing, v5,

response, v6.

iii] Interpretation:

Two episodes on keeping the Sabbath:

Reaping on the Sabbath: In the first episode, 2:23-28, Jesus' use of the David incident is somewhat obscure, since it doesn't concern Sabbath observance as such. Lane suggests that the story "is offered [as] an analogy to Jesus and his disciples." In Jesus' retelling of the story (and his expansion of it!!!) he establishes both the humanity that lies behind divine law, and his authority to adjudge on matters of law. These truths are encapsulated in two sayings:

First: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath". The story supports Jesus' view "that his disciples' action is not violating the humanitarian purpose of the Sabbath law, even though it may be violating the law as such", Gundry. Sabbath law is not designed to burden us, but to provide an opportunity for rest, a rest that prefigures the coming day of God's eternal rest. The story "shows that the rigidity with which the Pharisees interpreted the ritual law was not in accordance with scripture", Cranfield. It should be noted that Jesus does not excuse the breaking of God's law on the ground of necessity. This is supported by the fact that Mark does not suggest that the disciples were hungry, or in need.

Second: "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath". The story reveals "that what David could do because he was David, was a valid precedent for the authority of someone greater than David", France. As David took upon himself the authority to adjudge matters of the law, as it relates to his companions, so does Jesus. Standing within radical rabbinical tradition, Jesus first identifies the humanity of Sabbath law ("the Sabbath is delivered over for your sake, but you are not delivered over to the Sabbath", Rabbi Simeon ben Menasya, *ca.* 180AD). Now, drawing a consequential result *ὥστε* from his willingness to adjudge on Sabbath law, as it relates to his disciples' actions, Jesus declares his right and authority, as God's messiah, "the Son of Man", to adjudge, and in so doing, proclaims that God's messianic rest is at hand, in and through the Son of Man.

Healing the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath. In the second episode, 3:1-6, rather than breaking Sabbath law, Jesus actually restores it to its proper purpose, a purpose lost in the maze of scribal traditions imposed on divine law. "The dawning of the kingdom of God in Jesus' ministry, brings the fullness of life that means forgiveness and freedom from sin, reconciliation of those who could not eat together,

deliverance from demonic power, the overcoming of death and the negative effects of law. Many respond in joy, but some have hard hearts, and on the basis of Scripture, tradition, and sincere religious conviction, consider Jesus a threat to the community of faith and God's purpose for the world. They begin plans to put him to death", Boring.

iv] Synoptics:

Reaping on the Sabbath: Matt.12:1-8, Lk.6:1-5. Mark's account is concise compared to Matthew and Luke. Note comments on 2:27.

Healing on the Sabbath: Matt.12:9-14, Lk.6:6-11. Again, Mark's account is concise when compared with Matthew and Luke. Matthew and Luke's account exhibit independence from Mark (it is commonly assumed that both Matthew and Luke use Mark as their primary source).

v] Homiletics: *The law of life*

Jeremiah prophesied that in the last day, when God inaugurates his righteous reign over broken humanity, he will write his law in the heart, rather than on tablets of stone. In our reading today, we see Jesus touching the substance of the law, its humanity rather than its legality. Jesus cuts through the regulations of Sabbath observance, all the don'ts, and exposes its intention for good. Had the Pharisees that day had their wits about them, they might have recognised in Jesus a sign of God's coming righteous reign, of His eternal day of rest. Sadly, they missed the sign and so missed the rest.

In both our stories, it is the humanity of the law that is common to each, and that humanity is worth considering. God's laws are there for our good, not our ill; they are not a legalistic tool of oppression, but rather a guide to joyful living. This human flexibility was evident, when, in the early church, the day of rest moved from the seventh day, Saturday, to the first day of the week, Sunday, the day when Christ rose from the dead. For the New Testament church, the fulfilment of their rest in the risen Christ became more important than their waiting for that rest on the Sabbath.

For a believer, Biblical law serves as a guide to Christian living, a practical guide toward our renewal by the indwelling compelling love of Christ. Biblical law was never intended to make us holy, but it can show us how to be holy, how to be Christ-like. So, God's law promotes life; let us then use it as a tool for joyous living.

Text - 2:23

The disciples *reap* on the Sabbath, v23-28. In this conflict / pronouncement story, the disciples' rather innocent picking of a few heads of wheat / barley while

passing through a field, is viewed as harvesting by some over-scrupulous Pharisees; reaping being classed as a work forbidden on the Sabbath under God's Law. Jesus then draws from an incident in the life of David to remind the Pharisees of the humanitarian nature of the law and of his right to adjudicate matters of the law. The episode is related thematically to the preceding episode in that both reveal a controversy related to Jesus' authority, i.e., he allows his disciples to break their fast, and here, he allows his disciples to reap on the Sabbath.

εν + dat. "**one [Sabbath]**" - [AND IT HAPPENED, CAME ABOUT *that* HE] IN / ON [THE SABBATHS]. Temporal use of the preposition, as NIV. The plural use of "sabbaths" is idiomatic.

παραπορευεσθαι [παραπορευομαι] pres. inf. "**was going**" - TO PASS BY. The infinitive forms a nominal clause, subject of the verb **εγενετο** "it became / happened" = "to pass through the grain-fields on the Sabbath happened" = "One day it happened *that* he was making his way through fields of corn on the Sabbath day", Cassirer. The accusative subject of the infinitive is **αυτον**, "he".

δια + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH. Obviously with the sense "through" in space, as of going through a grain-field. Somewhat redundant, given the **παρα** prefix to the infinitive, but usual form

ων σπαριμων adj. "**grain-fields**" - THE SEED-BEARING = GRAIN-FIELDS. The adjective "seed-bearing" is used here as a substantive, "grain-field". The grain would be either wheat, or barley.

ποιειν [ποιεω] pres. inf. "**walked**" - [AND THE DISCIPLES OF HIM BEGAN] TO MAKE / DO [WAY]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin". Literally the clause reads "they began to do", probably with the sense "make their way", usually shortened to "they began plucking", Taylor. The phrase is possibly descriptive of the disciples pushing their way through the grain-field, and so making a way / path / road for themselves to walk along (cf., Cranfield), although free reaping is only allowed along the edge, and this for the poor and hungry. Gundry argues that the construction is serving to separate the disciples from Jesus, i.e., only the disciples are pushing into the grain-field and plucking the heads of wheat / barley. Marcus argues that the phrase is serving to describe the disciples making a way for Jesus, with the allusion to "making a way (the royal way) for the Lord" (overly subtle??). "As the disciples made their way through", Moffatt.

τιλλοντες [τιλλω] pres. part. "**they began to pick**" - PICKING, PLUCKING [THE HEADS OF GRAIN]. The participle is adverbial, probably modal expressing the manner in which they passed through the field. "As the disciples made a path they pulled off heads of grain", Peterson.

v24

αυτω dat. pro. "**to him**" - [AND THE PHARISEES SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

τί "**why**" - WHY [ARE THEY DOING]. Interrogative use of the pronoun.

ὁ οὐκ ἐξεστιν "**what is unlawful**" - WHAT IS NOT PERMITTED. "The Pharisees regarded what the disciples were doing as work", Cranfield. That the Pharisees were always present to make negative comments every time Jesus does something controversial, is questioned by some commentators, so Sanders, although given Jesus' controversial ministry, we would expect the religious authorities to keep an eye on him. "What the law prohibits people from doing", TH.

τοις σαββασιν [ον] dat. "**on the Sabbath**" - ON THE SABBATHS? The dative is adverbial, temporal / of time. The plural use "sabbaths" is idiomatic.

v25

Jesus now relates the story of when David and his companions ate the loaves of presentation, cf., 1Sam.21:1-7, v25-26. As already noted, Jesus retells the story with some "poetic licence", although Jesus' retelling is probably best described as an authoritative "interpretation of scripture", Boring. Under normal circumstances, a rabbinical argument would only stand where two texts are quoted and these not from a historical book. Jesus' interpretation stands by itself, since it is given under the authority of the Son of Man.

λεγει [λεγω] pres. "**he answered**" - [AND] HE SAYS. Historic / narrative present used for a dramatic purpose.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ουδεποτε adv. "**never**" - [HAVE YOU] NEVER [READ]. Rhetorical indicative verb modified by the temporal adverb "never". Obviously they had read, but not understood.

ὅτε "**when**" - [WHAT DAVID DID] WHEN. Introducing a temporal clause; "when he was in need and hungry", ESV.

οἱ μετ αυτου "**and his companions**" - [HE WAS IN NEED AND WAS HUNGRY, HE AND] THE ONES WITH HIM? The article οἱ serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "with him" into a noun, "the men with him." The preposition μετ, "with", expresses association. The doubling up of the "need" possibly reflects "the general tendency by the rabbis to justify David's actions as being from one ravenously hungry whose life was in danger", Guelich. On the other hand, it is possible that "hungry" simply explains the need; "when he found himself in need, and he and his companions were going hungry", Cassirer.

επι + gen. "**in the days of**" - AT, DURING *the time of*. Temporal use of the preposition.

Αβιαθαρ gen. "**Abiathar**" - ABIATHAR. At the time of this story, Ahimelech was actually the high priest. Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech, was one of the few who escaped the slaughter perpetrated by Doeg the Edomite. Both Matthew and Luke omit the name, as do some Markan manuscripts. "In the days of" may provide a general designation, rather than a specific one (Possibly "in the section of scripture having to do with Abiathar", Wenham; "in the presence of Abiathar the high priest", Derrett), or it may be a gloss, or possibly Mark (even Jesus??) has made a mistake (so raising the issue of inspiration!). Freedman suggests that in the development of a tradition, as here, a better-known name often supplants a lesser-known name (Abiathar's importance relates to his association with "the house of God", ie. the temple in Jerusalem, so Gundry, and his association with David, so Marcus).

αρχιερεως [υς εως] gen. "**the high priest**" - HIGH PRIEST. Genitive is apposition to "Abiathar".

πως "-" - HOW [HE ENTERED INTO]. In a sense this interrogative particle serves to introduce an exegetical clause specifying τι, "what" David did, namely, entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence. Yet, given its prime use in direct and indirect questions, the interrogative sense is best expressed; "Have you never read what how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ... ?", ESV.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [THE HOUSE] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

της προθεσεως [ις εως] gen. "**the consecrated [bread]**" - [AND HE ATE THE BREAD] OF THE SETTING FORTH, OFFERING. "God" is assumed, bread that is offered, set forth to God, so "consecrated / sacred" bread. The genitive is therefore best treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting "bread", as NIV. The twelve "loaves of presentation *to God*" were placed on the altar on the Sabbath, and replaced the next Sabbath. The priests ate the replaced bread, cf., Ex.25:30, Lev.24:5-9.

φαγειν [φαγω] aor. inf. "**to eat**" - [WHICH IS NOT PERMITTED, RIGHT] TO BE EATEN. The infinitive serves as a substantive, subject of the negated verb "permitted, allowed"; "to be eaten is not allowed."

ει μη "**only for**" - EXCEPT [THE PRIESTS]. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception.

και και "**and [he] also**" - AND [HE GAVE] AND = ALSO. Coordinative and adjunctive; "and also, furthermore, in addition."

τοις οὖσιν [εἰμι] dat. pres. part. **"to [his] companions"** - TO THE ONES BEING. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object, ie., David's companions; "and also to those who were with him / to his companions."

σὺν + dat. "-" - WITH [HIM]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

v27

Mark now records the first of two sayings which address the issue of Sabbath observance. This first saying presents as an integral part of what is a typical conflict story. Yet, it is not found in either Matthew or Luke's account of this story. Matthew has "I tell you that there is something here greater than the temple. Don't you know what the Scriptures mean when they say, 'instead of offering sacrifice to me, I want you to be merciful to others'? If you knew what this means, you would not condemn these innocent disciples of mine", Matt.12:6-7. Mark's quoted saying takes a similar line, it encapsulates Jesus' humanitarian interpretation of the Sabbath commandment. Given the scribal traditions surrounding Sabbath law, Jesus' words are indeed radical. It is clear that the Pharisees are unable to accept Jesus' interpretation and consequently view him as a law-breaker and therefore devoid of the one qualification that, in their view, may have indicated that he is the messiah. By setting aside scribal tradition and reinterpreting divine law, Jesus reveals himself as the messiah, the one who brings to fruition God's long awaited Sabbath rest.

αὐτοῖς dat. pro. **"to them"** - [AND HE SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

διὰ + acc. **"for"** - [THE SABBATH WAS CREATED, ESTABLISHED, CAME ABOUT] BECAUSE OF / ON ACCOUNT OF. Causal, although here leaning toward benefit, "for the sake of" = "for the benefit of." The second use, **διὰ το σαββατον**, "because of / for the Sabbath", is causal without any idea of benefit for.

τον ανθρωπον acc. **"man"** - MAN [AND NOT MAN ON ACCOUNT OF THE SABBATH]. Manson suggests that "Son of Man", rather than just "man", properly represents the Aramaic. The idea is that the Sabbath was given for Israel alone, and now it is given to Jesus and his disciples - an interesting idea, but not widely accepted. "Man" as "humanity", Cranfield.

v28

This second saying does not present as an integral element of the conflict story about reaping on the Sabbath, although all synoptic gospels record it as the punch-line for this episode. This independent saying probably attached during oral transmission (possibly by Mark) in order to provide a theological perspective on Jesus' right to interpret the Law in the way he has done. "The conclusion to be drawn from this (ie. Jesus' radical interpretation of Sabbath law) is that the Son of man exercises his lordship even over the Sabbath", Cassirer.

Points made by some of the leading commentators are worth considering:

- Taylor, "He who is man's Lord and Representative has authority to determine its laws and use";
- Gundry, "Mark does not want the pericope to end on a humanitarian note, but with an emphasis on Jesus' authority";
- Boring, "the authority by which he [Jesus] authorises his disciples to violate the norms of tradition and Scripture is the climactic self-declaration" of "the unique authority of Jesus";
- Edwards, "By what authority does Jesus contravene Sabbath convention and presume to redefine it? ... True lordship over the Sabbath is invested in the Son of Man";
- Marcus, "The Son of Man is its [the Sabbath] sovereign."

ὥστε + ind. "so" - The function of **ὥστε** + ind. here is open to some debate.

It is usually consecutive, expressing result, but how is the authority of the Son of Man over the Sabbath a result of the Sabbath being made for man. On rare occasions this construction expresses purpose, "in order that", or likeness, "likewise", but this seems unlikely here. Many who stress a consecutive sense suggest that "son of man" takes its Aramaic sense here, "man / humanity; "the Sabbath was made for man, so as a result man is Lord of the Sabbath." It is very unlikely that Mark intends such an interpretation. Both Luke and Matthew do not include v27, and so do not need to make a link with v28. They may well have noted the confusion caused by the saying in v27 and set it aside from the tradition to enable a proper focus on Jesus.

It seems best to treat this linking conjunction as inferential (even though most of Mark's uses of the conjunction are consecutive), drawing a general logical conclusion to validate an argument. Jesus goes to the heart of Sabbath Law, teaching that it is designed for the enrichment of humanity, for the good of all. Jesus' right to draw out such an interpretation, in defiance of burdensome scribal regulations, rests on his authority as messiah, the coming Son of Man, the one who will reign in glory. "The Sabbath was made to serve us; we weren't made to serve the Sabbath." *Jesus has the right to teach this interpretation of the Law because the Son of Man exercises his lordship, even over the Sabbath.* "He's in charge!" Peterson.

του ανθρωπου "of Man" - [THE SON] OF MAN. The genitive is adjectival, relational. For the title "Son of Man", see 2:10. Here not just "man" but most likely Daniel's coming "Son of Man" / messiah, the one who takes up authority and rule at the right hand of the Ancient of Days.

κυριος [ος] "Lord" - [IS] LORD. The capitalising of "lord" in the NIV implies the word is a divine title, but "ruler / master / owner" = "the one who exercises authority" is surely in Jesus' mind.

και "even" - AND = EVEN. Here ascensive; "even".

του σαββατου [ον] gen. "of the Sabbath" - OF THE SABBATH. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / of subordination; "over the Sabbath", Moffatt.

3:1

Jesus heals on the Sabbath, v1-6. In this second pronouncement / controversy / healing / miracle story concerning Sabbath observance, Jesus again identifies the failure of religious Israel to see the humanitarian purpose within divine law, and takes to himself the right to both proclaim and perform that purpose. For the Pharisees, Jesus' revisionism is the last straw - he is no messiah, just a Nazarene prone to blasphemy.

παλιν adv. "another time" - [AND HE ENTERED] AGAIN [INTO THE SYNAGOGUE]. Temporal adverb.

εχων [εξω] pres. part. "with" - [AND THERE WAS THERE A MAN] HAVING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "man", "a man was there who had a withered hand."

ξηραμμενην [ξηραινω] perf. pas. part. "a shrivelled [hand]" - HAVING BEEN WITHERED, DRIED UP. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "hand", "a hand which had been withered"; "disfigured", NLB. The perfect tense is used here to express a past event which has ongoing / permanent results. "A man with a crippled hand", Peterson.

την χειρα [χειρ ος] "hand" - THE HAND. With parts of the body the article indicates possession; "his hand was withered", TH.

v2

παρετηρουν [παρατηρεω] imperf. "some of them were looking" - THEY WERE WATCHING INTENTLY *to see* [IF ON THE SABBATHS HE WILL HEAL HIM]. Of studying someone intently; the prefix παρα serving to intensify "they were watching." The imperfect being durative expresses the continued action of watching. Not just "people were watching", impersonal, so Taylor, but obviously "the religious authorities." "The Jewish leaders were watching him (intently)", Junkins.

ινα + subj. "for a reason to [accuse Jesus]" - THAT = IN ORDER THAT [THEY MIGHT ACCUSE]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that they might accuse him", ie., "so as to get a charge against him", Moffatt.

αυτου gen. "Jesus" - HIM. Genitive of direct object after the κατα prefix verb "to accuse against."

ει "to see if" - The conjunction here serves to introduce an object clause / dependent statement of indirect question. Usually translated as a dependent statement of perception with the cognitive verb assumed, as NIV, although the

syntax implies an indirect question; "they wondered if / whether he would heal him on the Sabbath."

θεραπευσει [θεραπευω] fut. "he would heal" - We might expect a durative present tense here, but the future tense is sometimes used with an interrogative ει to express the question that would be in the mind of those who were watching, ie. "will he heal him?", cf. TH / Lagrange. If a person's life was in danger it was accepted that medical care could be administered, but if not, then care should be administered after the Sabbath. Jesus happily overrides such *insect law* (scribal legalism) with *camel law* (mercy). "They kept watching to see if Jesus would heal him on the Sabbath", CEV.

τοις σαββασιν [ον] dat. "on the Sabbath" - The dative is temporal; the plural is idiomatic.

v3

Jesus intentionally uses the handicapped man to make his point by bringing him into the front of the gathered congregation.

τω ανθρωπω [ος] dat. "to the man" - [HE SAYS] TO THE MAN. Dative of indirect object.

τω ... εχοντι [εξω] dat. pres. part. "with" - THE ONE HAVING [THE WITHERED HAND]. The articular participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "man", dative in agreement with "man"; "the man who had the withered hand" - "the man who had the deformed hand."

εγειρε εις το μεσον "stand up in front of everyone" - RISE INTO THE MIDDLE. Luke's εγειρε και στηθι εις το μεσον, "arise and stand into [in] the middle [of the gathering]", is somewhat more instructive than Mark's *short talk*. Of course, Luke may have misread Mark, eg., "rise and come forward", Moffatt (assuming Luke used Mark rather than existing oral tradition!!).

v4

Given that the law is designed for good (it is humanitarian), then the logic of Jesus question is that "to refuse to do good is to do evil; and it could not be right to do evil on the Sabbath", Plummer. The religious authorities remain silent because, given their legalist understanding of the law, they are unable to answer the question. The fact that their logic has forced them into a corner should prompt a reassessment of basic principles and a recognition that Jesus' humanitarian approach to law has something in it - that the Sabbath may have indeed been made for man. Their unwillingness to rethink their position rightly prompts Jesus' οργη, "anger".

αυτοις dat. pro. "them" - [AND HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ἐξεστιν pres. "**which is lawful**" - [IS] IT LAWFUL, RIGHT, PERMISSIBLE, ALLOWED. The subject of the verb "it is lawful" consists of the four substantive infinitives, "to do good / to do evil / to save / to destroy"; "to help or to hurt, to save life or to kill", Barclay. The presence of the particle ἢ, "or", indicates a question, as NIV.

τοῖς σαββάσιν [ον] dat. "**on the Sabbath**" - Dative of time.

ποιησαι [ποιεω] aor. inf. "**to do [good]**" - TO DO [GOOD OR TO DO EVIL, TO RESTORE LIFE OR DESTROY]. This infinitive, together with "to do evil", "to save [life]" and "to kill", stands as the subject of the verb "it is right / lawful."

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, here to a change in referent. Here obviously adversative.

ἔσιωπων [σιωπαω] imperf. "**they remained silent**" - THEY WERE SILENT. The imperfect, being durative, expresses ongoing action, as NIV. The article οἱ, "they", specifies the subject, namely, the authorities. "No one made a sound", Junkins.

v5

So, Jesus does good and heals the man. The Pharisees, on the other hand, do evil; they plan Jesus' assassination. They should have taken note of Jesus' question and observed the flaw in their logic.

περιβλεψαμενος [περιβλεπω] aor. part. "**he looked around**" - [AND] HAVING LOOKED AROUND AT [THEM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said", although it may be treated as adverbial, temporal, "then he looked around [upon]." A nice descriptive, such that we can imagine Jesus doing the sweeping stare.

μετ [μετα] "**with / in**" - WITH [ANGER]. Here, the prepositional phrase "with anger" is likely adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of Jesus' looking around, "angrily"; "wrathfully", TH. Further describing Jesus' reaction; the looking is not overly friendly! "His gaze swept around them and there was anger in his eyes", Barclay.

συλλυπουμενος [συλλυπεω] pres. pas. part. "**deeply distressed**" - BEING DISTRESSED, GRIEVED. The participle is adverbial, modal, also expressing the manner of Jesus' looking around, "he looked around with anger and grief"; "being grieved on account of the callousness of their minds", Cassirer. The presence of the prefix συν would imply "grieve with" = "sympathise", Cranfield, so Taylor, but "grieving along with" is not how the context has it, but rather συλλυπουμενος επι, "grieved at." The οργη, "anger", is not just anger, annoyance, but rather a grieving anger driven by a feeling of hurt at the inhumanity of the religious officials; a mixture of "anger and sorrow", REB. These human qualities describe

the nature of Jesus, not just his humanity, since the divine is not devoid of feelings.

επι + dat. "**at**" - UPON. Here causal; "on the basis of / because of" = "at [the blindness, insensitivity]."

της καρδιας [α] gen. "**hearts**" - [THE HARDNESS] OF THE HEART [OF THEM]. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "hearts"; "hard hearts" = "impervious minds", although usually classified as verbal, objective, the heart being the object of the hardening. "He sensed their inhumanity", Phillips; "their obstinacy", Moffatt.

τω ανθρωπω [ος] dat. "**to the man**" - [HE SAYS] TO THE MAN [STRETCH OUT THE HAND, AND HE STRETCHED OUT]. Dative of indirect object.

απεκατεσταθη [αποκαθιστημι] aor. pas. "**was completely restored**" - [AND THE HAND OF HIM] WAS RESTORED, RETURNED TO ITS ORIGINAL SOUNDNESS. The aorist expressing completed action, as NIV.

v6

εξελθοντες [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "**then [the Pharisees] went out**" - [AND] GOING OUT. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "giving [counsel against] / held [council]", or possibly adverbial, temporal, as NIV; "**after** they went out". The implied subject is obviously "the Pharisees" and their "going out" refers to their going out of the synagogue. "Upon this, [the Pharisees ...] made their exit", Cassirer.

ευθως "-" - [THE PHARISEES] IMMEDIATELY. Temporal adverb. "Immediately" indicates that the Pharisees started plotting Jesus' murder on the Sabbath, which *work* is unlawful, cf., v4. Note that Herod's party was a political grouping, not religious, but it would be necessary for the Pharisees to get them on side if they were to make a move against Jesus. There is only limited evidence available for the existence of this political grouping and it is interesting that Mark would mention them, given that they would be less than a distant memory with the passing of Herod. See Guelich for a discussion on this issue. "At once joined the Herodians", Moffatt.

συμβουλιον εδιδουν "**and began to plot**" - CAUSED A CONSULTATION, HELD COUNSEL, PLANED. In general terms "they took counsel / plotted", ie., they are functioning as "assassins", Gundry. The imperfect is possibly inceptive, as NIV; "they **started** making plans", CEV.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - WITH [THE HERODIANS]. Expressing association.

κατα + gen. "-" - AGAINST [HIM]. Here expressing opposition; "against".

οπως + subj. "**how [they might kill Jesus]**" - *as to* HOW [THEY MIGHT DESTROY HIM]. Here the conjunction serves to introduce an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech after the verb "giving [counsel against]",

while at the same time expressing in what manner the Pharisees might be able to bring about Jesus' death; "how" Since this construction can replace $\text{iv}\alpha + \text{subj.}$ it is possible that a purpose clause is intended, such that the Pharisees consulted with the Herodians, a political group they would have little respect for, "in order to kill Jesus." This is the first mention of Jesus' opponents wanting to kill him. Literally "destroy", so "kill", but better, "assassinate".

3:7-19

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

4. The true Israel defined 3:7-35

i] The new Israel of God

Synopsis

Opposition from Israel's religious officials now forces Jesus to move from the local synagogue to the countryside where he continues to preach and heal. Great crowds gather to Jesus from all over Palestine, and Mark records the use of a boat as a makeshift pulpit to deal with the increasing number of onlookers. Just by touching Jesus, the sick are healed and the possessed exorcised. The demons, probably in an attempt to gain mastery over Jesus, declare their knowledge of him, but Jesus simply silences them and sends them packing. Seeking solitude from the hubbub, Jesus withdraws to the desolate hill-country, and there he appoints the twelve that they might be with him and assist in preaching the gospel.

Teaching

Jesus the messiah, the Son of God, exercises his authority through his disciples.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8. In the first major section of Mark's gospel, 1:1-5:43, Jesus is initially revealed as the messianic saviour, preaching, healing and exorcising with great power. We then moved into controversy, 2:1-3:6, but now we are again confronted by the messianic saviour, healing and exorcising, although now seemingly hiding his identity while gathering a new Israel based on his own personal authority, an authority which is mediated by his apostles, those called to be "with him."

ii] Structure: *The New Israel of God:*

The Galilean ministry summarised, v7-12;

The appointment of the twelve, v13-19.

The commission, v13-15;

The twelve, v16-19.

iii] Interpretation:

The opening verses serve to refocus the reader on Jesus the messiah after the series of conflict stories, 2:1-3:6. Crowds press in on Jesus, "human sufferers fall upon him in their agitation to touch him, and the unclean spirits fall before him blaring out his divine (messianic??) identity. The quick and dramatic succession of these two falling groups contributes

to the sense of Jesus' awesome sovereignty and power in the midst of a chaotic situation", Marcus.

We then move to see how the Christian community, those who have decided to accept the call to follow Jesus, will experience Jesus' authority. The authority of Jesus will be mediated to the Christian community in the creation of the twelve, cf., Boring, p99. These leaders, representing the twelve tribes of the new Israel, are called to be "with" Jesus, and authorised as Jesus' representatives in both word and sign. For us, this ministry is realised in the gospels and contextualised in Paul's epistles.

The apostolic commission, v14-15: The task of an apostle is to proclaim the coming kingdom in both word and sign. Given that an instruction to a particular group of people at a particular moment in time is not necessarily an instruction for all people at all times, Jesus' instructions to the apostles do not necessarily apply to individual believers today.

Although the instructions do not apply to the individual, they do apply to the apostolic community as a whole, namely, the church. We are commissioned, as a people of God, to proclaim the coming kingdom in words and signs, words and signs contextualised for a Gentile world (a process evidenced in Acts, eg., Paul's Areopagus sermon). So, we communicate the promise of eternal life rather than a coming kingdom, and build a community of love rather than cast out demons, for "by this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Rather than employ Jesus' two-by-two method of communication, a medium suited to first century Judaism, we employ mediums suited to the twenty-first century: social (Twitter, Face Book), electronic media, print, organisational (eg., The Bible Society), By this means we fulfil Christ's commission.

iv] Synoptics:

i] A summary of the Galilean ministry, 3:7-12: Matt.4:24-25, Lk.6:17-19. Both Matthew and Luke condense Mark's account. In this episode / pericope, Mark draws together snippets of tradition in order to provide a overall summary of Jesus' public ministry.

The appointment of the twelve, 3:13-19: Matt.5:1, 10:1, Lk.6:14-16, Acts 1:13. Mark's account aligns more with Luke than Matthew, although Matthew, like Mark, sees the selection of "the twelve" in the terms of a delegation of authority.

v] Homiletics: *He sent them out to preach*

Today we read of Jesus selecting a team of associates to go on mission with him and preach the gospel. Now we know, that not only did they do that, but after Jesus' death and resurrection, they continued to do it. So, how well do you think they did it?

Have you ever wondered why the first three gospels are so similar? If you have, you're not the only one. Bible scholars have pawed over these three gospels trying to work out the link. The most popular theory for a time, was that Matthew wrote his gospel and then Mark wrote his using Matthew as his main source, and then Luke wrote his gospel using Matthew and Mark, along with some extra material he was able to dig up himself. Today, the most popular theory is that Mark wrote his gospel first, using his own knowledge of the gospel story. Then Luke wrote his gospel using Mark, and a source document called Q, along with the results of his own research. And finally, Matthew wrote his gospel using Q, Mark, and Luke.

In recent times, Bible scholars have come up with the theory that at the time when the first three gospels were written, all the stories and teachings of Jesus were firmly set in an Aramaic oral tradition. Only a small number of people at this time were able to read and write, and so information was passed on by story-tellers, teachers who had learnt the information off by heart and were able to teach others by rote so that they could pass it on. Bible scholars tell us that Jesus sayings, his teachings, were originally in the form of Aramaic poetry, they were metered so they could be easily remembered. As for the stories, they took on a particular shape that was easily remembered, often finishing with a punch-line

Of course, guess where all these stories and teachings of Jesus came from. Yes, the apostles, the team that Jesus commissioned to be with him, to minister full-time with him, to learn from him and then to go out and communicate what they had learned. The apostles are our founding story-tellers. So, the apostles, as our founding story-tellers, learnt Jesus' teachings, shaped the stories in the telling of them, and those stories and teachings soon became a set tradition in the ever-expanding Christian church.

Of course, as the church expanded and the apostles started to die off, the need arose to document the Jesus story for posterity. This is where our gospel writers come in. The church was increasingly Gentile, rather than Jewish, and the language of the market place was Greek, so our gospel writers translated the Jesus story from Aramaic to Greek. Their care in reproducing the tradition is evident in the similarity of the first three

gospels. There are slight differences, just like the differences evident when different people tell a story, but the similarities are startling.

So, what do you think; did the apostles do what Jesus commissioned them to do? Where they successful? Their gift to us enables us to be with Jesus, as they were with Jesus, to know him and to be one with him, as they knew him and were one with him.

Text - 3:7

The new Israel of God, v7-19: i] The messianic signs, v7-12. Mark sets the scene for us, v7-8. Jesus may be having trouble with Israel's religious authorities and increasingly finds himself unwelcome in the local synagogues, but the populous at large happily flocks to see him in the countryside. Mark tells us that people from all over Palestine come to see Jesus at work.

As France notes, this contained unit could be inserted at any point in the Galilean narrative, but it is placed here to provide a context for the selection of the twelve in distinction from the crowd of enthusiastic fair-weather disciples. It is clear that Jesus' ministry is word-focused / gospel-focused, but it is interesting that Mark, at this point, mentions only the healings and exorcisms / the signs. It is possible that Mark is making a point, namely that this "great multitude" is attracted by what Jesus is "doing", not what he is saying. Jesus' ministry may be word-focused, but those who "followed him" are deed-focused. This explains Jesus' desire to implement the messianic secret, particularly evident in his silencing of the demons. The mystery of the coming kingdom is for those with eyes to see, namely, the seekers after truth (the twelve), and only they will know the truth and receive the authority to make it known.

ανεχωρησεν [αναχωρευω] aor. "[Jesus] withdrew" - [AND JESUS] WENT BACK, DEPARTED, RETIRED. The word can be used of flight, of taking refuge, so MM; "a tactical withdrawal", France.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - WITH [HIS DISCIPLES]. Expressing accompaniment.

προς + acc. "**to**" - TOWARD [THE SEA, LAKE GALILEE] Spatial, expressing movement toward.

απο + gen. "**from [Galilee]**" - [AND A GREAT MULTITUDE] FROM [GALILEE]. Expressing source / origin.

ηκολουθησεν [ακολουθεω] aor. "**followed**" - FOLLOWED *him* [AND = ALSO FROM JUDEA]. Variant reading, probably original, expressing the idea that fair-weather disciples followed Jesus from Galilee to the lake and that other people who had heard of what he was doing were also drawn from all points of the compass to join with them. "Crowds of people from Galilee followed him. The crowds flocked to him also from", Barclay.

v8

ακουοντες [ακουω] pres. part. **"When they heard"** - [AND FROM JERUSALEM AND FROM IDUMEA AND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE JORDAN AND AROUND TYRE AND SIDON, A GREAT CROWD FOLLOWED HIM.] HEARING. The participle is adverbial, best taken as temporal, as NIV, but with a causal touch; "all these crowds came because they heard what Jesus was doing", CEV.

ὅσα pro. **"all"** - HOW GREAT, HOW MUCH (neut. pl.) = EVERYTHING THAT [HE WAS DOING].

ηλθον [ερχομαι] aor. **"came"** - THEY CAME [TOWARD HIM]. The πληθος πολυ, "great crowd", although singular, implies a plural and this has influenced the plural form of ερχομαι, "to come."

Ιδουμαιας [α] gen. **"Idumea"** - South of Jerusalem, Edom, the Negev. The region was settled by the Edomites. They were later forced by the Maccabees to convert to Judaism. They were not regarded as true Jews and for this reason Herod, who was an Idumaeen, was viewed with some suspicion by racially pure Jews.

περαν του Ιορδανου + gen. **"across the Jordan"** - Perea, not the more Gentile Decapolis.

περι Τυρον και Σιδωνα + acc. **"around Tyre and Sidon"** - "The neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon", TH. Referring to the Jewish settlements north of Galilee.

v9

On this occasion, the push of the crowd is so great that the disciples commandeer a boat for a pulpit. In a rather pointed comment, Mark notes the reason for Jesus' popularity; it has little to do with the message he preaches, but the miracles he performs. The people press in to touch him so that they might be healed.

δια + acc. **"because of"** - [AND] BECAUSE OF [THE CROWD. Causal, introducing a causal clause.

τοις μαθηταις [ης ου] dat. **"his disciples"** - [HE SAID] TO THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object.

ινα **"to"** - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus said to the disciples.

πλοιαριον [ον] **"a small boat"** - A BOAT. Nominative subject of the verb "to be ready." Diminutive form of "boat", so "small boat", although often diminutive forms lose their power over time, so possibly just "a boat", DDG.

αυτω dat. pro. **"for him"** - [SHOULD REMAIN AT HAND, STAND READY] FOR HIM. Dative of interest, advantage.

ἵνα μη "-" - LEST [THEY CRUSH, COMPRESS HIM]. Introducing a negated purpose clause, "in order that they not crush him" = "to keep the people from crowding him", ESV. The verb takes a plural subject, "they", even though "they" = "crowd" is singular. Idiomatic form.

v10

γὰρ "for" - BECAUSE [HE HEALED MANY]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why a boat is needed for a pulpit, because, given the miracles Jesus was performing, people were crushing in to touch him.

ὥστε + inf. "so that" - SO THAT = THE RESULT WAS THAT *they* [TO FALL UPON = FELL UPON HIM]. This construction is consecutive here, expressing result. The accusative subject of the infinitive is assumed, with the infinitive, ἐπιπιπτειν, taking a dative of direct object αὐτῷ, "him". The picture is of a crowd pushing forward and falling over Jesus in an attempt to get close to him and touch him.

ἵνα + subj. "to" - THAT = IN ORDER THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose. The crowd hold a rather magical view of Jesus' capacity to heal. We are not told whether they were all healed, although Mark does give us examples of this type of healing successfully working, 5:25-34, 6:56, cf., 2Ki.13:21, Acts.5:15-16, 19:11-12. Such behaviour does serve to differentiate the crowd of fair-weather disciples from the apostles.

ὅσοι pro. "those [with diseases]" - AS MANY AS [HAD WHIP = SICKNESS, ILLNESS, AFFLICTIONS, MIGHT TOUCH HIM]. Serving as a substantive, subject of the verb "to have." "Those suffering from bodily afflictions of any kind pressed about him in their eagerness to touch him", Cassirer.

v11

The crowd sees Jesus as a miracle worker, but when he confronts people who are demon possessed, the demons know very well who they are dealing with - "the Son of God." The demons state who Jesus is in an attempt to get the better of him, a kind of "we know who you are and we have your measure." Of course, they don't, and so Jesus tells them to shut up. Jesus obviously casts them out, although Mark doesn't tell us one way or the other. It's interesting how Jesus often keeps his identify secret; it's as if he wants only those who seek after the truth to find the truth - miracle-seeking crowds will never find the truth.

ὅταν + ind. "whenever" - WHENEVER. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, even though followed by an indicative rather than the usual subjunctive; the imperfect tense, being durative, suggests an indefinite time frame. The temporal clause is somewhat conditional, expressing a general supposition; "whenever, *as the case may be, then*"

τα πνευματα τα ακαθαρτα **"the impure spirits"** - THE UNCLEAN SPIRITS [SAW HIM]. Nominative subject of the verb "to fall down before." Referring to demon possessed persons.

αυτω dat. pro. **"him"** - [THEY WERE FALLING DOWN BEFORE] HIM. Dative of direct object after the προς prefix verb "to fall down before (at the feet of)." The doing of obeisance expresses subservience to a greater one.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - [AND THEY WERE CRYING OUT, SHRIEKING, SCREAMING] SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, or adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their calling out, redundant, so just "cried out." The reference may be to one or more demon-possessed persons, but either way, a single person may be possessed by many unclean spirits who together screamed.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of direct speech expressing what they say.

του θεου [ος] **"of God"** - [YOU ARE THE SON] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, relational. The term "Son of God" is probably being used in its messianic sense rather than a filial sense, although for Mark, the title expresses high Christology and soon becomes the authentic confession of believers. The demons recognise the presence of a superior and by declaring their knowledge of Jesus they either defer to him or try to gain mastery over him; a kind of "we know who you are" - they think they have his measure. The trouble is, Jesus has their measure and so shuts them up, v12. The Father declares Jesus as such, 1:11, the disciples finally get onto it, 9:7, the truth is out at Jesus' trial, 14:61-62, and even a soldier works it out, 15:39, but long before this, the demons were well onto it.

v12

As already noted, there is no mention of an exorcism here, just an action to end the demons' shouting, but why does Jesus silence the demons when they reveal who he is? A demonic revelation is certainly inappropriate, and as noted above, their words are likely to be mischievous and so are properly silenced. Of course, Jesus tells many people not to reveal who he is, even his disciples, 8:30. The purpose of Jesus' action, commonly called *the messianic secret*, is not overly clear. Jesus may want to restrain popular acclaim - it would not be helpful for gospel ministry to have the populous stirred up with messianic expectations which inevitably lead to a rebellion against Rome. Yet, one suspects that the main reason is that the kingdom is for seekers, those with eyes to see; only the seeker after truth deserves to know the truth - the rest are left with amazement and wonder.

επειμα [επιτιμω] imperf. + dat. **"he gave [them strict] orders"** - [AND] HE [GREATLY] REBUKED. This verb is used of Jesus' exorcisms, 1:25, 5:9. France argues it reflects the Hebrew *gaar*, a "subjugating word", a word that brings the

demons under control; "and he charged them strictly not to make him known", Berkeley. Note that the adjective **πολλα**, "many", is used as an adverb, so "greatly, sternly strongly, strictly ordered them. "

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - THEM. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to rebuke."

ινα μη + subj. "**not to**" - LEST [THEY SHOULD MAKE HIM]. Possibly introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception, although **ινα** + the subjunctive is more likely introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech here, expressing what the demons should not do; "he gave them strict orders that they not make him known." In 1:25 Jesus simply told them **φιμωθητι**, "be muzzled", or simply, "shut up."

φανερων adj. "**about [him]**" - MANIFEST, EVIDENT, CLEAR, PLAIN. Accusative complement of the direct object "him", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object. "lest they should make him known" = "reveal the identity of", TH.

v13

ii] The twelve are chosen, v13-19. Jesus withdraws to the highlands and selects from those who follow him twelve special disciples, later known as apostles, sent-ones, v13-15. These twelve are to join with Jesus in full-time ministry. They will be with Jesus and learn from him and will have the authority to proclaim the gospel both in words and signs. The most outstanding sign of the gospel for Jews living in the first century, is the exercise of authority over dark powers.

το ορος [ους] "[**on**] a mountainside" - [AND HE GOES UP TO, INTO] THE HILL, MOUNTAIN, HIGH COUNTRY. "Selected", Stein, is unlikely, although "whom he wills" indicates choice is operative. Given Jesus' authoritative action of choosing the twelve, the new Israel, "mountain" is obviously intended as an allusion to Moses and Mount Sinai. This may be why the article **το** is often used with the word, i.e., it is particularising; a particular mountain is in mind. None-the-less, a simple retreat up into the hill country to get away from the crowds may be all that is in mind.

προσκαλειται [προσκαλω] pres. mid. "**called to him**" - [AND] CALLED, SUMMONED, INVITED. Often taken as an authoritative "call" or "summons", but "invited" should not be dismissed.

ους ηθελεν [θελω] imperf. "**those [he] wanted**" - THOSE [HE] WANTED [AND THEY CAME TOWARD HIM]. The relative clause serves as a nominal phrase, object of the verb "called / invited." The verb indicates purpose / will, rather than desire, BAGD. The use of **αυτος**, "he", is emphatic by position and use, "he himself"; possibly "those whom he personally wanted."

v14

The Gk. sentence covers v14-15. The main verb **εποιησεν**, "to do / appoint", is modified by two adverbial clauses introduced by **ἵνα**, both expressing purpose; the first, "in order that they might be with him (the twelve being the subject), and the second, "in order that he might send them", (Jesus being the subject). The second purpose clause is modified by two subordinate constructions, both formed by adverbial infinitives expressing purpose, **αποστελλῆ**, "in order to preach", and **εχειν**, "in order to have [authority]", the second being itself modified by an epexegetic infinitive specifying the nature of the "authority", namely, **εκβαλλειν**, "to cast out [demons]."

εποιησεν [ποιεω] aor. "**he appointed**" - [AND] HE MADE. "Made" in the sense of the LXX "appoint", cf., 1Sam.12:6, 1Kgs.13:33. The way Mark describes it, Jesus "calls / invites", from the crowd, people to follow as disciples, and from this group selects / appoints / commissions twelve for more intimate association / more intensive training for the task of a special mission.

δωδεκα adj. "**twelve**" - TWELVE. "A number symbolising the longed-for fulfilment of Israel's destiny in the end time", Marcus. By this time Jews could only trace their lineage to two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. Lineage to the other ten tribes was long lost. For Mark, it is not "the twelve apostles", but just "the twelve" who are *apostolos*, "sent ones." Their selection is not hierarchical, but functional.

ὄυς και αποστολους νομομασεν "-" - WHOM HE ALSO NAMED APOSTLES. Strongly attested variant reading, although possibly transposed from Luke. The noun **αποστολους**, "apostles", serves as the accusative complement to the direct object **ὧσιν**, "whom", standing in a double accusative construction. "And he appointed twelve whom he also named apostles."

ἵνα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [THEY MIGHT BE]. Introducing a purpose clause stating the first purpose of the appointment of the twelve.

μετ [μετα] + gen. "**with**" - WITH [HIM]. Expressing association; the first purpose is that "the twelve" might be permanent associates of Jesus in that they set aside their normal living, their trade or whatever, and join with Jesus in his itinerant ministry. Presumably the wider group of disciples are more part-time followers, still earning a living and joining with Jesus when they can. There are numerous references in the gospels of the disciples being "with" Jesus such that being a Christian involves being in community with Christ, "being with him." Note the Pauline extension of being "in Christ" and Christ "in us."

ἵνα + subj. "**that**" - [AND] THAT [HE MIGHT SEND THEM]. Introducing a purpose clause stating the second purpose of the the appointment of the twelve; "in order that." Mission entails going out into the world, and for Luke / Acts, to

the end of the world, or more rightly, the centre of the world, namely, Rome / the secular city (the whore of Babylon???)

κηρυσσειν [κηρυσσω] pres. inf. "**to preach**" - TO PREACH. The first purpose of the mission is "to preach *the gospel concerning the coming kingdom.*" The prime task of the twelve is to preach the message, which task was the centre of both the Baptist's and Jesus' ministry, 1:4, 7, 14, 38-39.

v15

εχειν [εχω] pres. inf. "**to have**" - [AND] TO HAVE. Following on from v14, the infinitive is adverbial, final, stating the second purpose of the disciples' mission, of their being sent out; "[so that he might send them in order to preach] and in order to have authority."

εξουσιαν [α] "**authority**" - AUTHORITY, POWER. The authority / power is derived from Jesus and is obviously not independent of his authority. It is usually understood that the authority covers both word and sign, although the Gk. text links it with exorcisms, and Mark has already associated the two, cf., 1:21-28, 6:7. In fact, the sentence is somewhat messy; a person is not sent to have authority but to act, in this case, to cast out demons, which act they have the power / authority to perform.

εκβαλλειν [εκβαλλω] pres. inf. "**to drive out**" - TO CAST OUT [THE DEMONS]. Epexegetic infinitive explaining / specifying the "authority". It is interesting that Mark does not mention healing, but still, the most notable sign of the coming kingdom is exorcism - the overthrow of the strong man's house. Later texts sought to repair this oversight!!!, **εχειν εξουσιαν θεαπευειν τας νοσους και εκβαλλειν τα δαιμονια**, "to have authority to heal the sick and to cast out demons."

v16

The list of the twelve, v16-19. The twelve, in a sense, represent the twelve tribes of Israel - the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the ten lost tribes. They are the founding members of the New Israel, the new people of God. Peter, the *rock-man* according to Jesus, and his brother Andrew; James and John, the sons of thunder (for their bad temper??). Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew (possibly the same person as Levi, although Mark does not suggest this); James the son of Alphaeus (possibly the brother of Levi the son of Alphaeus, 2:14) and Thaddeus (Judas, son of James, Lk.6:16); Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot the man of Kerioth.

τους δωδεκα adj. "**these are the twelve**" - [AND HE APPOINTED] THE TWELVE. The adjective serves as a substantive, accusative direct object of the verb "to appoint." The verb here takes the sense "appoint" rather than "do". A variant reading, most likely dropped for syntactical reasons, given the variant in

v14, and so it is most likely original. Manson takes the conjunction **και** as inferential, "so"; "And so he appointed the twelve", Cassirer.

τω Σιμωνι [ων ωνος] dat. "**Simon**" - [AND] TO SIMON. Dative of indirect object.

επεθηκεν [επιτιθημι] aor. "**he gave [the name]**" - HE PLACED UPON = HE ADDED [NAME]. The phrase **επεθηκεν ονομα**, "added a name", often takes the sense "give a surname", BAGD.

πετρον [ος] "**Peter**" - PETER. "Peter" serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "name", standing in a double accusative construction. It is likely that even by the time Mark is writing his gospel, the transliterated "Peter" would be used for Simon, rather than the literal sense "Rock", "Rock-man".

v17

Ιακωβον [ος] "**James**" - JAMES. Accusative in apposition to the accusative **τους δωδεκα**, "the twelve." So also the rest of the listed apostles. Note how the inner circle is listed first: Peter, James, John and Andrew.

τον "son" - THE *son* [OF ZEBADÉE]. "Son", **υιον**, is assumed. The genitive **του Ζεβεδαιου** is adjectival, relational.

Ιακωβου [ος] gen. "**his [brother]**" - [AND JOHN THE BROTHER] OF JAMES. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

Βοανηργες "Boanerges" - [HE GAVE NAME] BOANEGES. Accusative complement of the direct object "name", standing in a double accusative construction.

βροντης [η] gen. "**[sons] of thunder**" - [WHICH IS = MEANS, SONS] OF THUNDER. The genitive is adjectival, technically relational, although "sons of" is used here as an idiomatic descriptive; "Jesus called them Boanerges, which means thunderbolt", CEV. The nickname given to James and John probably describes their quick temper.

v18

τον "son [of Alphaeus]" - [AND ANDREW AND PHILIP AND BARTHOLOMEW AND MATTHEW AND THOMAS AND JAMES] THE *one* = *son* [OF ALPHAEUS]. The genitive is adjectival, relational. "Son" is assumed.

Καναανιον [ος] "**[Simon] the Zealot**" - [AND SIMON] THE CANANEAN. Standing in apposition to "Simon". Rather than the geographical Canaan, so "Canaanite", or even the village Cana, the word is drawn from the Aramaic, *qan'an*, meaning "zealot, enthusiast."

v19

Ισκαριωθ "[**Judas**] **Iscariot**" - [JUDAS] ISCARIOT. Standing in apposition to "Judas". Davies and Allison suggest three possible meanings: a) "man of Qerioth", a town near Hebron; b) taken from the Aramaic meaning "false one"; c) from the Greek **σικαριος**, "dagger-man, assassin" = "revolutionary / insurgent / terrorist (or from the Jewish perspective "freedom-fighter" - one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist [as we well know today!!!]). Commentators are divided, eg., Marcus opts for "Judas the revolutionary."

και "-" - [WHO] ALSO. Possibly adjunctive, "also", but more likely emphatic; "and Judas Iscariot, and he the one who betrayed him."

παρεδωκεν [**παραδιδομι**] aor. "**betrayed**" - DELIVERED OVER [HIM]. The verb actually means "to hand over", rather than "betrayed". As Decker notes, the word for betrayal is **προδιδομι**, and only Luke opts to describe Judas as a traitor.

3:20-35

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

4. True Israel defined, 3:7-35

ii] Satan defeated

Synopsis

"Mark begins by telling us of the anxiety of Jesus' kith and kin about him, goes on to describe the charge of 'black magic' which some Jerusalem scribes brought against him, and after relating the controversy, records Christ's words about his 'real brethren'", Hunter.

Teaching

In the face of the dawning kingdom, there are those who come to Jesus for blessing, who become family, brothers and sisters, but there are also those who seek to *bind* this one who does the *binding*, and so fail to find in him the forgiveness he freely offers.

Issues

i] Context: See Mark 3:7-19. The passage before us falls within the opening section of the gospel of Mark, paralleling the commencement of Jesus' ministry with the commencement of Israel's journey from Egypt to the promised land. In the sub-section 3:7-35, Mark defines the true Israel, and it is within this theme that our passage sits.

ii] Structure: *The character of Jesus' true family:*

Jesus' popularity with the common folk, v20;

Jesus' family think he is deranged, v21;

The religious authorities view Jesus as an agent of Satan, v22;

Sayings on Jesus authority over Satan, v23-30:

#1. "How can Satan cast out Satan", v23;

#2. A house divided cannot stand, v24-26;

#3. A strong man must be bound to plunder his house, v27;

#4. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, v28-30.

Jesus' true family, v31-35.

Marcus suggests the following chiasmic structure:

Jesus' relatives, v20-21

The charge of demonic agency, v23-26

The parable of the Strong Man, v27

Charge of demonic agency, v28-30

Jesus' relatives, v31-35.

iii] Interpretation:

It is now widely accepted that Mark often arranges the received tradition in blocks of three, A₁, B, A₂. All three episodes have their own point, but together shape a new point. In the Markan sandwich before us, the A₁ episode record Jesus in a crowded house, with "his own people" wanting to take charge of him, and then in the A₂ episode, Jesus is again in a house surrounded by a crowd, with his family attempting to "call him out." Whereas in the A episodes there are those who would *bind* Jesus, in the B episode we learn that Jesus is the one who does the binding; "he is the binder of the strong man who is himself unbounded", Edwards. See J.R. Edwards, *Markan Sandwiches*. Compare 2:1-12, 5:21-43, 6:14-29, 11:12-25, 14:54-72.

The problem with Mark's use of framed stories is that they are not always logical. In Luke's record of the tradition concerning Jesus and Beelzebub, the B element in Mark, the comment of the religious authorities is prompted by Jesus having just cast out a mute demon, Lk.11:14-15. Their comment in Mark 3:22 is discordant with "he is out of his mind", v21. None-the-less, this observation, of itself, indicates that Mark is intent on revealing a particular truth, despite narrative logic.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.9:32-34, 12:22-32, 46-50; Lk.11:14-23, 17-23, 12:10, 8:19-21. Composed from a number of traditional elements, Mark's narrative logic is evident when his account is compared with Matthew and Luke's treatment of these elements. Note also how Mark still evidences the vivid nature of an eye witness account. Matthean priority is indicated by the treatment of this traditional material, but not proven.

v] Homiletics: *Family matters*

"She 'aint heavy mister, she's my sister."

We all know well the bond of family, friends, work, team and even that of national identity. These circles give us meaning and direction. We know how it is when those circles begin to break down due to age, distance, or disagreement. Yes indeed, we know the meaning of family.

Yet, Jesus reminds us of an authentic relationship which ultimately transcends all human association. It is a relationship with him and with those who relate to him. In the end, the relationships we possess as members of Jesus' family pales all other associations.

To share in Jesus' family, to share in his new community, requires an act of obedience to God. There are two parts to this obedience: First, a

recognition that we are flawed and lost to God. And second, a willing dependence on Jesus, the one who binds the powers of darkness and sets us eternally free.

We can ignore Jesus, see him as deluded, or even corrupted. To reject his offer of friendship, and continue to do so, is what it means to "blaspheme against the Holy Spirit". Such is the unforgivable sin. Yet, when we put our trust in Jesus we enter his circle of friends, and that circle will be ours for eternity.

So, there we have it, Jesus, the one who binds the powers of darkness, gathers us as family in the safety of his care. Let us always rest in him.

Text - 3:20

The family and its critics, v20-35: i] Mark records the initial enthusiastic response to Jesus' ministry, a response which is overwhelming Jesus and his disciples and which prompts a negative reaction from Jesus' family and Israel's religious officials, v20.

εις + acc. "" - [AND HE ENTERS, GOES] INTO [A HOUSE]. Expressing direction toward and arrival at. The pericope is introduced with a historic / narrative present.

παλιν adv. "**again**" - [AND THE CROWD COMES TOGETHER] AGAIN. Indicating the continued enthusiasm of the crowd in response to Jesus' ministry, cf.3:7. Possibly again in the same locality (Capernaum?) at the same house (Peter's house?), so Gundry.

ὥστε + inf. "**so that**" - SO THAT [THEY WERE NOT ABLE]. Introducing a consecutive clause expressing result; "with the result that."

φαγειν [φαγω] aor. inf. "**to eat**" - TO EAT [BREAD]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "they were [not] able"; the "they" is obviously "Jesus and his disciples", and serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive. The "to eat bread" is an Aramaic expression "for taking food of any sort", Cranfield. "Bread" here may be syntactically classified as a synecdoche where the reference to a part refers to the whole, so "food", or just as the NIV, "they were not able to eat" = "Jesus and his disciples were not even able to share a meal together." "it was impossible for them to even eat a meal", Barclay. Emphasising Jesus "attractive power", Gundry.

v21

ii] Jesus' popularity is causing some concern with "his own people", v21. Both Taylor and Cranfield note that the response of Jesus' family could never be invented; "Mark's frankness in impressive", Cranfield.

ακουσαντες [ακουω] aor. part. "**when [his family] heard about this**" - [AND] HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, as NIV.

οἱ παρ αὐτοῦ "his family" - THOSE FROM BESIDE HIM. Classical **οἱ παρ** + dat. = "those of someone's household", but in Koine Gk. it is, as here, + gen., but takes much the same meaning. The article **οἱ** serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "from beside him" into a substantive; "the ones from beside him" = "his family". This phrase may just refer to Jesus' family friends, or his relatives, or to his immediate family; "his mother and his brothers." We know that Jesus' kin did not at first believe in his messiahship. None-the-less, it seems likely that Mark is being deliberately vague so they could even be fair-weather disciples. Unlike "the ones around him sitting in a circle" who are happily bound to the messianic family, these "his own people" seek to bind the binder of the strong man. Not a good idea!

κρατησαι [κρατεω] aor. inf. "**to take charge**" - [WENT OUT] TO SEIZE HOLD OF [HIM]. The infinitive is adverbial, final, introducing a purpose clause; "they came out [from their home to the house Jesus was staying] in order to get hold of him / restrain him." Possibly "to calm down", although the verb is far too strong to give this meaning.

γαρ "for" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they wanted to take charge of him.

ελεγον [λεγω] imperf. "**they said**" - THEY WERE SAYING. Possibly an impersonal plural where this was said of Jesus, which rumour family members had heard about; "for men were saying", Moffatt, although probably just "a scholarly attempt to protect the family", Marcus.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech / stating, expressing what the family said.

εξεστη [εξιστημι] aor. "**he is out of his mind**" - HE HAS STOOD OUTSIDE = IS CONFUSED, LOST HIS SENSES. The aorist is best treated as dramatic, expressing a present state. "He must be in the grip of some kind of emotional frenzy", Junkins, or possibly with the more sinister connotation, "he has a demon and is insane", cf., John 10:20. This would better fit with the comment of the religious authorities, v22.

v22

iii] The religious authorities investigate the situation and make their judgment in the strongest terms; "He is possessed", v22.

οἱ γραμματεῖς [εὗς εὗς] "**the teachers of the law**" - [AND] THE SCRIBES. The word was originally used of those who simply copied the scriptures, a kind of human printing press, but by this time, they were regarded as authorised interpreters, teaches of the scriptures, so "experts in the law", Barclay. That they came from Jerusalem, gives them even greater authority.

οἱ καταβαντες [καταβαινω] aor. part. "**who came down**" - THE ONES HAVING COME DOWN. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "scribes", "the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem", Moffatt. Coming down in height terms, but also coming down from the superior to *the great unwashed*.

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM [JERUSALEM]. Expressing source / origin.

ελεγον [λεγω] imperf. "**said**" - WERE SAYING. Possibly an inceptive imperfect, "began to say."

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech; "said that", and is followed up by a second example, "and *said* that"

Βεελζεβουλ "**Beelzebub**" - [HE HAS] BEELZEBUL. Aramaic: "lord of the house, temple / lord of the dung, flies, carrion" from the Syrian original "Lord Ekron", 2King.1:2. It would seem that "Beelzebub" and "the prince of demons", both refer to "Satan" (so Edwards), although possibly "the prince of demons" refers to a superior evil spirit. This may imply that Beelzebub also is a title for a superior demon-prince, particularly as there is no reference to Satan being called Beelzebub (so Gundry).

εν + dat. "**by**" - [AND THAT] BY. Instrumental, expressing means, is common for this preposition, agency, as here, less so, although it may be instrumental if "by the power of" is assumed.

των δαιμονιων [ον] gen. "**[the prince] of demons**" - [THE RULER] OF DEMON [HE CASTS OUT DEMONS]. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic, of subordination; "by the ruler over the demons."

v23

iv] In a series of sayings, Mark has Jesus answering the charge that he is acting under the power of Satan, v23-30. The first saying counters this charge, although it requires some expansion to make sense; "(If I really cast out demons by the power of the prince of demons, then it must mean that Satan is actually casting out Satan, but) how can Satan cast out Satan?" Cranfield, v23. The next saying is introduced by two illustrations supporting the point that if Satan has moved against himself then he is finished, v24-26. In the next saying Jesus identifies the correct conclusion to be drawn from his miraculous works, particularly exorcisms, namely that Satan, the "strong man", is, at least to some degree, "bound" and unable to resist the ministry of Jesus, v27. The final saying, along with its explanation, links the sin against the Holy Spirit with the assessment that Jesus is a disciple of the prince of demons. Anyone who makes such an assessment is lost, v28-30.

The sayings present as a series of stitched independent sayings assembled by Mark to address the issues raised in the two surrounding family-focused episodes / pericopes, 3:20-22, and 3:31-35. Of course, Mark may be recording a complete

discourse given by Jesus at the time, or even a set of already assembled sayings. Whatever the case, there is little bearing on interpretation, and certainly none on inspiration. See Taylor who argues that v27 (cf. Lk.11:21) at least is a stitched independent saying.

Introduction, v23a. Illustrative sayings on the assessment that Jesus is a disciple of the prince of demons.

προσκαλεσαμενος [προσκαλεω] aor. part. "**so [Jesus] called [them]**" - HAVING SUMMONED, CALLED [THEM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "he was speaking"; "and he summoned them and spoke to them." Possibly adverbial, temporal; "after Jesus called them."

ελεγεν [λεγω] imperf. "**he began to speak**" - HE WAS SPEAKING. The NIV has taken the imperfect as inceptive, but Mark may just intend a durative action, "he was speaking to them in parables."

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN, ON. Probably instrumental, expressing means; "by having recourse to figurative language", Cassirer.

παραβολαις [η] dat. "**parables**" - PARABLES. The word is used of: allegories, eg., the parable of the Sower; of riddles (*marsal*), eg., "the kingdom of heaven is like unto ..." = kingdom parables / a hidden gospel message; of illustrations, figurative teaching, eg., The parable of the tenants in the vineyard, Matt.21:33-46; and of illustrative sayings, as here of a "picturesque and allusive maxim", Taylor.

Saying #1, v23b. It is illogical to suggest that Satan would go to war with Satan.

πως adv. "**how**" - HOW. Here introducing a dependent statement of direct speech / question, "how ...?".

εκβαλλειν [εκβαλλω] pres. inf. "**drive out**" - [IS ABLE = IS IT POSSIBLE *for* SATAN] TO CAST OUT [SATAN]? The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "is able"; "how is Satan able to eject Satan?" In Hebrew "Satan" is known as "the Adversary."

v24

Saying #2, v24-26. "A nation set upon civil war is unable to survive."

και "-" - AND. Here possibly taking the Semitic causal sense, "for", so Gundry, Cranfield. "How is it possible for Satan to expel Satan? For if civil war breaks out in a kingdom nothing can make that kingdom last", Weymouth. At the least it is a Markan stitching device.

εαν + subj. "**if**" - IF [A KINGDOM IS DIVIDED]. Introducing a conditional clause 3rd class, where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true; "if, *as may be the case, then ...*" "Kingdom" in the terms of a political entity.

εφ [επι] + acc. "**against**" - OVER, UPON, ON [ITSELF]. Spatial; "upon itself", here with the sense "against itself".

σταθηναι [ιστημι] aor. pas. inf. "**[cannot] stand**" - [IS NOT ABLE] TO STAND. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "is [not] able."

v25

"And if there are internal divisions in a household, it is impossible that such a household should stand firm", Cassirer. For the syntax, see v24.

οικια [α] - "**a house**" - Used in the sense of a "family", or "household".

v26

"If Satan has geared up to do battle against himself, he will destroy himself and bring his kingdom to an end", Junkins.

ει + ind. "**if**" - [AND] IF. Introducing a conditional clause 1st. class, where the proposed condition is assumed to be true; "if, *as is the case, then*" The conditional clauses in v24 and 25, being 3rd. class, propose a future possibility, whereas here, the 1st. class conditional clause proposes a truth, although in this instant, for argument's sake. Given that Satan's reign has not yet ended, Jesus is employing an argument that is observably untrue. "In other words, the argument has shifted from the hypothetical to the assumption that Satan has indeed not risen up against himself", Guelich.

εφ [επι] + acc. "**opposes**" - [SATAN STOOD UP] AGAINST [HIMSELF]. Spatial, here expressing opposition.

εμερισθη [μεριζω] aor. pas. "**is divided**" - [AND] WAS DIVIDED. "And if he is split against himself", Barclay.

στηναι [ιστημι] aor. inf. "**[he cannot] stand**" - [*then* HE IS NOT ABLE] TO STAND. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "is not able."

αλλα "-" - BUT [HE HAS AN END]. Adversative in a counterpoint construction; "he cannot last, but ends", Berkeley. "He is done for", Manson, although better, "he is at his end", Gundry, rather than "finished".

v27

Saying #3, v27. There is, of course, another way of reading Jesus' miraculous healings and exorcisms. "If God is to rule, Satan the 'strong man' must be bound. Jesus is not only the herald of the dawning kingdom, but in some sense its agent, the 'stronger one' announced by the Baptist, cf., 1:7", Boring.

αλλα "**in fact**" - BUT. Adversative, here introducing a counter argument; "on the contrary", TH.

ου ουδεις μη "no one" - NO [ONE IS] NOT [ABLE]. An emphatic double negative construction. The piling up of negations stresses the point that it is impossible to set Satan's captives free without first disabling Satan. ουδεις, "no one", serves as the subject of δυναται, "is able."

εισελθων [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "enter" - HAVING ENTERED. The participle may be adverbial, temporal, possibly attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the complementary infinitive "to plunder", "no one is able to enter into the house of a strong man and to plunder his property unless", or even adjectival, attributive, "no one who enters a strong man's house is able to plunder his goods"

του ισχυρου gen. adj. "the strong man's [house]" - [THE HOUSE] OF THE STRONG, MIGHTY *man* [to plunder the possessions of him]. The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, possessive.

εαν μη + subj. "unless / without [first]" - UNLESS [FIRST]. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designation an exception, as NIV.

δηση [δεω] aor. subj. "[he] ties up / tying [him] up" - HE MAY BIND. The binding of Satan is an interesting sub-issue and something often practised today in various forms. As far as the NT is concerned, Satan is both "bound / defeated" and at the same time strolling around like a roaring lion - another example of the now/not yet reality of the kingdom.

τον ισχυρον gen. adj. "the strong man" - THE STRONG *man*. Accusative direct object of the verb "to bind." The substantival articular adjective is often treated as indefinite, "a strong man", citing Aramaic form, although Mark does probably have in mind "the strong man" = Satan.

τοτε "then" - THEN. Consequential in time terms; "then what follows is that" The logic of the argument is as follows: "if someone ties up a strong man he is able to carry off his possessions. Given that a stronger man than Satan has come, has entered his house, and has bound him, then he will plunder his house, as you can well see."

διαρπασει [διαρπαζω] fut. "he can rob" - HE WILL ROB, PLUNDER [THE HOUSE OF HIM]. Note the stress on actuality, "he will rob the house."

v28

Saying #4, v28-30. This next saying, followed in v30 by a word of explanation, serves as a warning to those who conclude that Jesus is an agent of darkness, rather than light; an agent of the prince of demons, Satan, rather than an agent of God. Addressing the issue of slander ("blasphemies"), Jesus makes the point that we can be forgiven all sort of sinful slanders, except a slander against the Holy Spirit; see v29.

ὅμιν "[I tell] you [the truth]" - [TRULY I SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object. Serving to introduce a statement that "is firm and binding", Cranfield. "I give you solemn assurance of this", Cassirer.

ὅτι "- " - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus has to say; "I say to you that"

παντα adj. "**all**" - ALL [THE SINS]. Luke has **πας ὅς**, "everyone who". Probably "all" modifies "sins"; "the sons of men shall be forgiven all their sins and all the blasphemes they may utter", Moffatt. On the other hand, it is possible that "all = everything" may serve as the subject of "will be forgiven", with "the sins and the blasphemies" in apposition to "all"; "everything will be forgiven mankind, their sins and their blasphemies." "Men will be forgiven for everything, for all their sins and their insults to God", Barclay. Cf., TH. At least we can say, on the basis of Jesus words, that forgiveness is available to all humanity for all the sins that they have committed, except

αἱ βλασφημιαὶ [α] "**blasphemies / [every] slander they utter**" - [EVEN] THE BLASPHEMIES. Meaning "to slander / to defame", often in reference to God; "as of words spoken directly or indirectly against God", Guelich, "of infractions against the true God", Edwards. Yet, it is possible that a more general sense is intended, so "slander" as such. It seems likely that "the sins and the slanders" is a hendiadys where a single idea is being expressed, so Gundry; "sinful slander."

ὅσα εἶεν + subj. "- " - AS IF = WHATEVER, HOWEVER [THEY MAY BLASPHEME]. Introducing an indefinite clause; "however often they utter blasphemies", TH. Agreeing with "sins", ie. neut. so "however many *sins* they may blaspheme"; "however many sins they commit by slandering", Gundry.

τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων "**of men / people**" - [WILL BE FORGIVEN] THE SONS OF MEN. The dative **τοὺς υἱοὺς**, "the sons", is a dative of direct object (**ἀφίημι**, "forgive", takes a dative of persons), while the genitive **τῶν ἀνθρώπων**, "of men", is adjectival, relational. A Semitic phrase like this, which denotes humanity in general, reminds us how easily Jesus' self-designation "the Son of Man" was missed as a messianic title. "All the sins the sons of men commit, and all the blasphemies they utter, are pardonable", Berkeley. Note, as is sometimes the case, a plural neuter subject will take a singular verb, as here. Possibly modal, so "may be forgiven", Zerwick; "people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter", TNIV.

v29

Scribal tradition states that "The Holy One, blessed be he, pardons everything else, but on profanation of the Name, he takes vengeance immediately." Much soul-searching surrounds this passage, but the context defines clearly what "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" is, namely, a blind

determination to deny the divine presence in the person and work of Jesus, concluding that he is a mere mortal, and a bad / mad one at that. The scribes slander God by calling Jesus an agent of Beelzebub. Yet, the issue is not that Jesus was slandered as such, but rather that the slander evidences a rejection of Jesus as the Christ, messiah. To reject the kingdom of God in the person of Jesus, to reject his words and signs, is to reject God's free offer of salvation. Such rejection brings condemnation and eternal loss. Of course, this rejection, as Calvin argues, is in the terms of a fixed attitude of mind. Jesus' family thought he had a demon and for some time they did not accept that he was Israel's messiah, yet they came to belief, and so were not "guilty of an eternal sin." So, the "unpardonable sin" is the "culpable rejection of, or refusal to recognise, God's redemptive activity", Guelich, a rejection of God's comprehensive offer of amnesty and forgiveness in Jesus, so Grundmann, cf., Ex.23:30-31.

ὅ [δε] **"but"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument, here to a counterpoint.

ὅς ... αὐ + subj. **"whoever"** - WHO IF = WHOEVER. Introducing a relative conditional clause, 3rd. class, where the condition has the possibility of coming true; "whoever, *as the case may be*, slanders the Holy Spirit, *then* they will never be forgiven."

εἰς **"against"** - [BLASPHEMES] TO, INTO [THE HOLY SPIRIT]. Expressing reference / respect, "with respect to the Holy Spirit, or probably better disadvantage, here opposition with hostile intent, "against", BAGD.

εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα **"never [be forgiven]"** - [DOES NOT HAVE FORGIVENESS] INTO THE AGE. Idiomatic Semitic phrase, "forever"; he will never be forgiven forever, Barclay. The verb "will never" reflects the durative sense of present tense of the negated verb εχει, "does not have" = "will never have."

ἁμαρτηματος [α] gen. **"of [an eternal] sin"** - [BUT IS GUILTY] OF [ETERNAL] SIN. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic / of definition, denoting the crime of which the person is ενοχος, "liable / answerable / guilty."

αιωνιου gen. adj. **"eternal"** - Attributive adjective, genitive in agreement with "sin", a sin which is eternal. Variants exist with "eternal judgment", given that "eternal sin" is a rather strange concept. The adjective "eternal" probably limits the sin to a sin which is eternal in consequence, i.e., it cannot be forgiven. Possibly "he is absolutely certain to hear himself condemned to Hell when he stands before God, in judgment, at the end of his life", Junkins, i.e. "sin with an eternal consequence", Edwards.

v30

ὅτι **"because"** - BECAUSE [THEY WERE SAYING]. Here probably introducing a causal clause explaining why they were guilty of an eternal sin. The verse is

somewhat elliptic (for brevity words are omitted); "*it was on account of* their saying *that* he was possessed of a tarnished spirit *that he spoke like this*", Cassirer. Note the imperfect **ελεγον**, "they were saying", which may be iterative, expressing repeated action, possibly highlighting the nature of the "unpardonable sin", namely, ongoing rejection. It is though important to remember that the imperfect is often used for speech seeing it entails a flow of words.

πνευμα ακαθαρτον "**an evil spirit**" - [HE HAS] AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT. A slightly more specific negative assessment of Jesus' person.

v31

v] Mark now refocuses on Jesus' family, this time their desire to "take charge of him", v31-35. Mark has compared the disciples with both the scribes and Jesus' relatives. Those who consider that Jesus is an agent of the Devil face the prospect of becoming the eternally unforgiven; the disciples, on the other hand, who do God's will, face the joyous prospect of membership in Jesus' true family, the family of God.

και "**then**" - AND. Here likely to be transitional; "then".

ερχεται [ερχομαι] pres. "**arrived**" - [AND THE MOTHER OF HIM AND THE BROTHERS OF HIM] CAME. Historic / narrative present tense; often the present tense is used to commence a new narrative discourse.

στηκοντες [ιστημι] pres. part. "**standing**" - STANDING. Best classified as an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb **απεστειλαν**, "they sent"; "they stood outside and sent someone ..." It may also be treated as adverbial, temporal, "while / as they stood outside they sent ..", or modal, expressing manner, as NIV. The participle may also be taken to attend **ερχεται**, "he came"; "Jesus' mother and brothers came and stood outside", Barclay.

εξω adv. "**outside**" - OUT, OUTSIDE. Adverb of place. Presumably Jesus is inside a home, although it is not stated.

καλουντες [καλεω] pres. part. "**to call**" - [THEY SENT TO HIM] CALLING [HIM]. The participle is probably adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "they sent someone to him in order to call him." "They sent a message to him (in order) to ask him to come out and see them", Barclay.

v32

περι + acc. "**around [him]**" - [AND A CROWD WERE SITTING] AROUND, NEAR HIM. Spatial.

λεγουσιν [λεγω] pres. "**they told**" - [AND] THEY WERE SAYING. In the sense that "the message is passed one to another until it reaches Jesus", Swete.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

αι αδελφαι **"and your sisters"** - [BEHOLD, THE MOTHER OF YOU AND THE BROTHERS OF YOU AND] THE SISTERS OF YOU. Nominative subject of the verb "to seek." The shorter reading without the variant "the sister of you" is to be preferred. Metzger regards it as an unreliable Western mechanical expansion. That the brothers and sisters of Jesus are biologically related to him, does not impinge on Mary's saintly character, nor the divinity of Jesus, but none-the-less, some segments of the Christian church hold that this reference is to relatives and not biological brothers and sisters.

εξω adv. **"are outside"** - *are* OUTSIDE [LOOKING FOR YOU]. Adverb of place. The adverb is normally taken with "mother and brothers", as NIV, but probably it should be taken with the verb "are looking for / seeking"; "your mother and your brothers are wanting you outside", cf., Moffatt.

v33

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. **"[he asked]"** - [AND] HAVING ANSWERED [HE SAYS]. Semitic idiom, redundant, but technically classified as attendant circumstance, or adverbial, modal. The passive is middle-passive, where the passive voice expresses a Gk. middle sense involving intercommunication. "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?", Cassirer.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - TO THEM [WHO IS THE MOTHER OF ME AND THE BROTHERS OF ME]? Dative of indirect object.

v34

Jesus defines his true family. "His gaze swept round the circle of people sitting around him. 'See!' he said, 'my mother and my brothers'", Barclay. The family members have not included "father" as Joseph had obviously died well before the commencement of Jesus' ministry. Yet, Jesus continues the family description without "father", since the father of this new family of brothers is God himself. This statement does not sever filial relationships, nicely illustrated when Jesus, on the cross, gave John the care of his mother, Mary. Yet, in the terms of eternity, there is one family that supersedes all others.

περιβλεψαμενος [περιβλεπω] aor. part. **"Then he looked at"** - [AND] HAVING LOOKED ABOUT TO. The participle is adverbial, best taken as temporal, as NIV.

τους καθημενους [καθημαι] pres. part. **"those seated"** - THE ONES SITTING. The participle serves as a substantive.

κυκλω adv. **"in a circle"** - IN A CIRCLE. This dative form of κυκλος, "circle", serves as an adverb of place with the sense "in a circle."

περι + acc. **"around"** - AROUND, NEAR [HIM]. Spatial.

λεγει [λεγω] pres. **"said"** - HE SAYS. Historic / narrative present tense, as NIV.

ἰδε **"Here are"** - BEHOLD [THE MOTHER OF ME AND THE BROTHERS OF ME].
Interjection.

v35

Jesus now explains how a person gains membership of his true family, the new community, the new Israel, the people of God. "While Mark does not prescribe or legally define what 'doing the will of God' means, the macro-narrative makes it clear that it must be related to repentance in response to Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom", Boring. Sadly, Boring adds "and the command to love God and neighbour." This *trust and obey* doctrine is common in Christian circles and has much to answer!!! Respect toward God and the love of neighbour, is the fruit of faith, and is not an associate requirement for salvation. The call of the gospel to do "God's will" is a call to "repent and believe", not "repent, believe and obey the ten commandments."

γάρ **"for"** - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why those sitting around Jesus are family. This variant only has limited support, but if it is original, it helps us understand what Jesus means by "whoever does the will of God." Jesus has declared that those sitting around him listening to his word, certainly supporters, probably disciples, are his family "because" those who do the will of God are members of Christ's family. As noted above, the will of God that realises membership in Jesus' eternal family, the kingdom of God, entails repentance and belief, namely, the act of turning to God, and the act of depending on God's divine man, Jesus, the Christ, for salvation. Mark gives us no evidential work of obedience other than that the disciples are sitting under Jesus' teaching ministry, that they are looking to Jesus, trusting Jesus, and of such is the will of God.

ὅς **αν** + subj. **"whoever"** - WHOEVER. Introducing a relative conditional clause, 3rd. class where the condition has the possibility of coming true; "whoever, *as the case may be*, does the will of God, *then* this one is my brother and sister and mother."

του θεου [ος] gen. **"God's [will]"** - [DOES THE WILL] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, but can also be classified as verbal, subjective.

οὗτος "-" - THIS *one* [IS BROTHER OF ME, AND SISTER, AND MOTHER]. This pronoun serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb to-be. Gundry notes that in dropping the definite articles for brother, sister and mother, Mark "adds emphasis to the new relationships by stressing their quality."

4:1-25

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

5. The good news of the kingdom, 4:1-34

i] The Parable of the Sower / Soils

Synopsis

Mark now draws aside from the narrative to give us an insight into Jesus preaching. Jesus is again teaching large gatherings, on this occasion, "beside the sea." His teaching is now in parables, riddles about the coming kingdom. Along with his riddles, Jesus tells a story about the sowing of seed and the different results achieved. Later, the disciples ask Jesus why he speaks in parables and he explains that it is so that those who "listen may not understand." Jesus then goes on to explain the story about the Sower, reinforced by a set of sayings, the lamp and the measure.

Teaching

Take heed to the Word of God. You have been warned!

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8. The parables of the kingdom fall within the first major section of the gospel of Mark. This is quite a large teaching unit in the gospel. Mark first presents The Parable of the Sower / Soils, a teaching parable about parables, and then explains the purpose of kingdom parables. He follows this with a set of sayings / mini parables to further explain the purpose of kingdom parables, and then concludes with two classic examples of kingdom parables, - The Growing Seed and The Mustard Seed.

ii] Background: *Jesus' use of parables*: There are basically two types of parables:

- teaching parables, stories which serve to illustrate a particular truth;
- kingdom parables, riddles which serve to present the gospel in a hidden form.

Teaching parables can be short pithy little illustrations, all the way up to extended allegories. Although rejected by some modern commentators (eg., Jeremias, reacting to a history of allegorical interpretations of the parable of the Sower, esp. the three levels of harvest = three orders of believers) Jesus does at times employ allegory. In this teaching form, various elements in the story are given meaning and together serve to teach a particular truth. Their interpretation must comply with the interpretation that Jesus supplies, and not be used as a platform for space-exploration!!

Kingdom parables, on the other hand, are usually introduced with the formula: "the kingdom of God / heaven may be compared to the situation where" Kingdom parables are similes, not allegories. They align with a Semitic *masal*, riddle, and present as the gospel in the form of a riddle. As such, they simply announce that the kingdom is near at hand. A people whose ears have grown dull do not deserve a clear word from God, they deserve nothing more than riddles.

C.H. Dodd in *The Parables of the Kingdom* makes the point that Jesus' kingdom parables proclaim the arrival of the kingdom of God; "Jesus is asserting that the time has come when the blessings of the reign of God are available to all men." The kingdom has burst in upon us and its affects are here and now. Dodd's realized eschatology has a powerful ring of truth to it, although we must never forget that the kingdom is also inaugurated - both *now* and *not yet*. The kingdom is indeed now, although its authentic presence is diluted by powers of darkness which seek to confuse. Confuse they may, but the coming day of judgement will sort all things out. So, Kingdom parables are all about eschatological-expectation.

iii] Structure: *The preaching of Jesus:*

Setting, v1-2;

The parable of the Sower, v3-9;

The purpose of parables, v10-12;

The explanation of the parable of the Sower, v13-20;

Sayings on the subject at hand, v21-25:

#1. A lamp is for light, v21;

#2. What is hidden must be disclosed, v22;

#3. A person is measured by their own measure, v24;

#4. Whoever has will be given more, v25.

iv] Interpretation:

Mark's account commences with an editorial note which provides the setting, v1-2. Some view this note as a Markan invention, although there is no reason why the mention of a large crowd beside the sea isn't part of Mark's received tradition, particularly in this case. Luke doesn't mention the sea. Then follows the parable proper, v3-9. The parable is best viewed as a teaching parable, in that it explains how people respond to the gospel / kingdom parables. The purpose of parables follows, v10-12. Jesus' words relate to kingdom parables and don't really apply to the parable of the Sower, but it is likely that this pericope was attached to the parable during the period of oral transmission, long before Mark came to record it. The explanation of the parable follows, v13-20. This explanation is supported by the parabolic sayings of the lamp and measure, v21-25, likely placed

here by Mark - they are used in different contexts by Matthew and Luke. These independent sayings of Jesus are framed by key phrases, eg., v23. The first saying, *a lamp is for light*, v21. The second, *what is hidden must be disclosed*, v22. The third saying, *a person is measured by their own measure*, v24. The final saying, *whoever has will be given more*, v25.

In The Parable of the Sower / Soils, and its attached four sayings, Mark tells us something about the communication of the Word of God / the gospel. The Word of God, concerning the new age of the coming kingdom, is spread like seed on a field; some ignore this message from God, some give it a moment of thought, while others begin to respond before being distracted, but there are some who accept it and bear fruit. In the same way as a person puts a lamp on a lamp-stand, the divine intention has always been to reveal the mystery of the coming kingdom, v21-22. Yet, we must carefully hear, for it is in accepting the Word / the gospel that the blessings flow, whereas in rejecting the word we are left with nothing, v24-25.

It is the attached independent sayings which serve to drive home this interpretation. Without the sayings, the parable could easily be addressing the eschatological harvest of the coming kingdom, or even something as mundane as explaining the different ways people respond to the gospel.

The purpose of kingdom parables, v10-12: What do we say of Jesus' purposeful hiding of the gospel in riddles (kingdom parables). Jesus states that the purpose of his kingdom parables (the gospel in the form of a riddle) is *iva*, "in order that seeing they may see and not perceive" The new age of the kingdom is a time of fruitful harvest, but not for historic Israel. Jesus' ministry to Israel has, for the most part, been rejected, and so now in this second year of his ministry, Jesus preaches the gospel in riddles. Initially both Jesus and the Baptist proclaimed the coming kingdom openly, but now, in an act of judgment upon a people with *thick ears*, Jesus speaks in riddles, cf., Isa.28:11-12, ref. 1Cor.14:21, applied to the misuse of tongues.

It is rather paradoxical to place such a profound truth in the middle of a teaching parable concerning the varied responses prompted when God's Word is proclaimed. Marcus argues, "what was hidden was hidden only in order that it might come into the light." Verses 21-22 "pictures the Markan present as an epoch of revelation: the lamp of God's word has come into the room and is casting its light into every dark crevice." Israel was blind to the light and paid a deadly price; Mark warns his readers to not repeat Israel's error. Take care how you hear, for the *not yet* of the kingdom reminds us that we live in an age of "colliding realms of light and darkness, of divine and demonic sovereignty" (Marcus) where the whole person, with

all their faculties, must chose to accept or reject the divine Word made known, v24-25.

So, the purpose of kingdom parables serves as a Targumic citation from Jesus, possibly included with the parable of the Sower / Seeds early in the received tradition, or possibly inserted by Mark.

Literary form of the Parable of the Sower / Soils: The parable of the sower / seeds presents as an allegory which requires an explanation of its hidden elements. Unlike kingdom parables, it does not address the coming kingdom, and as such, is not a riddle. It is, in a sense, an allegory about the impact of kingdom parables - only some get the message. Some commentators view the parable's explanation as a product of early church preaching, but there is no reason why it isn't a record of Jesus' explanation of the parable to his disciples.

v] Synoptics:

The parable of the Sower and its explanation is also found in Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23, and Luke 8:4-8, 11-15. The purpose of parables is also found in Matthew 13:10-17 and Luke 8:9-10. The lamp and the measure, v21-25, consists of four independent sayings. The first saying, *a lamp is for light*, v21, is also found in Luke 8:16, 11:33 and Matthew 5:15. The second, *what is hidden must be disclosed*, v22, is also found in Luke 8:17, 12:2, and Matthew 10:26. The third saying, *a person is measured by their own measure*, v24, is also found in Luke 6:38 and Matthew 7:2. The final saying, *whoever has will be given more*, v25, is also found in Luke 8:18, and Matthew 13:12, 25:29. Mark's effective use of the saying material would imply Matthean priority, although it can be explained by the independent use of the extant oral tradition by all three synoptic evangelists.

vi] Homiletics: *Nature or nurture*

The debate over whether we are a product of nature or nurture will never be resolved. We seem to go through fads. Sometimes we think it's all about genes, directing and controlling. Then at other times it's all about our environment, shaping the person we are. Maybe it's just fifty-fifty; both nature and nurture.

Some years ago, a geneticist was pontificating on a radio show, obviously very much on the side of nature, and he was arguing that some people are predisposed to religious faith. I found it a disturbing notion; was it just a genetic inclination that made me the person I am? Did my genes just force me toward a religious faith, to the extent that if I lived in the

Middle East I would be a Muslim? Mind you, the other side of the argument is just as disturbing. Is my religious faith the product of my parent's influence, or my peer group? I actually can't deny any of these influences.

Both nature and nurture may have led me to church, may have prompted me to accept a call for decision, but a living faith, a firm resolve to hold onto Jesus in the midst of all my doubts and fears, I don't think that has nothing to do with nature or nurture.

Like seeds on a pathway, most of the young people in my age group never even attempted to get into the Christian youth scene. To their mind, the stories of Jesus were little more than fairy tales. Even so, there were some enthusiastic young people who rolling up every Sunday afternoon to sing, pray and read the Bible together. Yet as the years passed, like seeds scorched in shallow ground or choked by weeds, one by one they fell away. Often, on entering university and being confronted by aggressive atheism, they would back away from their childhood flirtation with Christianity. If it wasn't persecution it was just the pressures of life - all the things they wanted to do, and all the things they wanted to get. And so, most of the people I grew up with slowly drifted away.

On one occasion, Jesus was talking about resolute reliance on him to the point where most of those who heard him were offended and left. A small band of disciples remained and Jesus asked if they were going walk off as well. They replied, "to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life." The state of life which involves a reliance on Jesus for eternal life, a reliance which transcends opposition, troubles, needs and the like, is not a product of nature, or nurture, it's the product of a seed sown in good ground bearing forth the fruit of faith.

So, choose to be the good soil. Take care how you hear!

Text - 4:1

The art of Word germination, v1-25: i] The parable of the sower / seeds, v1-9. Jesus is again teaching beside lake Galilee, and is again hemmed in by a large crowd. Using a method already employed, the disciples commandeer a boat for Jesus to use as a pulpit. They push the boat out a little way and the crowd gathers by the water's edge.

διδασκεῖ [διδασκω] pres. inf. "**[began] to teach**" - [AND AGAIN HE BEGAN] TO TEACH. Complementary infinitive completing the sense of the verb "to begin."

παρα + acc. "**by**" - BESIDE [THE LAKE]. Spatial.

πλειστος adj. "**so large**" - [AND A] VERY LARGE [CROWD GATHERED TOGETHER TOWARD HIM]. Superlative adjective used for a comparative, so "very large" rather than "largest." The sense is that the crowds gathering to see Jesus

are increasing in size such that this crowd is a very large crowd. So great, in fact, that Jesus is forced to preach from a boat moored on the lake.

ὥστε + inf. "**that**" - SO THAT. Here consecutive, expressing result, "so that, having got into the boat, he sat in it on the lake"; "so that he got into a little boat on the lake and sat down", Phillips.

αὐτον pro. "**he**" - HE. Accusative subject of the infinitive **καθισθαι**, "to sit."

εμβαντα [εμαινω] aor. part. "**got [into a boat]**" - HAVING EMBARKED [INTO A BOAT]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verbal aspect of the infinitive "to sit"; "he got into a boat on the lake and sat down." It can also be treated as adverbial, temporal; "so that, after getting into the boat, he sat *in it out* on the lake."

εν + dat. "**out on**" - [TO SIN] IN, ON [THE LAKE]. Local, expressing space / sphere. The word order implies that Jesus **καθισθαι εν τη θαλασση**, "sat on the sea", but the intention is "sat *in the boat* on the sea." The word order may allude to the idea of the voice of the Lord upon the waters, cf., Psalm 29. Sitting, rather than standing, is the correct posture for an authoritative teacher. Both Matthew and Luke omit **εν τη θαλασση**, "in the sea."

ἦσαν [ειμι] imperf. "**[while all the people] were**" - [AND ALL THE CROWD] WERE. Although the subject "crowd" is singular, a plural verb to-be is used, given that "crowd" is a collective noun.

προς + acc. "**along the shore**" - TOWARD [THE LAKE]. Spatial; "next to, near the lake."

εν + gen. "**at [the water's edge]**" - UPON, ON [THE LAND]. Spatial, "down upon."

v2

Mark tells us that Jesus often used **παραβολαις** for teaching purposes, either teaching illustrations like the parable of the sower, or gospel riddles like the parable of the mustard seed.

εδιδασκεν [διδασκω] imperf. "**He taught [them]**" - [AND] HE WAS TEACHING [THEM]. The imperfect here is sometimes taken as inceptive; "he began to teach them many things."

πολλα adj. "**many things**" - MANY *things*. The accusative adjective serves as the complement of the direct object "him", standing in a double accusative construction.

εν + dat. "**by**" - IN = WITH. Presumably instrumental, expressing means; "by means of parables."

παραβολαις [η] dat. "**parables**" - PARABLES. "In the LXX and Jewish apocalyptic literature, (this word) becomes a term for a message, often encrypted in a comparison of some sort, that is difficult to comprehend and requires

decipherment", Marcus. France argues that with the word "parable", "the emphasis [is] not so much on the teaching method as on the idea of obscurity." That, of course, is particularly so for kingdom parables, but not necessarily for teaching parables. None-the-less, although the parable of the sower is not a kingdom parable (note the missing "the kingdom of God is like .."), being an allegory, it requires interpretation. Both Matthew and Luke imply that the interpretation is not just to the apostles, but also the crowd. Mark does restrict the interpretation somewhat, but it is not just to the apostles, it is to "those who were around Jesus along with the twelve" (the twelve + seekers??).

εν + dat. "**in [his teaching]**" - [AND HE WAS SAYING TO THEM] IN [THE TEACHING OF HIM]. Temporal use of the preposition, "when he was teaching them"; "this is what he said to them as he taught", Barclay / "in the course of his teaching", Cassirer.

v3

ii] The parable of the Sower / Seeds, v3-9. The parable entails a simple agricultural illustration. A sower goes out to sow his field. As he scatters the seed, some of it falls on the pathway running through the field. The birds get to feed on those seeds. Some of the seeds fall on shallow ground. The thin layer of soil over the rock-shelf heats up quickly, the seeds sprout, but what moisture there is in the soil quickly dries out and the shoots wither and die. Some seed falls where there are still roots of wooded weeds. The weeds quickly shoot and strangle the sprouting seeds. But some seed falls on good ground and bears forth an abundant harvest.

ὁ σπειρων [σπειρω] pres. part. "**A farmer**" - THE ONE SOWING [WENT OUT]. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to go out."

σπειραι [σπειρω] aor. inf. "**to sow his seeds**" - TO SOW. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to ..."

v4

εγενετο [γινομαι] aor. "-" - [AND] IT BECAME = IT HAPPENED. "Listen! look!", Barclay.

εν τω + inf. "**as**" - IN [TO SOW]. This construction, **εν** + the articular infinitive, introduces a temporal clause, contemporaneous time, "while he sowed"; "as he sowed", Moffatt, etc.

ὁ pro. "-" - WHICH = THIS SEED [FELL]. The singular relative pronoun, "which", serves as a demonstrative pronoun, "this seed fell"; "this *portion of seed* fell", BAGD. A collective singular for what would be plural seeds.

μεν και αλλο και αλλο και αλλα "**some some other ... still other ...**" - Introducing a coordinate series which runs through to v8. Usually

μεν δε, adversative comparative, but here μεν και. "some *seed* fell on rocky ground and other *seed* fell among thorns and"

παρα + acc. "**along [the path]**" - BESIDE [THE WAY AND CAME THE BIRDS AND DEVoured IT]. Spatial. The intent is surely "on the footpath", Berkeley.

v5

και αλλο "**some**" - AND OTHER *seed* [FELL]. The coordinate series continues.

επι + acc. "**on [rocky places]**" - UPON [STONY GROUND]. Spatial. Referring to a thin layer of soil over bedrock, rather than soil with stones in it. "Some seed fell on ground where there was only a thin skin of earth over the rock", Barclay.

όπου adv. "**where**" - WHERE [IT DID NOT HAVE MUCH SOIL AND IMMEDIATELY IT SPRANG UP]. Local adverb.

δια το + inf. "**because**" - BECAUSE. Causal construction. In Spring, seed germinates more quickly in shallow soil over bedrock due to it warming up more quickly. A deep layer of soil takes time to warm up in Spring. "It quickly sprouted in the warm soil", Junkins.

μη "-" - [IT DID] NOT [HAVE MUCH]. This negation, rather than ου, is used with a non-indicative.

γης [η] gen. "**the soil [was shallow]**" - DEPTH [OF SOIL]. The genitive is adjectival, attributed; "deep soil."

v6

ότε + ind. "**when**" - WHEN. Temporal conjunction introducing a temporal clause, as NIV.

ανετειλεν [ανατελλω] aor. " **came up**" - [THE SUN] ROSE [IT WAS SCORCHED]. Not referring to dawn, but the increasing intensity of the sun as the season moves toward summer; "but as the season progressed."

δια το + inf. "**because**" - [AND] BECAUSE [IT DID NOT HAVE A ROOT IT WITHERED]. This construction serves to introduce a causal clause, as NIV; "because it did not have enough root", CEV. Luke, "because it did not have ικμαδα, moisture."

v7

εις "**among**" - [AND OTHER *seeds* FELL] INTO [THE THORN WEEDS]. Spatial, expressing direction toward and arrival at.

συνεπιξιαν [συνπιγω] aor. "**choked**" - [AND THE THORNS CAME UP AND] CHOKED. Referring to woody weeds that are quick to develop, striving to choke out opposition, or more specifically, root-stock of thorn-bushes which has remained in the ground and then grows quickly to crowd out the seed, so that no crop is produced.

αυτο pro. "**the plants**" - IT [AND IT DID NOT GIVE FRUIT]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to choke." Collective used of the singular pronoun.

v8

αλλα adj. "**still other seed**" - [AND] OTHERS [FELL INTO THE GOOD SOIL]. This time the demonstrative adjective is plural rather than the collective singular "other *seeds*."

αναβαινοντα [αναβαινω] pres. part. "**it came up**" - [AND] RISING UP [IT WAS GIVING FRUIT AND GROWING]. As with **αυξανομενα**, "growing", the participle may be treated as attendant circumstance, or adverbial, temporal; "and other seed fell in the good earth and yielded a crop, as it sprang up and grew", Berkeley.

ἐν ... ἐν ... ἐν "**some, some, some**" - [AND IT WAS BEARING *fruit*] ONE [THIRTY], ONE [SIXTY AND] ONE [ONE HUNDRED]. Collective use of "one" = "some". Variant **εις ... εν ... εν**, but unlikely. It is generally felt that this rather strange construction is Semitic = "thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold", TH. A yield of one hundred times the seed sown is well beyond the norm, but it is possible for one plant to yield one hundred seeds, even though a spectacular result. So, the story is not describing something beyond the bounds of nature. Luke has **εκατονταπλασιονα**, "a hundredfold", by itself. It has been suggested that the multiple yields were introduced to make the point "all good disciples are fruitful, but the performance may not necessarily be uniform", France. It seems most unlikely that this parable has anything to do with discipleship, especially "performance". Setting aside an eschatological harvest interpretation (abundant harvest = the kingdom of God at hand), we are left with something like the sown Word yields life / salvation / eternity / ... to those who hear aright.

v9

Saying: In introducing the parable Jesus calls for attentive listening, **ακουετε**, "listen", v3. This saying, often viewed as a Markan inclusion, although obviously a punch-line used by Jesus in his preaching (cf., v23), calls for a considered response. It "leaves its hearers with the responsibility of discerning and applying its meaning", France.

ακουειν [ακουω] pres. inf. "**to hear**" - [AND HE WAS SAYING, WHO HAS EARS] TO HEAR. The infinitive is most likely adverbial, expressing purpose, "in order to hear", but it may also be taken as exegetical, "which hear", simply "to hear." Given the context, the point is that those who have the capacity to hear a word from God ought to pay attention to what he has to say.

ακουετω [ακουω] pres. imp. "**let them hear**" - LET HIM HEAR. The imperative, although singular, is usually treated as collective, so "let them pay

attention", TH. Yet, the singular imperative makes for a command that is pointed, forceful; "pay attention."

v10

ii] The purpose of kingdom parables, v10-12. Jesus calls for attentive listening, but few are attentive. The reason for this lies in the hard hearts of the hearers resulting in the divine hand of judgment. A stiff-necked people who rebut the Word of God, face, in an act of judgment, a word in riddles. Jesus' messianic ministry is no longer welcome in Israel's synagogues and so he is forced into the open countryside. In an act of judgment, he speaks in "parables", enigmas, riddles. Of course, the seeker after truth can unlock the riddle by coming to Jesus. Anyway, **τοις δωδεκα**, "the twelve", and **οι περι αυτον**, "the ones around him" (seekers???) want to know *about*, or is it *the meaning of* the parables. Their question is about **παραβολας**, "parables", plural, not specifically the parable of the Sower. They are probably asking Jesus why he preaches in riddles.

Of course, the parable of the Sower is not a kingdom parable as such, so this explanation by Jesus is not directly applicable. Jesus' answer applies primarily to kingdom parables, parables like the Mustard Seed, which parables are "for those outside." See above.

οτε "when" - [AND] WHEN. Temporal conjunction introducing a temporal clause, as NIV.

κατα μονας "alone" - [HE BECAME] ACCORDING TO ALONE = ALONE. Idiomatic; an adverbial, modal construction, with the adjective "alone", the manner of his "being"; "being by himself."

οι "-" - THE *ones*. The article here serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrases "around him" and "with the twelve" into a nominal construction; "the ones / those who were around him with the twelve."

περι + acc. "around" - ABOUT, AROUND [HIM]. Spatial.

συν + dat. "-" - WITH [THE TWELVE]. Expressing association.

τας παραβολας [η] "parables" - [WERE ASKING HIM *about / the meaning of*] THE PARABLES. This noun may be classified as either the accusative complement of the direct object **αυτον**, "him", standing in a double accusative construction, or simply as an adverbial accusative, reference / respect, "they asked him about / concerning (even "the meaning of") the parables."

v11

αυτοις dat. pro. "[he told] them" - [AND HE WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

το μυστηριον [ον] "the secret" - THE MYSTERY. Nominative subject of the verb "to give." A "mystery" is a secret now revealed; "a matter of hiddenness, not

complexity", Boring. The content of the secret is the gospel - the kingdom is now. "The mystery of the kingdom is given to the disciples. They have been granted the insight that the kingdom of God that is to appear at the eschaton in power and is already dawning in the ministry of Jesus", Boring.

της βασιλειας [α] gen. "**of the kingdom**" - OF THE KINGDOM [OF GOD]. The genitive is adjectival, exegetical, limiting "secret" by specifying its nature / the particular secret in mind; "the mystery / secret which is all about the coming kingdom of God." For "the kingdom of God" see 1:15.

ὑμιν dat. pro. "**to you**" - [HAS BEEN GIVEN] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object / interest. Referring to the twelve and those others who have come to be *περι*, "about", Jesus, i.e., disciples / seekers.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Adversative, as NIV.

τοις dat. "**to those [on the outside]**" - TO THE ONES [OUTSIDE]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the adverb *εξω*, "outside", into a nominal phrase, "those who are not disciples", Barclay. Dative of indirect object / interest. "Those outside" are Israel's religious authorities and those who have aligned with them against Jesus the messiah, i.e., unbelievers.

εν + dat. "**in [parables]**" - [EVERYTHING BECOMES, COMES] IN [PARABLES]. Instrumental, expressing means, "by means of parables", or adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of remaining, "everything remains in parables", Phillips.

v12

A freehand version of Isaiah 6:9f. "In this text Jesus is portrayed as having taught in parables to keep people from understanding", Boring, so also Marcus. It is likely that the text explains the purpose of kingdom parables, namely, to blind / confuse the hearer, although it is possible to argue that this is but one purpose. It may be that these words only apply to those who are hostile to the gospel and as such serves as an act of judgment on them alone. As noted above, it does seem that kingdom parables are a blanket act of judgement on Israel itself, and thus on the people as a whole. Israel has rejected a clear word from God and so is subjected to riddles. Of course, this act of judgment does not stop the true seeker from finding the truth - they can always come to Jesus later and ask him to explain the meaning of the parable.

ἵνα + subj. "**so that**" - THAT. This complex *hina* clause is formed with four subjunctives, two following *μηποτε*, "lest". The construction is probably final, expressing purpose (God's purpose!), but a consecutive clause expressing result is possible. Mark is usually *blamed* for the insertion of *hina*, although it seems integral to the meaning of the pericope. Unable to abide the notion that Jesus purposely befuddles his hearers, Manson argue that *ἵνα* wrongly translates an Aramaic *de* which should have been translated *οἷ*, "who". It is also possible,

although unlikely, that **ἵνα** is recitative, introducing a dependent statement, direct quote; "that seeing they may see but not perceive." It is also possibly, although again unlikely, that the construction is exegetical, explaining the operation of the divine will in Jesus' use of riddles. Note how both Matthew and Luke soften the statement; Matthew changes **ἵνα** to **ὅτι**, "because", and both drop **μηποτε** "lest, otherwise." Anyway, it is likely that here, **ἵνα** + subj. expresses purpose, although as France notes, it is "not so much the *purpose* of the hiding, but rather what *must inevitably follow* (the rejection of God's Word)."

βλεπωσιν [**βλεπω**] pres. part. "**they may be ever seeing**" - SEEING [THEY MAY SEE]. The participle "seeing" may be taken as adverbial, concessive, "so that although they see they may not understand", but linked to the verb "to see" may well reflect an intensive Aramaic construction, so "they may indeed see", ESV.

και "**but**" - AND [MAY NOT PERCEIVE, AND HEARING THEM, MAY HEAR AND MAY NOT UNDERSTAND]. Here adversative; "but not understand".

μηποτε + subj. "**otherwise**" - LEST. Introducing a negated purpose clause, **ἵνα** + **μηποτε**, "in order that they not; "to make it certain that they should not turn towards God and have their deeds forgiven them", Cassirer.

επιστρεψωσιν [**επιστρεφω**] aor. subj. "**they might turn**" - THEY SHOULD TURN BACK. Used in the LXX of turning back to God, so with the sense of "repent".

αφεθη [**αφιημι**] aor. pas. subj. "**be forgiven**" - [AND] IT BE FORGIVEN. The sense is "and God should forgive them."

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - THEM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to forgive."

v13

iii] Jesus explains the parable, v13-20. "Have you worked out the riddle of the Sower?" Obviously they hadn't. If the disciples can't unlock the meaning of the Sower / Soils, how will they unlock the meaning of Jesus' kingdom riddles? Jesus goes on to explain the riddle of the Sower. The seed represents God's word, it represents the message to broken humanity contained in Jesus' riddles, namely, the gospel, the good news of God's coming kingdom, of his eternal reign of grace. The scattering of seed on the pathway may be compared with the situation where the gospel is communicated far and wide, people hear it, but it makes no impact. The scattering of seed on shallow ground may be compared to the situation where the gospel is communicated to people who, when they hear the message, receive it enthusiastically, but when trouble or persecution comes their way, they lose heart and melt away. The seed scattered into weedy ground may be compared with the situation where the gospel is communicated to people who take it in, but are overwhelmed with the worries about all the things they have to do and all the things they want to get. The seed scattered in good soil may be compared with

the situation where the gospel is communicated and some people take not of it, receive it and bear the fruit of faith in abundance.

The opening verse, consisting of two questions linked by **και**, serves to compare a lesser with a greater; If a person can't understand the parable of the Sower / Seeds, what hope is there in understanding a kingdom parable / riddle? Some commentators have suggested that Jesus is indicating that the parable of the Sower is the key to unlock the meaning of his kingdom parables. So for example, seed = word, therefore the parable of the mustard seed is about the growing impact of God's word. This seems unlikely. The issue probably concerns levels of sophistication - if you can't understand a simple illustration describing how people respond to the gospel / kingdom parables, then how will you ever understand the riddle of the gospel / kingdom parable itself?

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [JESUS SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ουκ "**don't**" - [DO YOU] NOT [KNOW, UNDERSTAND THIS PARABLE]? This negation is used in a question expecting a negative answer.

και "-" - AND. Here introducing a question; "then how will you understand?"

πως "how" - HOW, IN WHAT WAY [WILL YOU COME TO KNOW ALL THE PARABLES]? Modal interrogative particle. "Comprehend", Cassirer.

v14

ὁ σπειρων [σπειρω] pres. part. "**the farmer**" - THE ONE SOWING [SOWS THE WORD]. The participle serves as a substantive.

v15

Many commentators argue that Mark identifies people with the soils, and it is certainly not unreasonable to handle the parable this way - it is an uncomplicated and effective approach. Yet, rather than soils, maybe Mark / Jesus wants us to identify with the situation, eg., seed scattered on a pathway which is quickly eaten by birds, well illustrates the situation where God's word is preached, but it makes no impact on the hearer - Satan whisks away the divine revelation.

Mark's syntax is *challenging*. Luke attempts to sort it out, but confuses us with *short-talk*; "The seed is the word of God. The ones beside the way are the ones having heard. Then comes the Devil" Presumably the sense is "the seed represents the word of God. The seed scattered on the pathway may be compared to the situation where a person hears what is proclaimed, but the substance of the message doesn't take root (the devil comes and takes away word from them)." Mark is trying to express the same point; "these *ones* (the seeds), which *are sown* beside the way, are (may be compared with the situation) where the word is sown

in people (as seed is sown in soil) and when it is heard, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which was sown in them."

οὔτοι masc. pro. "**some people**" - [BUT/AND] THESE *ones* = *seeds*. The demonstrative pronoun is masculine, rather than neuter for "seeds", but of course, the seeds represent the Word, **λογος**, masculine, and so this may have prompted a masculine "these" for "seeds", rather than people / soils; "the seeds that fall by the roadside", Cassirer, so also Marcus - see Guelich for his take on the problem. Most translations follow the NIV, "people". The parallel construction with the adjectival participle **σπειρομενοι**, "being sown", found in v16, supports the view that "these seeds" is intended; "these *seeds*, the *ones scattered* beside the pathway." The NIV approach is commonly followed, eg., "Some people are like the seed that falls on the hardened soil of the road. No sooner do they hear the Word than Satan snatches away what has been planted in them", Peterson.

οἱ "-" - THE ONES [BESIDE THE WAY]. The article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase **παρα την ὁδον**, "beside the way", into an attributive modifier limiting "these *seeds*"; "these *ones* = *seeds* (words) which are scattered beside the way."

εισιν [ειμι] pres. "**are like**" - ARE = REPRESENT. Here introducing a comparison, as NIV. "The seeds which are scattered on the pathway, may be compared to the situation where the Word is sown .."

ὅπου "**where**" - WHERE [IS SOWN THE WORD]. Local conjunction; "where the Word is sown."

και "-" - AND. Coordinative, "and", rather than adversative, "but"; "the message is sown and as soon as it is heard", Berkeley.

ὅταν + subj. "**as soon as**" - WHEN. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, treated as definite.

ακουσωσιν [ακουω] aor. subj. "**they hear**" - THEY HEAR *it*. The subject is **ὁ λογος**, "the word", so "when it is heard."

ευθυς adv. "-" - IMMEDIATELY [COMES SATAN AND TAKES THE WORD]. Temporal adverb. "Satan comes at once and takes away what was sown in their minds", Phillips, but possibly just what happens next in the narrative; "then".

τον εσπαρμενον [σπειρω] perf. pas. part. "**that was sown [in them]**" - HAVING BEEN SOWN [INTO, TO THEM]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the word", as NIV. In much the same way as a person without a sense of humour will often miss the point of a joke, so a person who is not seeking after truth will fail to see its relevance even when thrust before them.

v16

Mark's difficult syntax continues. Although often read as "these *people* are like / may be compared with the seed beside the path", the syntax implies "these

ones (the seeds = word), which are sown on the rocky ground (shallow ground) are (may be compared to the situation) *where the word is sown in people*, who, when they hear the word, receive it joyfully." Either way, the point is clear enough.

καὶ "-" AND. Coordinative; "similarly", Cassirer.

οὗτοι pro. "others" - THESE ones. Demonstrative pronoun, as v15. Variant ὁμοίως, "in like manner, likewise", is an attempt to sort out Mark's *interesting* syntax. As noted above, although the syntax implies that "these ones" = "the seeds" (God's words sown), the NIV provides a sensible translation; "And some are like the seed that lands in the gravel. When they first hear the Word, they respond with great enthusiasm. But there is such shallow soil of character that when the emotions wear off and some difficulty arrives, there is nothing to show for it", Peterson.

οἱ σπειρομενοι [σπειρω] pres. pas. part. "seed sown" - THE ONES BEING SOWN. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting οὗτοι, "these"; "these ones = seeds which are sown upon rocky places / ground."

ἐπι + acc. "on" - UPON [ROCKY PLACES]. Spatial.

εἰσιν [εἰμι] pres. "like" - ARE = REPRESENT. "May be compared to the situation where", As v15.

οἷ pro. "-" - WHO. Masculine relative pronoun; "may be compared to the situation *where the word is sown in people who*."

ὅταν + subj. "-" - WHEN [THEY HEAR THE WORD]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, treated as definite; "when they hear the word."

μετα + acc. "with joy" - [IMMEDIATELY RECEIVE IT] WITH [JOY]. The preposition is adverbial, modal, expressing manner. Taken with χαρᾶς, "joy", it forms an adverb modifying the verb "receive"; "they enthusiastically receive it at once."

v17

καὶ "but since" - AND. The conjunction here serves an epexegetic function, introducing a kind of parenthesis explaining how a superficial person (ie., a person who, when they hear the word, receive it joyfully, but then when trouble or persecution arises because of the word, give up) is like seed growing in shallow ground; *it is because seed growing in shallow ground* has a limited root system and is short lived."

ἐν + dat. "-" - [THEY DO NOT HAVE A ROOT] IN [THEMSELVES, BUT ARE TEMPORARY, TRANSITORY]. Local, expressing sphere, metaphorical; "within themselves

εἶτα adv. "-" - THEN. Temporal adverb, expressing what follows in time; "next". The seed falling on shallow ground, quickly sprouting, but quickly dying

due to a stunted root system, is like / may be compared with the situation where a person accepts the word enthusiastically, but then, when the word brings trouble or persecution

γενομένης [γίνομαι] gen. aor. part. "**when [trouble or persecution] comes**" - [TRIBULATION OR PERSECUTION] COMING ABOUT. The genitive participle, and its two genitive subjects, form a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

δια + acc. "**because of**" - BECAUSE OF [THE WORD]. Causal; "because of, on account of." Luke expresses this time as a "time of testing."

σκανδαλιζονται [σκανδαλιζω] pres. pas. "**they [quickly] fall away**" - THEY [IMMEDIATELY] TRIP, STUMBLE. Luke uses the verb **αφιστημι**, with the sense "to fall away", "become apostate", BAGD. Mark's choice is, "to be ensnared, trapped", MM, moving to the sense "be offended", "of being offended and repelled to the point of abandoning", TH. "Stumble and fall", Berkeley.

v18

αλλοι adj. "**[still] others**" - [AND] OTHERS. The problem as to what is sown continues. Most assume the "others" are other people representing soil, but leaving aside the idea of soil being sown (or both soil and seeds, so Marcus), the "others" again probably refers to seeds (the masculine "others" reflecting the masculine **λογος**, "word"); "others (other seeds) which are sown into the thorns are (may be compared with the situation) *where the word is sown in people*. These *people* are the ones who hear the word, but ..." "The seed cast in the weeds represents the ones who hear the kingdom news but are overwhelmed with worries about all the things they have to do and all the things they want to get. The stress strangles what they heard, and nothing comes of it", Peterson.

οἱ σπειρομενοι [σπειρω] pres. mid./pas. part. "**sown**" - *the ones* BEING SOWN [INTO THE THORNS]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "others = other *seeds*"; "other *seeds* which are sown among the thorns."

οἱ ακουσαντες [ακουω] pres. part. "**hear [the word]**" - [ARE = REPRESENT] THE ONES HAVING HEARD [THE WORD]. The participle serves as a substantive, predicate nominative.

v19

και "but" - AND. Here adversative, "but", as NIV.

του αιωνος [ων ωνος] gen. "**of this life**" - [THE ANXIETIES, CARES, WORRIES] OF THE AGE. The sense being "worldly life." The genitive may be treated as descriptive, idiomatic / source, "the worries *that come our way through the rough-and-tumble* of life." Zerwick suggests verbal, objective, "for things of the world", or subjective, "which preoccupy men in the world." The

NIV has translated the article **του** as a demonstrative pronoun, "this age", rather than "the age."

του πλουτου [ος] gen. "**of wealth**" - [AND THE SEDUCTION, ALLUREMENT] OF RICHES. The genitive may again be taken as descriptive, idiomatic / source, "the seduction *which comes from* wealth", Cassirer, but it is usually classified as verbal, objective.

περι "for" - [AND THE DESIRES FOR THE REST, WHAT REMAINS]. Reference / respect, "with reference to"; "passions for other interests", Berkeley.

εισπορευομεναι [εισπορευομαι] pres. part. "**come in**" - GOING IN [CHOKING THE WORD]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to choke", as NIV.

ακαρπος adj. "**unfruitful**" - [AND IT BECOMES] UNFRUITFUL. Predicate adjective.

v20

και "-" - AND. Here adversative; "but".

εκεινοι pro. "**others**" - THOSE [ARE]. Masculine demonstrative pronoun again, "those"; not "those people", but "those seeds", as above. The opening clause is again repeated, as above; "those (those seeds) which are sown on good soil are (may be compared with the situation) *where the word is sown in people* who hear the word and receive *it* and bear fruit,"

οι σπαρεντες [σπειρω] aor. pas. part. "**seed sown**" - THE ONES HAVING BEEN SOWN. The participle serves as a substantive.

επι + acc. "**on [good soil]**" - UPON [THE GOOD SOIL]. Spatial.

οιτινες pro. "-" - WHO [HEAR THE WORD AND RECEIVE *it*]. Indefinite relative pronoun.

καρποφουσιν [καρποφω] pres. "**produce a crop**" - [AND] BEAR FRUIT. The issue of bearing fruit is usually taken to refer to discipleship, faithful Christian living, but it is more likely that faith is the harvest in mind, dependence on God's Word; "people who hear the gospel, accept it and put their faith in it." Of course, as we launch into space with our many and varied applications, we are bound to remember that the **καρπος**, "fruit", remains unstated. The text simply makes the point that when "the word falls on good soil, it is amazingly productive", Boring.

εν "some" - ONE [THIRTY AND] ONE [SIXTY AND] ONE [ONE HUNDRED]. For the Gk., see v8. It is more than likely that the varied results of the harvest are not in mind. The point is, the harvest is bountiful, even at "thirtyfold". Everyone knows that harvests are variable, but this one is bountiful, and that's what matters. None-the-less, if anything is to be made of the variable nature of the harvest, faith is observably variable. Some believers seem to exhibit exemplary faith, others,

like me, rely on a faith as small as a mustard seed, infected with doubts and fears, but it is enough, because our salvation does not rest on the quality of our faith, but the quality of God's grace.

v21

iv] The lamp and the measure, v21-25. Mark (Luke follows suit) now arranges four independent sayings to guide our understanding of the parable of the Sower. "The word is meant to be heard, and finally will be. The hiding and hardening are only temporary and correspond to God's wisdom, not human common sense", Boring. So, "take care to understand the meaning of that which you hear", Cassirer, v24. "The divine gift of perceiving God's kingdom is not arbitrary, but is given to those who strive to understand and have developed their own insight..... Those who hear with insight receive more insight; those who hear only superficially have even that taken away from them", Boring.

Saying #1. Given that the function of a lamp is to give light, a person doesn't hide a lighted lamp. Given that the function of divine revelation is to enlighten humanity, God doesn't hide his Word - except in an act of divine judgement upon a people whose ears have grown dull, eg., kingdom parables. Have the ears of Western civilisation grown dull?

αυτοις dat. pro. "[he said] to them" - [AND HE WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object. Is the antecedent the disciples or the gathered crowd along with the disciples?

μητι "-" - Used in a question expecting a negative answer; "you don't do you?"

ερχεται [ερχομαι] "do you bring" - [THE LAMP] DOES [NOT] COME. A rather strange expression, usually viewed as shaped by the original Aramaic. "Do you turn on a torch and then cover it with your hand, or do you let it light your way?"

ινα + subj. "to [put it]" - THAT = IN ORDER THAT [IT MAY BE PLACED]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that." There are four purpose clauses in this and the following three verses.

υπο + acc. "under" - UNDER [THE MEASURE BOWL OR] UNDER [THE BED]. Spatial, as NIV.

ουχ "[do]n't" - NOT [THAT = IN ORDER THAT IT MAY BE PLACED UPON THE LAMP-STAND]. Used in a question expecting a positive answer; "does not the lamp come in order that it may be placed upon the lamp-stand?"

v22

Saying #2: What is hidden will be revealed. Mark uses the saying to reflect on the hidden nature of kingdom parables, so establishing the point that with God, "nothing is kept hidden except with the intention that it should come into the open", Cassirer. This saying uses Hebraic parallelism.

γάρ "for" - Probably serving here as a stitching device, rather than expressing cause / reason. None-the-less, Mark wants v21 and 22 taken together and "for" in English serves this purpose. This saying is about uncovering, not covering.

εάν μη "-" - [IT IS NOT *something* HIDDEN] EXCEPT. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception. "Nothing is hidden." Note the two negatives, ου μη, a construction where two negatives = a positive.

ἵνα + subj. "is meant" - THAT [IT MAY *eventually* BE REVEALED]. Usually taken here as adverbial, introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that." The ἵνα is often viewed as an insertion by Mark to make the point that God may hide the truth for a time, but he does this in order to ultimately reveal it. Of course, purpose can express inevitability, particularly with God. The so-called Q version of the verse is usually taken as "nothing is covered that will not be revealed, and hid that will not be known." Is God the organiser of a treasure hunt, hiding things in order that they may be found?

εγενετο [γινομαι] aor. "is" - [NOR] HAS IT BECOME [HIDDEN]. Given that εστιν, "[there] is [not hidden] / [whatever] is [hidden]", is present tense, the intent of an aorist here is somewhat perplexing. Marcus thinks Mark is stressing a time signature, so the aorist here is serving as a past tense; "just as, in the past (during Jesus' lifetime), nothing was hidden except in order to become manifest, so it is in the present: all the hiddenness of the current age will ultimately serve the purpose of revelation", Marcus. It is more likely that the aorist is simply a punctiliar present and that what we have here is typical Semitic parallelism where the same point is made with slightly different words; the point being, what is hidden will be revealed. When????

αλλ [αλλα] "-" - BUT [THAT IT MAY *eventually* COME INTO *the* OPEN (that it may be known)]. Establishing a counterpoint.

v23

A common saying used by Jesus to encourage attention; "pay attention."

ει + ind. "if" - IF [ANYONE HAS EARS]. Introducing a conditional clause 1st class where the condition is assumed to be true; "if, as is the case, then [let them hear]."

ακουειν [ακουω] pres. inf. "to hear" - TO HEAR [LET HIM HEAR]. The infinitive is probably adjectival, epexegetic, limiting by explaining / making specific "ears"; "ears that hear." Not just the capacity to hear, but more particularly, to hear the Word of God; "If you have ears attuned to the Word of God, then you had better listen to what I say."

v24

Saying #3: "What you give is what you get, and even more." The saying, in general terms, applies to the whole of life, both practical and spiritual - results only come through applied effort. In the context, this principle applies to God's word. When we apply ourselves to God's word we will get understanding, and then some. Interestingly, Qumran texts make the same point, namely, "people will receive insight according to the measure of their attentiveness", Marcus. It should be noted that the usual application of this text, when applied to Temple Day, namely, that money given to the church will be returned in full, and then some, may help the church's bottom-line, but is certainly not an *eternal verity*!

βλεπετε [βλεπω] pres. imp. "**consider carefully**" - [AND HE WAS SAYING TO THEM] SEE, CONSIDER. "Pay attention to"; apply all our faculties to ...

τί pro. "**what**"- WHAT [YOU HEAR]. Not "how", Lk.8:18, but "what you hear", although possibly just standing in for **ὅ**, "that which", Zerwick. "In a world that is still, in a sense, Satan's house and dominion, not all the voices that may be heard ought to be heard", Marcus.

εν + dat. "**with**" - IN = BY. Instrumental, expressing means, "with", as NIV.

ῶ μετρῶ [ον] "**the measure**" - [WHAT] MEASURE [YOU MEASURE IT WILL BE MEASURED]. A measure of something. The verb takes the sense of "give out / apportion / deal out", BAGD.

ὑμιν dat. pro. "**to you**" - Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage.

προσθεσεται [προστιθημι] fut. pas. "**even more**" - [AND] IT WILL BE PUT TO, ADDED TO. In the sense of "given in addition to." The passive, as with "will be measured", may be taken as theological / divine; God does the measuring out and adding, adding more than we could ever have imagined. So, Emily Dickinson on divine overcompensation:

As if I asked a common Alms,
and in my wondering hand
A Stranger pressed a Kingdom
And I, bewildered stand -

ὑμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - Dative of interest / direct object after the **προς** prefix verb "to add to."

v25

Saying #4: "Them that's got shall get, Them that's not shall lose", Billie Holiday. Seemingly identifying the flaw in capitalism, namely "that inequality tends to be compounded rather than rectified", France, ie., the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. But of course, context is everything, and so this saying again addresses the issue of the right hearing of the word of God. Those who apply

themselves to the revealed word will be given more comprehension; those who ignore it will lose even the knowledge they have.

γαρ "-" - FOR. As v22, used here as a stitching device.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [WHOEVER HAS, IT WILL BE GIVEN] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

και "**even**" - [WHOEVER DOES NOT HAVE] AND = EVEN [WHAT HE HAS WILL BE TAKEN AWAY]. Here ascensive; "even", as NIV. Given that it is not possible to take away something someone doesn't have, the sense is "whoever does not have *much*"; "A person who has very little, even the little they have will be taken away from them."

απ [**απο**] + gen. "**from**" - FROM [HIM]. Expressing separation; "away from." "The person who does nothing with the little that they retain of what they hear will be given nothing more; and even the little they have retained will be taken away from them", cf., Junkins.

4:26-34

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

5. The Word - the good news of the kingdom, 4:1-34

iii] The parable of the growing seed and mustard seed

Synopsis

A large crowd, eager to hear what Jesus has to say, has gathered by the lakeside. With the crowd pressing in, Jesus mounts a fishing boat, moves out into the lake a little way, and sitting in the stern, he begins teaching the people in parables. The narrative logic is interrupted by Jesus' explanation to the disciples of the parable of the Sower and why he speaks to the crowd in parables, but then, Mark continues by recording two examples of Jesus' kingdom parables.

Teaching

Now is the hour for the realisation / inauguration of God's righteous reign. "The kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the gospel."

Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-25.

ii] Background: *Jesus' use of parables*; See 4:1-25.

iii] Structure: *The parables of the growing seed and mustard bush*:

The parable of the growing seed, v26-29;

The parable of the mustard seed, v30-32.

Editorial comment, v33-34:

Jesus' general preaching was in the form of kingdom parables, v33;
to his disciples Jesus "explained everything", v34.

iv] Interpretation:

Both these parables are often interpreted as if illustrating growth in the kingdom, the movement of time from small beginnings to ultimate fulfilment, eg., the growth in the Christian church from its earliest days. This interpretation is derived from the parable of the Sower where it is assumed that the "seed" = "word" formula applies to all Jesus' parables. Yet, it is more likely that both these parables proclaim the immediacy of the kingdom. See C.H. Dodd *The Parables of the Kingdom*, but note that Dodd's realised eschatology always stands in tension with inaugurated eschatology - *now/not yet*.

Although often viewed as allegories, these two parables present as gospel presentations designed for a people with ears that don't want to hear.

They serve to draw out the true seeker, while, in an act of judgment, confuse those who have chosen to reject a clear word from God. As with all kingdom parables, they begin with the phrase "the kingdom of God / heaven is like....."; "like = *may be compared to the situation where*" They announce the righteous reign of God in the person of Jesus, who's coming has released mysterious forces which even now inaugurate that reign, a reign that will be fully realised at the *eschaton*. In this sense, they are mysterious enigmatic utterances similar to an Old Testament riddle, a *marsal*, a riddle which conceals its meaning from the hearer, eg., 2Sam.12:5f. It is within an environment of disbelief and opposition that Jesus has used these parables, but in simple terms, they proclaim that "the kingdom of God is at hand / *is bursting in upon us.*"

v] Synoptics:

The parable of the Growing Seed, v26-29. This short parable partly aligns with Matthew's parable of the weeds in the field, 13:24-30. Although some six words are common to both parables, Mark's version is without the weeds, and more particularly, without the commentary / interpretation. Markan priority is indicated, although we may just have two totally different parables.

The parable of the Mustard Seed, v30-32. Matt.13:31-32, Lk.13:18-19. Luke leaves out the comment that the mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds. A small / large comparison is likely to be original, but "smallest" is problematic.

Jesus' use of parables, v33-34. Matt.13:34-35. Matthew's addition of the quote from Isaiah supports Markan priority, although it seems strange for Matthew to move this pericope from after the parable of the Mustard Seed to after the parable of the Yeast.

vi] Homiletics: *The Grim Reaper*



Some years back, a resident of a retirement village in England decided to play a joke on his friends. He dressed up as the Grim Reaper, and after dinner, he toddled around village, appearing at the window of some of the apartments. Three people died of a heart attack. You see, waiting for God is one thing, but waiting for the Grim Reaper is another.

The kingdom parables of the growing seed and the mustard seed, proclaim that the kingdom of God has burst in upon us, it's "now"; the

catastrophic eruption of the reign of God in Christ has begun. Faced with this reality we are bound to ask how well our ears hear, for if God's mysterious reign is indeed intruding into human affairs, then it is also intruding into our affairs. So, do we "repent and believe", or do we ignore the fact that "the harvest is come", the tree is full grown?

"You can be a king or a street sweeper, but everyone has to dance with the Grim Reaper."

Text - 4:26

Two kingdom parables, v26-32: i] The parable of the growing seed, v26-29. Mark's "he also said", introduces another unit of teaching, here another kingdom parable. The introductory phrase "the kingdom of God" clues us to the fact that this story is a riddle; it tells us a secret about the kingdom. "God's cosmic intrusion into human affairs may be compared with the situation where a person, as it were, might sow a field. The grain germinates, grows, and when ripe, then comes the harvest. Although often treated as a parable of growth, it is more likely proclaiming the inauguration / realisation of the reign of God in Christ. The harvest is now, "the kingdom at hand", the reign of God begun.

ελεγεν [λεγω] imperf. "**he [also] said**" - [AND] HE WAS SAYING. Used to introduce a new element in the episode. "Another saying of his was this", Weymouth.

οὕτως adv. "**this is what [the kingdom of God] is like**" - THUS, IN THIS WAS, SO [IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD]. Predicate adverb used as a comparative; "God's righteous reign may be compared with the situation where" For "the kingdom of God", see 1:15.

ὡς + subj. "-" - AS, LIKE. The use of this construction here is often regarded as faulty (missing εν, εαν), either bad grammar or a textual error, cf., Gundry, p223 - typical of loose Koine Gk!! Possibly conditional, "as if a man should sow a crop", but also possibly comparative, "where a man, as it were, might sow a field", even exegetical, so Decker.

ανθρωπος [ος] "**a man**" - A MAN. Jesus is often identified with the sower in the parable of the Sower, but this sower "does not know." The image of an ignorant Jesus is unlikely, and in any case, kingdom parables are not allegories where each element represents something, or someone.

βαλη [βαλλω] aor. subj. "**scatters**" - MIGHT THROW. The aorist subjunctive may be futuristic, "as a man will sow", Moulton, (the aorist subjunctive does function, at times, as if it were a future indicative), but it is more likely that the subjunctive is a product of narrative style used for a hypothetical situation. Note the flurry of subjunctives that follow. The aorist tense is punctiliar, here

describing the act of sowing a field, while in the following verses, the present tense dominates, expressing the ongoing action of growth.

τον σπορον [ος] sing. "**seed**" - THE SEED. A singular collective seed is described, unlike the parable of the Sower. The parable of the Sower is often regarded as a "type" parable providing the clues to the interpretation of the kingdom parables. It is on this basis that the "seed" is often regarded as the word of God, the gospel. Yet, this assumes again that the kingdom parables are allegories where individual elements are assigned a meaning. It is more likely that the parable of the Sower is a teaching parable about parables (note, it does not begin with the phrase "the kingdom of God/heaven is like"). The parable of the Sower explains the function of kingdom parables, namely that they are gospel presentations, and as such prompt a varied response.

επι + gen. "**on**" - UPON [THE SOIL]. Spatial.

v27

νυκτα [νυξ νυκτος] "**Night [and day]**" - [AND] NIGHT [AND DAY]. "Night" and "day" are accusative of time, expressing extent. Night comes first because the day begins at sunset.

καθευδη [καθευδω] pres. subj. "**whether he sleeps**" - HE MIGHT SLEEP. Mark continues to use subjunctives to express a hypothetical situation: *εγειρηται*, "rise", *βλαστα*, "sprouts", *μηκυνηται*, "grows". It is also possibly that the subjunctive is used as a temporal indicator; "it is as if a man should sow a crop in his land, and then go to sleep and wake again, night after night, day after day, while the crop sprouts and grows", Knox. Another possibility is that the construction *ως* + subj. in v26 has influenced the use of subjunctive verbs in this verse, so conditional, "as if", or comparative, "as it were."

και και "**or [gets up]**" - AND [RISE] AND [THE SEED]. Correlative use of the conjunction *και*, expressing the ongoing business of working each day and sleeping each night. "He wakens in the morning and he goes to sleep at night", Barclay.

μηκυνηται [μηκυνω] aor. subj. "**grows**" - BECOMES LONG, GROWS UP. This descriptive of growth, expressed also in v28, naturally prompts the idea that the parable is about the growth of the kingdom - it starts out small in the ministry of Jesus and ends up with the heavenly assembly in the last day, or even the growth of the church. The parable of the Mustard Seed is also often understood as a parable of growth. Yet, the parable is probably not about growth. "While the seed sprouts and grows", Torrey.

ως "**how**" - [HE DOES NOT KNOW] HOW *the seed grows*. When used after verbs of saying or thinking, this conjunction will often introduce a dependant statement. Here the perception is assumed, namely, that the seed grows. A

temporal use is also possible; "while it happens." "He has no idea how it happens", Phillips.

v28

αυτοματη adj. "**all by itself**" - ON ITS OWN, BY ITSELF. Functioning as an adverb, with the sense "spontaneously". Referring to something which happens without visible cause, BAGD. "With no help from anyone", Barclay.

χαρτον [ος] "**stalk**" - [THE SOIL BEARS FRUIT, FIRST] GRASS. Here "the green shoot", Taylor.

ειτεν "**then**" - THEN. Temporal adverb. Ionic form of **ειτα** used only here in the NT, but common in papyri of the time.

πληρης adj. "**full [kernel]**" - [A HEAD OF GRAIN, THEN] FULL [WHEAT]. "Full" in the sense of "ripe". They "grow into plants that produce grain", CEV.

εν dat. "**in**" - IN [THE HEAD]. Local, expressing space; "then the ripe grain in the ear."

v29

The language of this verse reflects Joel 3:13 and is shaped to serve as the punch line. This verse reinforces the view that the parable is not about growth, but about harvest, a harvest which announces that "the kingdom of God is at hand" - the harvest is come.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. The postpositive conjunction is transitional, introducing a contrast and therefore a climax to the story. "But no sooner is the crop ready", Weymouth.

οταν + subj. "**as soon as [the grain is ripe]**" - WHEN [THE CROP]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, "but whenever the crop is ready", Moffatt, although usually translated with the more definite sense, "when", as NIV.

παραδοι [παραδιδωμι] aor. subj. "**is ripe**" - PERMITS, ALLOWS / HAND OVER. Here the classical, "permits" = "ready", "when its crop is ready", Black. Aramaic usage, "fully mature", Manson.

ευθυς "-" - IMMEDIATELY. Somewhat redundant given **οταν**, but serving to compress time and underline urgency; "He sends his reapers in without delay", Phillips.

αποστελλει [αποστελλω] pres. "**he puts [the sickle to it]**" - HE SENDS [THE SICKLE]. "He sends forth / puts forth the sickle", although more likely reflecting the Joel source, "wields / applies the sickle." Imaging the letting loose of the reapers, and so "send" can be rendered, "then he sends the reapers", Weymouth.

ὅτι "because" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why he, the farmer, puts the sickle to the grain, because the grain is ready to harvest.

παρεστηκεν [παριστημι] perf. "[the harvest] has come" - [THE HARVEST] HAS CAUSED TO BE, ARRIVED. Here the perfect underlines a point of time; "is here", Cranfield.

v30

ii] The parable of the Mustard Seed, v30-32. This parable makes the same point as the parable of the growing seed. Of course, if the above interpretation is correct, then the traditional names for these parables is misleading. *The parable of the mustard seed* becomes *the parable of the full-grown mustard bush* and *the parable of the growing seed* becomes *the parable of the seed ripe for harvest*. Again, the parable is best taken to reveal "the catastrophic irruption of the Reign of God into human affairs", Mann, rather than be "understood as embodying ideas of growth", eg., "God's reign may seem small and insignificant in its beginnings, but it holds within it the most surprising forces", Moule. Even with an eschatological climactic approach to this kingdom parable, there still remains the temptation to draw any number of allegorical applications from the different elements in the parable. Mann probably sets the limits with "God's reign is already present and people are already seeking its shelter and its promises." Interpretations of kingdom parables are only limited by the limits of one's imagination.

πως + subj. "what" - [AND HE WAS SAYING] HOW, IN WHAT WAY. Deliberative / interrogative particle. A textual variant has "with what."

ὀμοιωσωμεν [ὀμοιωω] aor. subj. "is like" - SHALL WE COMPARE. A deliberative subjunctive, as NIV, "how shall we ...?". "To what shall we compare", Moffatt.

την βασιλειαν του θεου "the kingdom of God" - See v1:15.

η "or" - OR. The disjunctive here introduces a tautology, a restated idea; Semitic parallelism.

εν + dat. "-" - IN, WITH, BY [WHAT]. Here taking an instrumental sense, expressing means, "by what parable." Variant "what kind."

παραβολη [η] "parable" - PROVERB, PARABLE, POEM. Is Mark intending us to understand the word as a technical descriptive, thus "parable", so NIV, or is he just describing a parallelism between the kingdom and the story, "by what comparison ('similitude / figure', Taylor) can we represent it?"

θωμεν [τιθημι] aor. subj. "shall we use to describe it" - MAY WE PRESENT [IT]? Again, the subjunctive is deliberative. Here in the sense of presenting an idea. A variant exists which has "may we compare." "What picture can we use to represent it", Barclay.

v31

The kingdom of God may be compared to the situation where a small mustard seed is planted and grows into a shrub large enough for birds to find shade in its branches. The kingdom promised long ago has found its fulfilment in Jesus. The tree is now full-grown and Israel may rest in its shade, Ez.17:22-24 - "the kingdom of God is at hand."

Mark's parenthesis, "which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground", is regarded with suspicion by some commentators. Its originality is questioned, or at least is regarded as Mark's own comment concerning mustard seeds. The comment is actually wrong in that the mustard is a small seed, but not the smallest, and the grammar is faulty, prompting textual variations.

ὥς "*it is like*" - AS. For the syntax see ὥς, v26. "With what will we compare the kingdom of God, what illustration best describes it? It may be compared to the situation where a mustard seed is sown, grows up, and becomes"

σιναπεως [ι εως] gen. "[a] **mustard**" - A MUSTARD PLANT. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "seed".

κοκκῷ [ος] dat. "**seed**" - GRAIN, SEED. Dative of comparison, or following an assumed εν, see ὥς, v26.

ὅταν + subj. "-" - [WHICH] WHEN [IT IS SOWN UPON THE EARTH]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, translated as definite.

ὄν [ειμι] pres. neut. part. of verb to-be. "**which is**" - BEING. Since this adjectival participle agrees with "grain" it should be masculine, but has been attracted to "offspring" which is neuter.

μικροτερον [μικρος] comp. adj. "**the smallest**" - SMALLER. The comparative here is used for the superlative. Although not the smallest seed, it was proverbially regarded as the smallest. Torrey suggests that an Aramaic original may have read "which is less than all the seeds."

παντων gen. adj. "**of all**" - OF = THAN ALL. The genitive is ablative, of comparison.

των σπερματων [α ατος] gen. "**seeds**" - OF THE SEEDS, OFFSPRING. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

των gen. "-" - THE [UPON THE EARTH]. This article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase "upon the earth" into an attributive modifier limiting "seeds"; "seeds which are on the earth."

v32

The riddle of the parable is deciphered by means of its Biblical precedence: Ps. 104:12, Ezk.17:23, 31:6, Dan.4:12, 14, 21 - that day, the day when Israel will find shelter, "is at hand."

και "yet" - AND. Here slightly adversative; "but / yet."

ὅταν + subj. "**when [planted]**" - WHEN [IT IS SOWN]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, translated as definite.

μειζον [μεγας] comp. adj. "**the largest**" - [IT GROWS UP AND BECOMES] LARGER, GREATER. Predicate adjective; the comparative used for the superlative. "It keeps on growing until it becomes the biggest of all kitchen herbs", Barclay.

παντων gen. adj. "**of all**" - OF = THAN ALL. The genitive is ablative, of comparison; "greater than all"

των λαχανων [ον] gen. "**the garden plants**" - OF THE VEGETABLES. The genitive is adjectival, partitive; "of garden herbs", Taylor.

ὥστε + inf. "**that**" - [AND MAKES LARGE BRANCHES] SO THAT, IN ORDER THAT. Introducing a consecutive clause expressing result; "with the result that."

του ουρανου [ος] gen. "-" - [THE BIRDS] OF HEAVEN. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "birds"; "wild birds."

δυνασθαι [δυναμαι] pres. inf. "**can**" - ARE ABLE. Infinitive following **ὥστε**. "The birds of heaven" serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive.

κατασκηνουν [κατασκηνω] pres. inf. "**perch**" - TO NEST, SETTLE, LIVE, DWELL, CAMP. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the infinitive "to be able / can." "Perch" is unlikely, "nest", Cranfield, but better, "rest under its shadow", Taylor.

ὑπο + acc. "**in**" - UNDER [THE SHADE OF IT]. Spatial.

v33

iii] Conclusion, v33-34. These verses are probably an editorial comment, added by Mark and repeated by Matthew, or added by Matthew and repeated by Mark???? Of course, they may well be part of the received tradition, possibly from a proto-Mark document, or retained within the oral tradition. The two verses summarise Jesus' teaching methodology. With general congregations Jesus teaches with stories / illustrations / parables, riddles, but with his disciples he undertakes more detailed exposition - "to you it has been granted to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven."

As already indicated, due to a rejection of the gospel, Jesus began presenting the gospel in the form of kingdom parables, riddles. These serve as an act of judgment upon a people whose ears have grown dull, but at the same time they serve as a sign to those seeking the coming kingdom. When Mark refers to

"similar parables" he probably has in mind similar kingdom parables and so **ακουειν** is not "understand", but rather "hear." Probably "as they were willing to hear" - an audience can take only so many riddles; understanding requires interpretation. "As they were able to hear it", NRSV, ESV. Probably not "to the extent they were able to understand", Guelich.

παροβολαις [η] dat. "[**with many similar**] **parables**" - [AND WITH MANY SIMILAR] PARABLES. The dative is instrumental, expressing means, "with / by many such parables."

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [HE WAS SPEAKING] TO THEM [THE WORD]. Dative of indirect object.

καθως "as much as" - AS. The sense here is unclear, but probably expressing a characteristic quality / standard, "in accordance with what they were able / willing to hear."

ακουειν [ακουω] pres. inf. "**hear / understand**" - [THEY WERE ABLE] TO HEAR. Complementary infinitive.

v34

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [BUT/AND HE WAS NOT SPEAKING] TO THEM [APART FROM, WITHOUT, PARABLES]. Dative of indirect object.

κατ ιδιαν "when he was alone" - [BUT/AND ACCORDING TO ONE'S OWN = PRIVATELY. This idiomatic prepositional phrase is adverbial; "privately."

τοις μαθηταις [ης ου] dat. "**disciples**" - [HE WAS EXPLAINING EVERYTHING] TO [OWN'S OWN = HIS OWN] DISCIPLES]. Dative of indirect object.

4:35-41

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

6. The powers defeated, 4:35-5:43

ij Nature - calming the sea

Synopsis

Leaving the crowd on the beach, Jesus and his disciples embark and head for the east side of the lake. On the way, they encounter a raging storm as wind, funnelling down the ravines onto the lake, whips up the sea. The boat begins to take water, and so the disciples wake Jesus who, at that moment, was fast asleep in the stern. "Don't you care if we drown", they cried. Jesus then stills the storm, commenting "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" The disciples, overwhelmed with fear, exclaim "what kind of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey his commands?", Cassirer.

Teaching

Jesus is Lord over the powers of darkness, which reality a disciple will experience through faith.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8. This incident falls within the later Galilean ministry of Jesus. It is part of a set of stories which demonstrate Jesus' victory over powers hostile to God, 4:35-5:43. In fact, it serves as part of an artistically packaged set stories. The kingdom parables announce the catastrophic eruption of the reign of God in Jesus, and now Mark describes the exercise of Jesus' authority over the powers of the deep (leviathan / Satan), demon possession, sickness and death. In these stories we are confronted with Jesus' word of power over dark forces, a word that interplays with the human response of faith.

ii] Structure: *Jesus stills the storm.*

The setting;

Miracle;

Associated word;

Response.

This episode / pericope adopts the standard form of a healing / miracle story, here particularly a nature miracle. Instead of the disciples asking for help they accuse Jesus and then Jesus, having stilled the storm, rebukes the disciples, who in-turn respond in amazement.

iii] Interpretation:

The stilling of the storm does more than just tell us that Jesus is Lord over nature. The roaring sea corresponds with the rage of the demoniac in the next story, 5:1-20, as does the calm of the sea with the demoniac's calm after the demon is cast out. So, what we have in this story is Jesus subduing the evil powers of darkness.

It was commonly believed that such powers dwell in the deep, in the waters of the sea. The great leviathan represents this power of darkness. So, this incident represents a satanic attack upon Jesus; the howling wind, the waves breaking into the boat, represent Satan reaching out to frustrate, even end Jesus' mission. Yet, the reign of God is Jesus has begun, and Jesus, the messiah, is on a divine mission, and no earthly, or spiritual power, can stand in his way. These powers may rant and rave, but they cannot frustrate the dawning kingdom.

Mark would have us face this reality; he would have us take note of the failure of Jesus' first disciples and their lack of faith; he would have us understand that Jesus is Lord over the powers of darkness.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.8:23-27, Lk.8:22-25. There is obvious alignment with the story of Jonah, particularly v37-39. Either Mark flavours his received tradition to draw out this alignment, or it is part of his received tradition. See Marcus on Mark's Jonah typology, Book 1, p336-8.

Alignment is evident between Luke and Mark for this and the next two episodes, cf., Lk.8:22-56. The accounts evidence the vivid details of an eyewitness account. This does not mean that they were present, just that the tradition they draw from has preserved the substantial elements of personal observation.

v] Homiletics: *Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?*



*Tho the tempest rage and the wild winds blow,
Not an angry wave shall our bark oer-flow.*

In St. Andrew's Anglican church at Cronulla, there is a stained-glass window depicting the story of Jesus stilling the storm. There were the disciples, cowering in their little boat, hard pressed in a perilous sea, and Jesus standing in their midst. Some of the crew are depicted filled with fear as they watch the waves plunge into their boat, while others are at peace

as they look to Jesus - "steadfast and sure while the billows roll."

Too often we find ourselves as if in a boat tossed against the "storms of life." It's not easy surviving in this ever-changing melting pot called life. Yet worse, our faith is constantly submerged in doubts and questions, our discipleship debilitated by fear.

Of course, the answer to our problem is simple enough. If our anchor is "fastened to the Rock which cannot move" then we "can defy the blast, through strength divine." Are we able to survive the "billows roll"? The answer, of course, is yes, for "we have an anchor that keeps the soul."

Text - 4:35

Jesus stills the storm, v35-41. Jesus has been preaching beside the sea of Galilee. Following his usual practice of furthering his gospel ministry, the team sets sail for the Eastern shore of the lake. Evening sailing was usually much safer, certainly safer than the afternoons when the wind often increases. On this occasion, a storm hit, and the boat was about to be swamped. The disciples, many of them experienced fishermen, were afraid of the severity of the storm. They woke Jesus and virtually accused him of not caring about their fate. Jesus responds by stilling the storm. He actually "rebukes" the storm, commanding it to be silent. This is exactly the way he treats the demonic powers. Powers have threatened Jesus and his disciples, and Jesus responds by muzzling them with a word of authority. Having rebuked the wind, Jesus rebukes the disciples with two questions which they answer themselves in their exclamation, "who is this?"

εν + dat. "-" - ON [THAT DAY]. Temporal use of the preposition.

γενομενης [γίνομαι] gen. aor. part. "**when [evening] came**" - [EVENING] HAVING BECOME, COME INTO BEING, BEEN BORN. The genitive participle with the genitive noun "evening" forms a genitive absolute construction, usually taken as temporal, as NIV. "Evening" means "sunset".

λεγει [λεγω] pres. "**he said**" - A historic present, used for narrative style, here to indicate transition to a new episode.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to his disciples**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

διελθωμεν [διερχομαι] aor. subj. "**let's go over**" - LET US GO THROUGH, PASS THROUGH. Hortatory subjunctive. Here obviously "let us cross over".

εις + acc. "**to [the other side]**" - TO, INTO. Spatial, expressing direction toward and arrival at. The country east of Lake Galilee; "to the eastern side of the lake."

v36

αφεντες [αφιημι] aor. part. "**leaving**" - [AND] SENDING AWAY, LETTING GO, GOING AWAY, RELEASING [THE CROWD]. Attendant circumstance participle,

expressing action accompanying the main verb "they take", but possibly adverbial, temporal. Sometimes given the sense "dismiss", although, Mark does not use the word this way. Taylor notes the alternate reading and argues that it is a Greek correction of the original Aramaic. They are leaving the crowd on the beach where they had been standing while Jesus spoke to them from the stern of the boat.

ὡς "just as" - [THEY TAKE HIM] AS [HE WAS]. Comparative. The intended sense of this phrase is unclear. Jesus is in the boat and so it is the disciples who leave the crowd and get in the boat/s. Sweet suggests "without going ashore to make preparations."

ἐν + dat. "in" - IN [THE BOAT]. Local, expressing space.

αυτου pro. "him" - [AND OTHER BOATS WERE WITH] HIM, IT. Genitive after the preposition **μετα**, "with", expressing association. Either with Jesus, or with the boat. No further mention is made of the other boats, but it is obviously one of those interesting pieces of the original setting preserved in the oral tradition.

v37

λαιλαψ [αψ απος] "[furious] squall" - [AND THERE CAME ABOUT A LARGE, FERCE] STORM, WHIRLWIND, HURRICANE, SQUALL. Nominative subject of **γινεται**; "a fierce gust of wind", BAGD.

ανεμου [ος] gen. "-" - OF WIND. The genitive is adjectival, possibly idiomatic, of material, identifying what the great squall is made of, namely "wind", but best treated as attributed, "a violent wind"; "a violent gale sprung up", Cassirer.

εις + acc. "[broke] over" - [AND THE WAVES WERE THROWING = BREAKING OVER] TO, INTO [THE BOAT]. Spatial, indicating the direction of the action and arrival at. Here in the sense, "the waves were breaking into the boat."

ωστε + inf. "so that" - SO THAT. Introducing a consecutive clause expressing result; the result being that they were nearly swamped.

ηδη adv. "-" - ALREADY [THE BOAT TO BE FILLED]. The storm was such that the boat was "already" swamped; "it was about to sink", CEV. The accusative "boat" serves as the subject of the infinitive "to be filled", which infinitive stands with **ωστε**; "the boat was already at the point of filling up = sinking."

v38

αυτος pro. "Jesus" - [AND] HE. Unnecessary use of the personal pronoun; Semitic form.

καθευδων [καθευδω] pres. part. "sleeping" - [HE WAS] SLEEPING. The present participle with the imperfect verb to-be forms a periphrastic imperfect

construction, possibly indicating durative action, "he was sound-asleep in the stern"; "he was sleeping on a cushion in the stern [*of the boat*]", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE STERN]. Local, expressing space.

επι + acc. "**on**" - UPON. Spatial; "upon".

το προσκεφαλαιον [ον] "**a cushion**" - A CUSHION. The article implies only one cushion. Possibly a rower's leather seat, although there would be more than one, or possibly a cushion for a guest who would normally be placed in the stern of the boat.

εγειρουσιν [εγειρω] pres. "**woke**" - [AND] THEY RAISE, LIFT UP = ROUSE [HIM]. As with λεγουσιν, "they say", historic / narrative present translated in the past tense.

αυτω dat. pro. "**to him**" - [AND THEY SAY] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

σοι dat. pro. "**[don't] you [care]**" - [TEACHER, DOES IT NOT MATTER TO] YOU. Dative of direct object after the verb μελει, "it is a concern to" / interest. "Teacher, don't you care that we are all about to drown? Hurry! Do something", Junkins.

οτι "**if**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Jesus was not caring about, namely "that we are perishing."

απολλυμεθα [απολλυμι] pres. mid. "**we drown**" - WE ARE PERISHING, RUINED. The words are a rebuke, but notice how they are softened in Matthew and Luke. "Is it of no concern to you that we are perishing / drowning?"; "Teacher, are we to drown, for all you care", Moffatt.

v39

διεγερθεις [διεγειρω] aor. pas. part. "**he got up**" - HAVING BEEN WOKEN OUT OF A SLEEP, AROUSED COMPLETELY. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "he rebuked", but it may be treated as adverbial, temporal, "after he got up.". Although most illustrations have Jesus now standing up in the back of the boat, blond hair blowing in the wind, arms outstretched like Charlton Heston in the Ten Commandments (minus the staff), "got up" is better rendered "he awoke." It is very unlikely that Jesus would be foolish enough to stand up in a small sailing boat during a storm. "And he woke up", Moffatt.

επειμησεν [επιτιμω] aor. + dat. "**rebuked**" - HE SPOKE STERNLY TO = HE REBUKED, WARNED STERNLY. As God rebukes the wilds of nature, so Jesus rebukes the wind, speaking as its master. Possibly "he checked the wind", Moffatt.

τω ανεμω [ος] dat. "**the wind**" - THE WIND. Dative of direct object after the επι prefix verb "to rebuke."

τη θαλασση [α] **"to the waves"** - [AND HE SPOKE] TO THE SEA, LAKE. Dative of indirect object.

σιωπα [σιωπαω] pres. imp. **"Quiet"** - KEEP SILENCE, STILL. Imperative, "be silent." Calvin says that Jesus, in addressing the sea, serves "to show that the power of his voice reached the elements, which were devoid of feeling." Cranfield sees no demonic power behind the wind that is driving the sea. Yet, given that the story is tied to Jesus' overcoming of the "legion", it is likely that we are dealing with something more than just Jesus' mastery over nature. If this is the case, it is very unlikely that he would have uttered a rather pathetic "hush", NJB.

πεφιμωσο [φιμωω] perf. pas. imp. **"be still"** - BE MUZZLED, SILENCED. A very rare perfect imperative - only 4 in the NT; used for stylistic emphasis. The construction gives an emphatic sense to "be still", and so reinforces the sense that Jesus is instructing the dark powers of the underworld - he uses the same word when silencing an evil spirit, cf., 1:25. It's "be still (get back in your box!) and stay that way."

εκοπασεν [κοπαζω] aor. **"died down"** - [AND THE WIND] CEASED, DROPPED. Note the ring of an eyewitness account in the vivid brevity of this story. "The wind dropped and there was a great calm."

γαληνη [η] **"[it was completely] calm"** - [AND THERE BECAME A GREAT] CALM. Taylor notes that the long vowels in the Greek serve to promote "an atmosphere of complete peace."

v40

αυτοις dat. pro. **"to his disciples"** - [AND HE SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

τί **"why"** - WHY. Interrogative pronoun.

δειλοι adj. **"afraid"** - [ARE YOU] COWARDLY, AFRAID, FEARFUL, TIMID. Predicate adjective.

ούτως "-" - THUS. The comparative textual variant expresses manner; "why are you afraid like this", Moffatt.

ουπω **"[do you] still [have] no [faith]?"** - [DO YOU HAVE] NOT YET. Variant πως ουκ, giving the sense "how is it that you do not have faith. The text is disturbed here with words either alternating or being left out. The NIV follows "do you not yet have faith?" Either way, by this time, the disciples should have learned something of Jesus' mission and so be able to trust him. So, rather than Phillips "what has happened to your faith?", the sense is probably "have you still no faith?", NJB.

πιστιν [ις εως] **"faith"** - RELIANCE UPON, TRUST, FAITH? "Faith" in the sense of reliance on Christ, that he is both willing and able to resist the powers of

darkness. There is debate over the intended focus of this faith. Many commentators see the faith as focused on God, his fatherly care, not in Jesus' mission, cf., Taylor. Yet, the episode describes the disciples' fear of being swamped by the storm. Jesus is the messiah, inaugurating the kingdom of God. Can nature, or more particularly the powers of darkness, resist the dawning of the new age? The Reed Sea could not stand in the way of Israel, nor the river Jordan, and certainly a storm on lake Galilee is unlikely to overcome the mission of the messiah, the Israel of God.

v41

The disciples have not yet worked out who Jesus is and as consequence, are afraid and without faith. Although the crowds hear only riddles (parables), the disciples hear the clear truth. Yet, at this stage, they do not fully understand that Jesus "is the Christ, the Son of God". They do not understand that Jesus is ushering in the kingdom of God with power and authority, and that no force can stand against this heavenly man and his mission.

εφοβηθησαν [φοβεομαι] aor. pas. "**they were terrified**" - [AND] THEY WERE AFRAID, FEARED [A GREAT FEAR]. The addition of "a great fear" in the Greek is added for emphasis, "they feared a great fear." The word can move toward "respect", "sheer awe swept over them", Phillips.

ελεγον [λεγω] imperf. "**asked**" - [AND] THEY WERE SAYING. Here possibly an inceptive imperfect where the emphasis is on the beginning of the action, "they began to say to one another", Taylor.

αλληλους pro. "**each other**" - [TOWARD] ONE ANOTHER. Discussion emerged within the group.

αρα "-" - [WHO] THEN, THEREFORE [IS THIS]. Drawing a logical conclusion; "in light of all that has happened then, who is this man?"

οτι "-" - THAT [AND = EVEN]. Possibly serving to introduce a dependent statement of perception expressing the content of their musings, that which prompts the question "who is this?" Zerwick suggests that it is causal in that it gives the reason why the question is put, see #420. Decker suggests that it is epexegetic, specifying who "this" is. "Who can this be seeing that both the wind and the waves obey him."

ο ανεμος [ος] "**wind**" - THE WIND. Nominative subject of the verb "to obey." Not "spirit."

η θαλασσα [α] "**waves**" - [AND] THE SEA, LAKE. Nominative subject of the verb "to obey." Obviously "waves", as NIV.

υπακουει [υπακουω] pres. "**obey**" - OBEY. It is the "wind" and the "sea / waves" which obey, although Mark has used a singular verb. He may have a singular sense in mind, that together they obey. Who is this that both the wind

and the sea = nature obey him? The answer is usually, he is God, but of course, someone like Moses, even the messiah, is the correct conclusion. The disciples obviously, at this stage in Jesus' ministry, do not know the answer to the question, which is why they ask it, and it is why they are still without faith.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb ὑπακουω, "to obey."

5:1-20

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

6. The powers defeated, 4:35-5:43

ii] Demons - Gerasene demoniac

Synopsis

Having weathered the storm on lake Galilee, Jesus and his disciples reach the eastern shore, possibly near a region today called Khersa. There they encounter a man suffering a severe case of demon possession. The *legion* of demons seek to barter with Jesus and finally gain approval to possess a herd of swine. In a frenzied rush, the swine dive into the sea and drown. The demoniac, now set free, expresses his desire to serve Jesus, but his neighbours, on the other hand, are less than impressed, given the loss of a valuable herd of swine.

Teaching

Jesus is Lord over the powers of darkness that would enslave us.

Issues

i] Context: See 12:35-41. The context of this exorcism needs to be noted, particularly its association with the miracle on the lake. In the stilling of the storm Jesus subdues the dark powers welling up from the abyss. These same powers have possessed the demoniac, and with the same word of authority, Jesus subdues them, driving them back where they belong.

ii] Structure: This passage / episode, *The demoniac healed*, presents as follows:

Jesus and the demoniac, v1-10;
the swine, v11-13;
the townspeople, v14-17;
the freed man, v18-20.

The structure of this rather untypical exorcism story, aligns with typical four-act drama structure, cf., Taylor.

The setting;
Miracle;
Associated word;
Response.

iii] Interpretation:

The story of the Gerasene demoniac again shows Jesus subduing dark powers with a word of authority. This time the dark powers demonstrate

their destructive nature as they seek to distort and destroy the image of God in humanity. In the first part of the story, the nature and power of Christ's word over the powers of darkness is revealed. In the second part of the story, we witness the demoniac's response of faith, as compared to the crowd's limited response of amazement and fear, a response similar to that of the disciples when confronted by Jesus' stilling of the storm, 4:35-41.

Application: It's worth noting the increased influence of Animal Liberation in Western societies. Animal liberationists have used this passage to suggest that Jesus happily participates in animal cruelty. To counter this charge, it could be argued that the drowning was not planned, that it was an unforeseen circumstance. It could also be argued that the frenzy of the swine was a natural reaction to the frenzy of the demoniac and so their drowning was accidental. It could even be argued that Jesus actually euthanised the pigs. He could have left the pigs in distress, infested with dark powers, but facilitated a swift and painless death in service of humanity.

Yet, a story like this must be considered within its cultural setting, and apart from twenty-first century cultural sensitivities. For Jews, swine are unclean animals. For a first century Jew, a swine would be an appropriate animal to house a demon, rather than be let loose to infest another human. Again, for a first century Jew, there is great humour in a story where demons stir up the host to such a degree that they end up jumping into the sea, and in so doing, find themselves entrapped in the deep, out of harm's way.

Jesus ministers within the cultural norms of his age. When we hear the story we may squirm, but when first century Jews hear the story they laugh. The story doesn't teach us that demons are entrapped in water under and around the earth, or that pigs serve well as a host for demons, etc., but that Jesus is Lord over the dark powers that would enslave us.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.8:28-34, Lk.8:26-39. Like Mark, Luke has one demoniac, while Matthew has two. If Matthew was using Mark, why would he change from one to two? Matthew and Luke's account share a traditional oral form, terse and uncomplicated, and so easily remembered. Mark, on the other hand, presents with an abundance of detail as if recording the account of an eyewitness, i.e., the account is not yet fully stylised by oral transmission. So, the mutual independence of Matthew and Mark is indicated.

v] Homiletics: *A disciple's brief*

Now, I have to say, watching a beautiful piece of pork crackling going headlong into the sea, is hard to take. But setting aside the loss of pork crackling, the destruction of a man's livelihood, possibly the livelihood of a whole village, and of course, cruelty to animals (actually, I think they were euthanised!!!!), anyway, apart from all this, there is a serious message in our reading today.

The powers of darkness may resist the dawning of God's reign in Christ, but in the end, their only choice is to flee in terror. God is gathering a people to be with him for eternity; the dominion of darkness is under attack.

Given the state of human affairs, it is likely that we may not recognise the vulnerability of the secular city, but the truth is Babel is on the run. As Jesus promised, the gates of Hades will not overcome his new community of believers. This fact is easily seen in the brief Jesus gave to the once-possessed demoniac. The story gives us a clue to how we may similarly confront the powers of darkness, and drive them to the abyss.

- "Go home to your family." Jesus tells this new disciple to minister to his own community, within his own social environ.
- "Tell them." A word of power has no power when sentenced to silence. Again, we are reminded that God's reign in Christ confronts the powers of darkness with a declared word; it is a reign realised through the preaching and teaching of the gospel, the good news about Jesus.
- Tell "how much the Lord has done", tell of his "mercy". The gospel announces the consequences of Christ's death and resurrection - of God's kindness and mercy for a broken people. Let us tell the news!

Text: 5:1

The Gerasene demoniac, v1-20: i] Jesus' meeting with the demon-possessed man, v1-5. After the storm on the lake, Jesus and his disciples come ashore in the region of Gerasa. There they confront a demon-possessed man who lives in caves nearby, caves that once served as tombs. The people in the villages nearby had tried to subdue him with chains to protect themselves from his lunacy, but they failed. He now wonders aimlessly, flaying himself with stones in an attempt to end his torment. He is in a state of total ruin, his personality possessed by dark powers. Mark takes great pains in describing his state of loss.

ηλθον [ερχομαι] aor. pl. **"They went"** - [AND] THEY CAME. The Plural indicating the presence of the disciples, although they play no part in the story.

εις + acc. "-" - TO, INTO. Spatial, expressing direction toward and arrival at.
το "-" - THE [BEYOND THE LAKE]. The neuter article το serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase "beyond the lake" = "other side of the lake", into a substantive, "the other side of the lake", object of ηλθον εις, "they came to." The adverb πέραν, "beyond, across", serving as a preposition + gen. answers the question where? Where does the action take place? "Across [the lake]." "They reached the opposite side of the lake", Moffatt.

εις + acc. "to" - TO, INTO. Repeating εις above to specify more clearly whereabouts across the lake.

την χωραν [α] "the region" - THE PLACE, COUNTRY. Here possibly in a political, rather than geographical sense, so "the territory around the city / environs", Boring.

των Γερασσηνων gen. "the Gerasenes" - OF THE GERASENES. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / local; "the region where the Gerasenes live." Variants exist, the least attested is "Gergesenes". Gergesa, now the modern village of Kursi, is situated on the edge of a plateau on the east bank of the Sea of Galilee. Gundry opts for this variant, see his notes 255/6. The best attested is "Gerasenes", Gerasa, now the modern city of Jerash, 35 miles south east of the Sea of Galilee, but not known to be territorially linked to the Sea of Galilee. Matthew's placement of the story at Gadara may be his own attempt to sort out the geography, Gadara being 5 miles south east of the lake with territorial links to the lake. Marcus opts for "Gerasenes" for symbolic reasons, the root meaning being "to banish". Guelich stays with the stronger reading, suggesting that "the region of" solves the geographical problem. Boring goes with the stronger reading, suggesting that Origen was responsible for the entrance of "Gergesenes" into the MSS tradition.

v2

εξελθοντος αυτου gen. "when [Jesus] got" - [AND HE] HAVING COME, GONE. The genitive participle + the genitive pronoun forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. A "clumsy use of the genitive absolute", Cranfield, given the inclusion of the subject αυτου. Note how Luke corrects the grammar having the participle agree with the dative pronoun αυτω following the verb "meet", see Zerwick #49.

εκ + gen. "out of" - OUT OF [THE BOAT]. Expressing source / origin.

ευθως "-" - IMMEDIATELY. A typical expression used by Mark, possibly to heighten anxiety in the narrative, "immediately", or just to progress the narrative, "then" Not present in some manuscripts.

εν + dat. "with" - [A MAN] WITH. Expressing association, as NIV.

πνευματι ακαθαρτω dat. "**an evil spirit**" - AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT. A typically Jewish turn of phrase for a person possessed by a demon, one of Satan's minions. The term "unclean spirit" appears 11 times in Mark.

εκ + gen. "**came from**" - OUT OF [THE TOMB]. Expressing source / origin. Mark also uses the word *μνημα* for "tomb" instead of *μνημειον* as here, but theories on source differences seem a bit far-fetched. "People were often buried in cave-like openings dug into the rock, big enough for a person to enter on foot, and usually high enough inside to allow a person to stand upright. Such a place would provide shelter for a man who had no other place to live", Bratcher. The demoniac's dwelling in tombs possibly emphasises Jesus' confrontation with the powers, namely "the power of death", Gundry, but certainly illustrates his wretched condition under the power of demonic forces, forces which Jesus will now confront and defeat.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - [MET] HIM. Dative of direct object after the *υπο* prefix verb "to meet."

v3

"Taken together, v3-5 contain the four characteristics of insanity in Judaism: a) running about at night; b) spending the night in a cemetery; c) tearing one's garments; and d) destroying what one has been given", Guelich.

ειχεν [εχω] imperf. "**lived**" - [WHO] HAD [THE = HIS DWELLING]. The imperfect is descriptive, used here to describe what was taking place in the past. "This man had his home among the tombs", Barclay.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [TOMBS]. Local, expressing space.

ουδε ... ουκει ουδεις "**no one [could bind him] any longer, not even [with a chain]**" - [AND] NOT ANY LONGER NO ONE. Emphatic triple negative. Further describing the wretched condition of the man. "And not even with a chain could anyone any longer bind him", TH.

δησαι [δew] aor. inf. "**bind**" - [WAS ABLE] TO BIND. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "was able".

αλυσει [ις ewς] dat. "**with a chain**" - [HIM] WITH A CHAIN. The dative is instrumental, expressing means, "by means of", as NIV.

v4

δια το + inf. "**for [he]**" - BECAUSE [HE OFTEN TO BE BOUND = HAD BEEN BOUND]. The construction *δια το* + the three infinitives, "to be bound / torn apart / smashed", technically forms a causal clause, "because of", but here expressing "past circumstances which explain the present situation", Taylor, cf., Burton #408. Cranfield notes that *γαρ* + ind. "would have been more natural." Lit. "On account of his having [often] been bound [with fetters and chains] and the chains

having been burst [by him] and the fetters broken ..." = "he had often been bound but had burst", Zerwick. Each of the three infinitives takes the usual accusative subject: *αυτον*, "he", *τας αλυσεις*, "the chains", and *τας πεδας*, "the fetters." The use of the perfect tense increases the vividness of the description, as if the words of an eyewitnesses are being recorded. Note how Mark returns to the imperfect tense with "no one was strong enough to subdue him". The inability of people to constrain the man illustrates the power of the demons and therefore the necessary power that Jesus will need to employ in order to subdue them.

πεδαις και αλυσεσιν dat. "**hand and foot**" - WITH FETTERS AND CHAINS. The dative is instrumental, expressing means, "bound by means of / with fetters and chains."

υπ [υπο] + gen. "**he [tore the chains apart]**" - [AND THE CHAINS HAD BEEN TORN APART] BY [HIM AND THE SHACKLES HAD BEEN SMASHED]. Expressing agency.

δαμασαι [δαμαζω] aor. inf. "**[strong enough] to subdue [him]**" - [AND NO ONE WAS STRONG *enough*] TO SUBDUCE [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "was strong / able."

v5

δια + gen. "**night and day**" - [AND] THROUGH (in time) = CONSTANTLY. "Temporal use of the preposition. "Throughout the night and day" = "all the time", "continually", Cranfield.

εν + dat. "**among**" - IN [THE TOMBS AND] IN [THE HILLS, MOUNTAINS]. Local, expressing space.

κραζων [κραζω] pres. part. "**he would cry out**" - HE WAS CRYING OUT. This participle with the imperfect verb to-be *ην* forms a periphrastic imperfect construction possibly emphasising the degree of his "shrieking", Moffatt; "he roared and raged among the tombs", Junkins.

κατακοπτων [κατακοπτω] pres. part. "**cut himself**" - [AND] BEATING, CUTTING [HIMSELF]. Periphrastic imperfect as above. The verb "cut to pieces" can also take the meaning "beat / bruise", although most translations go with "cutting", "lacerating himself", Gundry, but possibly "bruising himself with stones", NAB. We can always cover all bases, eg. "slicing and bruising himself with sharp rocks", Junkins. However we take the word, the description is of self-destructive behaviour.

λιθους [ος] dat. "**with stones**" - IN = WITH STONES. The dative is instrumental, expressing means; "by means of."

v6

ii] Jesus meets with the demoniac and exorcises him, v6-13. It is difficult to know whether the demoniac has some control over the situation, particularly his **προσεκυνησεν**, "bowing down before" Jesus, his doing obeisance. We are probably best served if we interpret the account as a revelation of the corrupt power of the demonic force, as opposed to the superior power of the Son of Man. The subduing of demonic forces proclaims the coming kingdom; the day of judgment is at hand for the powers of darkness are even now being banished to the abyss. So, we are best to read the actions of the demoniac as attempts by the demons themselves to frustrate the exorcism, or at least to keep their options open for another time (ie., to be allowed to possess the pigs). A power-play by the demons is evidence in the act of kneeling, the raised voice, a claim that Jesus has no right to interfere with them, a precise description of Jesus' person (the knowledge of a person gives power over them), an invocation in God's name, the evasive answer to Jesus' request for their name and the seeking of concessions (the pigs).

ιδων [ειδον] aor. part. "**when he saw**" - [AND] HAVING SEEN [JESUS]. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV, but with a causal touch.

απο μακροθεν "**from a distance**" - FROM AFAR. This idiomatic phrase, a preposition with an adverb instead of a substantive, "is a Koine trait", Decker; "from afar", ESV. This construction is used a number of times in Mark.

προσεκυνησεν [προσκυνηω] aor + dat. "**fell on his knees in front of**" - [HE RAN AND] DID OBEISANCE TO, WORSHIPPED, FELL DOWN BEFORE, PROSTRATED BEFORE. This word, usually followed by the dative in the NT, is often translated as "worship". Here in the sense of a reverential response to a superior, although as noted above, probably with deceptive intent (assuming that the action is prompted by the demonic forces and not the demoniac himself). "He ran and knelt before him", Phillips.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the **προς** prefix verb "to do obeisance."

v7

κραξας [κραδξω] aor. part. "**he shouted**" - [AND] HAVING CRIED OUT, SHOUTING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant, expressing action accompanying the verb "he says" = "he said (historic present). "On catching sight of Jesus from afar, he ran and knelt before him, shrieking aloud", Moffatt.

θωνη [η] dat. "**voice**" - IN A [LOUD] VOICE. The dative is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his shouting; "with a loud voice."

τι εμοι και σοι "what do you want with me" - [HE SAYS] WHAT TO ME AND TO YOU. The dative pronouns, εμοι, "to me", σοι, "to you", probably express reference / respect, "what *is there* with respect to me and to you?" = "what have I to do with you?" Zerwick. An interesting turn of phrase, somewhat idiomatic - expressing defensive hostility.

του θεου [ος] gen. " [most high] God" - [JESUS SON] OF THE [HIGHEST, MOST HIGH] GOD. The genitive is adjectival, relational. The use of such a full description of Jesus' identity by the demonic powers probably serves as an attempt to control him - if you know the person you can control the person. Salespersons, even today, use the same technique!!!

ορκιζω pres. "swear [to God] / in [God's] name" - I IMPLORE, ADJURE, ENTREAT, IMPLORE / I PUT UNDER AN OATH [YOU GOD]. Followed by a double accusative, "you" and "God", the second accusative indicating under whose authority the entreaty is made, an accusative of oath; "that by which one swears", Zerwick. Possibly, "for God's sake, don't torture me", Barclay, or maybe a more aggressive "before God / under God's name / authority, I demand that you not meddle with me."

μη βασανισης [βασανιζω] aor. subj. "that you won't torture [me]" - DO NOT TORTURE, TORTURE [ME]. Subjunctive of prohibition, cf.. Wallace p469. The NIV has formed a dependent statement, but better as Barclay above. Possibly a plea that Jesus not act in judgment against them before the time of the eschatological judgment, so Marcus. Possibly just "a fear of banishment from the spirit's home", so Guelich. Better taken as a demand not to be banished, before time, from the world of human existence and eternally incarcerated in the underworld, the primeval bog of the dark leviathan, ie. hell, cf., Rev.14:11, 20:10, so Gundry. Luke certainly seems to express the view that "what the demons fear is imprisonment before their destruction", Taylor, cf., Lk.8:31. "Do not torture me", Moffatt.

v8

γαρ "for" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the protest, "because" "The shout represents the unclean spirit's attempts to resist exorcism", Gundry.

ελεγεν [λεγω] imperf. "*Jesus had said*" - HE WAS SAYING. The imperfect is possibly inceptive, best translated as a pluperfect, "he had begun saying", Taylor. Jesus had begun the exorcism with the words as quoted, but the demons have interrupted with their plea, so presumably Jesus halts the exorcism and starts to converse with them. Probably best expressed by "he was about to say", Gundry.

αυτω dat. pro. "to him" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

εξελθε [εξερχομαι] aor. imp. "**come out**" - COME OUT. The aorist imperative expresses punctiliar action and is followed by a nominative of address, **το πνευμα το ακαθαρτον**, "you unclean spirit."

εκ + gen. "**of**" - FROM [THE MAN]. Expressing source / origin. Stylistic repartition of source / origin already expressed in the **εξ** prefix of the verb "come out."

το ακαθαρτον adj. "**evil / impure**" - UNCLEAN [SPIRIT]. The Canon of Apollonius applies with both "evil" and "spirit" taking an article, and in v2 both without an article. Either construction is correct. "Come out of this man you many wicked, dirty spirits", Junkins.

v9

Jesus halts the exorcism and asks the demon's their name, but receives an evasive reply. To give their name is to hand power over to Jesus. The term "Legion" is probably a desperate attempt to resist Jesus; a kind of "we are many." Recognising that the gig is up, the demons beg that they not be sent from the world of human affairs and confined to the abyss, the dark primeval bog prepared for Satan and his minions.

επηρωτα [επερωτω] imperf. "**[Jesus] asked**" - [AND] HE ASKED, ENQUIRED OF [HIM]. Imperfect is again possibly inceptive, or just stylistic, "Jesus began to ask him."

σοι dat. pro. "**your [name]**" - [WHAT NAME] TO YOU. The dative here may be classified as a dative of possession, or interest, advantage; "what name belongs to you." It is very unlikely that Jesus needs to know the name of the demonic powers to exercise authority over them. So, Jesus' request is probably nothing more than a "who are you". Possibly "asked the man his identity", Junkins, as if to help the man himself recall his identity, but it is more likely that Jesus is conversing with the demonic powers, even though the masculine "asked him" is used by Mark. The man might be uttering the words, but it is the demonic powers who are doing the communicating.

μοι dat. pro. "**my [name is]**" - [AND HE SAYS TO HIM, NAME] TO ME. Dative of possession / interest, advantage.

λεγιων "**Legion**" - *is* LEGION. A legion was a term used of a Roman military formation of "4,000 to 6,000 men", Cranfield, but it is very doubtful that the story is an allegory of Roman occupation, cf., Boring p151. The demonic powers are probably lying, even evading the question (just a collective noun rather than a name, so Gundry), but it is possible that they have answered as directed, even explaining why their name is "Legion" - because "there are many of us", Cassirer. What we probably have here is an evasive description of a demonic coven, with a warning to Jesus that "we are many".

ὅτι **"for"** - BECAUSE [WE ARE MANY]. Here serving to introduce a causal clause expressing why the name "legion"; "because we are many."

v10

παρακαλει [παρακαλεω] imperf. **"he begged [Jesus]"** - [AND] HE WAS BEGGING, IMPLORING, URGING [HIM]. The imperfect is durative, possibly iterative. Note, "he", singular, again identifies the man as doing the actual speaking for "them", plural. "They begged him earnestly ...", Moffatt, although "earnestly" is a bit off the mark; "made strong entreaty of Jesus", Cassirer.

πολλα adj. **"again and again"** - GREATLY. The adjective serves as an adverb, possibly with an iterative sense, "repeatedly", or to express intensity, "he begged him earnestly", ESV.

ἵνα + subj. "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech, entreating, expressing what they begged; "he begged ... that he not send them ..."

εξω + gen. **"out of [the area]"** - [HE NOT SEND THEM] OUTSIDE, OUT OF [THE COUNTRY]. Expressing separation. There seems to be the idea that demons like their own area of operation, cf., Lk.11:24f. It is sometimes understood that they ask Jesus not drive them off into a lonely place, this resting on the folk idea that demons were usually sent to uninhabited mountains, the ends of the earth, the sea, and particularly deserts, where they can no longer harm people. As already noted, what they fear is confinement in the abyss and that may be the point of their request.

v11

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

χοιρων [ος] gen. **"[herd] of pigs"** - [THERE WAS THERE TOWARD THE MOUNTAIN A GREAT HEARD] OF PIGS. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / of content; "a herd *consisting of / made up of* pigs. The use of this preposition προς, "toward", for proximity, "at / close to / nearby", is not common, although Cranfield suggests that here it means "on [the hill]." The "mountain", indicates steep terrain and links with the stampede of the pigs down "the steep bank".

βοσκομενη [βοσκω] pres. pas. part. **"feeding"** - [THERE WAS THERE, NEAR THE MOUNTAIN, A GREAT HEARD OF PIGS] FEEDING. The participle may be treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting pigs, "there was there, on the hillside, a great hear of pigs which were feeding", but it may also be treated as a periphrastic imperfect construction; ἦν βοσκομενη, "there was feeding there." A heard of pigs indicates that the region is Gentile, given that Jewish law prohibits the keeping of pigs.

v12

The gig is up and so the demons employ their last strategy by seeking a concession. So, we see unfold *a tricked devil story*, cf., Bultman, rather than *a gentle-Jesus meek and mild story*, a story which seeks to soften Jesus' responsibility.

παρεκαλεσαν [παρακαλεω] aor. "**begged**" - [AND] THEY URGED, EXHORTED [HIM]. Note now the plural is used for the demoniac as he speaks, although we shouldn't make much of it, given the difficulty of handling the "he/them" situation. "And they appealed to him", Berkeley.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Redundant attendant circumstance participle.

πεμψον [πεμπω] aor. imp. "**send**" - SEND [US INTO THE PIGS]. The aorist expressing punctiliar action, also possibly expressing "a particular request", Cranfield.

ινα + subj. "**allow**" - THAT [WE MAY ENTER THEM]. Probably introducing a purpose, or result (intended) clause, "that we may enter them", Moffatt, or possibly a rare example of the imperatival use of **ινα**, cf., Moule p144, so NIV, Cassirer, Barclay, ... "So that we may enter them", Marcus.

v13

The concession granted, the demons bring about their own destruction / encasement in the abyss, by startling the pigs and driving them into the sea. As already noted, the folk motif of tricking the demons would prompt great humour, but above all, the story proclaims the realisation / inauguration of the kingdom of God in the messiah's defeat of hostile powers.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**he gave them [permission]**" - [HE ALLOWED, PERMITTED] THEM. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to allow."

εξελθοντα [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "**came out**" - [AND] HAVING COME OUT [THE UNCLEAN SPIRITS ENTERED INTO THE PIGS]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "then came out the unclean spirits", Moffatt.

ως "**about [two thousand in number]**" - [AND THE HERD] ABOUT [TWO THOUSAND]. With numbers this particle expresses approximation; "there were about two-thousand of them", Barclay.

ωρμησεν [ορμω] aor. "**rushed**" - RUSHED. Meaning "set in motion", but usually intransitive, so "rush". Used of the "unreasoning onrush of a crowd", Swete. Driven mad, the pigs rushed to their destruction. "With a great birre the folk was cast down", Wycliffe.

κατα + gen. "**down**" - DOWN. Spatial. "Sent the hogs over the cliff and into the sea where they were drowned", Junkins.

του κρημνου [ος] gen. "the steep bank" - THE PRECIPICE, STEEP BANK [INTO THE LAKE]. "The overhanging bank", Taylor.

εν + dat. "in" - [AND WERE DROWNED] IN [THE LAKE]. Local, expressing space.

v14

iii] The focus of the story now moves to the reaction of the crowd; they hear of the exorcism and come out to witness what has occurred, v14-17. As with the disciples in the story of the stilling of the storm, the response of the crowd is one of "fear". "They realise that they are in the presence of someone for whom the world is not the unchangeable, unnoticed givenness of everyday life, and this is scary indeed", Boring. "Fear" is not "faith", but it can be a step toward faith.

οἱ βοσκοντες [βοσκω] pres. part. "those tending [the pigs]" - [AND] THE ONES FEEDING [THEM]. The participle serves as a substantive. "The herdsmen", Barclay.

εις + acc. "in [the town and countryside]" - [FLED AND REPORTED] INTO = IN [THE TOWN AND INTO THE HAMLETS]. An example of εν + dat. being replaced by εις + acc. (some + dat.), a process now complete in modern Gk. See Zerwick #99. "Spreading the story in the city ...", Cassirer.

ιδειν [ειδον] aor. inf. "to see" - [AND THEY CAME] TO SEE. The infinitive is adverbial, expressing purpose, "in order to see".

το γεγονος [γινομαι] perf. part. "had happened" - [WHAT IS] THE things HAPPENING. Indirect question in the tense and mood of direct speech, see Porter p274/5, "what is happening?" = "and they came to see what was happening." The articular participle serves as a substantive, object of the verb to-be; "what it was that had taken place", Wuest.

v15

ερχονται [ερχομαι] pres. "when they came" - [AND] THEY COME [TO JESUS]. Historic / narrative present, although in the narrative discourse, the change in tense indicates new players. See Decker, Mk.1:21. They came to "have a good look at" the former demoniac.

τον δαιμονιζομενον [δαιμονιζομαι] pres. part. "the man [who had] been possessed" - [AND THEY SEE] THE ONE BEING DEMON POSSESSED. The participle serves as a substantive; "the demon-possessed man".

τον εσχηκοτα [εχω] perf. part. "by" - THE ONE HAVING HAD [THE LEGION]. The participle serves as a substantive standing in apposition to "the one being possessed", but it may also be treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting "the one being possessed"; "They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac, who had been

possessed of the legion", Berkeley. The perfect tense may express the continuing state of being no longer possessed, or it may be a dramatic perfect, used for effect.

καθημενον [καθημαι] pres. part. "**sitting there**" - SITTING, [HAVING BEEN CLOTHED AND BEING OF SOUND MIND]. The accusative participle, as with "having been clothed" and "being of sound mind", serves as the complement of the direct object "man", standing in a quadruple accusative construction, and making a statement about the object, "the man". "They saw the lunatic sitting down, clothed and in his sober senses", Moffatt.

εφοβηθησαν [φοβω] aor. pas. "**they were afraid**" - [AND] THEY WERE AFRAID. The word can take a natural sense, meaning "fainthearted / scared / fearful", and certainly there is evidence of this sense in its usage in the synoptics, yet the religious sense of "awe" is also present. Whether it be the disciples, as in the stilling of the storm, or the crowds, either Jews, or as here, possibly Gentiles, Jesus' miracles prompt a response that is best described as "scary wonderment", a breathtaking trembling amazement. Most people continue with their unease, but some move on to faith. In fact, given the ending of the gospel where the women leave the tomb in "terror and amazement", it is clear that Mark intentionally leaves his readers in a state of wonderment that they might consider a move from "fear" to "faith".

v16

οι ιδοντες [ειδον] aor. part. "**those who had seen it**" - [AND] THE ONES HAVING SEEN. The participle serves as a substantive. Referring to the herdsmen.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**the people**" - [DESCRIBED] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

πως "**what**" - HOW [IT HAPPENED]. Here this interrogative particle serves to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech explaining what they told the people; how it (all these things) had happened to the demoniac and also the pigs, *how it had happened to them*. Not "what had happened", as in v14, but "how" it had happened, ie., the exercise of Jesus' power, so Gundry. "Everyone who had seen what had happened (the herdsmen), told about the man and the pigs", CEV.

τω δαιμονιζομενω [δαιμονιζομαι] dat. pres. mid. part. "**to the demon-possessed man**" - TO THE ONE BEING POSSESSED. Dative of reference / respect; "with respect to"

περι + gen. "**told about**" - [AND] ABOUT, CONCERNING [THE PIGS]. Reference / respect.

v17

ηρξαντο [αρχω] aor. "[**then**] **the people began**" - [AND] THEY BEGAN. The subject is unclear, either the herdsmen, or the villagers.

παρακαλεῖν [παρακαλεω] pres. inf. "**to plead to**" - TO URGE, EXHORT, IMPLORE [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "began". It is "urge / plead", not "command". Mark continues to display Jesus' power and authority. Jesus is someone who "can only be besought, not ordered about", Gundry.

απελθεῖν [απερχομαι] aor. inf. "**to leave**" - TO LEAVE, DEPART. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement / indirect speech of entreating, "they began to plead that Jesus leave their district." This request is obviously prompted by their fear. See intro. v14, for "fear" in terms of "a confrontation with Jesus' supreme authority", Anderson. The fear of economic loss is a very unlikely theme for Mark, eg., "offended, it seems, by the loss of their property, they ask Jesus to leave them", Cranfield, also Guelich.

απο + gen. "-" - FROM [THE REGION OF THEM]. Expressing separation; "away from their shores."

v18

iv] We now come to the end of Mark's extended exorcism story - the crowd has responded with "fear," but the demoniac responds in "faith", v18-20. The account has a number of unusual features: the demoniac asks to follow Jesus, but is refused; Jesus tells the demoniac to go and tell what the Lord had done rather than maintain the messianic secret as elsewhere. Both features can be explained by the demoniac being a Gentile, although Mark does not settle the matter for us. Certainly, Decapolis was a predominately a Gentile area, but there was a small Jewish population.

εμβαινοντος [εμβαινω] pres. "**as [Jesus] was getting [into the boat]**" - [AND HE] ENTERING, EMBARKING [INTO THE BOAT]. The genitive participle, and its genitive subject **αυτου**, "he", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. "When Jesus was getting on board the boat", Barclay.

ὁ δαιμονισθεις [δαιμονιζομαι] aor. pas. part. "**the man who had been demon-possessed**" - THE ONE HAVING BEEN DEMON POSSESSED [WAS BEGGING, EXHORTING]. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to beg." The imperfect verb is probably durative (progressive) expressing ongoing action; "pleaded to be allowed to stay with him", Barclay.

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT [HE MIGHT BE]. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech / entreating, expressing what the demoniac begged Jesus; "begged that he might be with him". "Be with him" is not quite "follow him", but surely discipleship is implied and therefore his response serves as an expression of faith.

μετ [μετα] + acc. "**with**" - WITH [HIM]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

v19

αλλα "but" - [AND HE DID NOT ALLOW, PERMIT HIM] BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not, but"

αυτω dat. pro. "[said]" - [SAID] TO HIM [GO INTO THE HOUSE OF YOU]. Dative of indirect object. "And he said to him, 'Go home to your family.'"

τους σους "-" - [TO] THE ONES OF YOU. The articular possessive pronoun, "the ones of you", probably extends the demoniac's witness beyond his family; "to your people / the people of your area (region, so "countrymen)", Guelich.

απαγγειλον [απαγγελω] aor. imp. "tell" - [AND] TELL, REPORT, ANNOUNCE. Variant **διαγγειλον** "used of missionary activity in Lk.9:60,", Taylor, but most likely not original, so here "informal report". None-the-less, the man is certainly to function as one of Jesus' sent-ones bearing witness to the exorcism (sign) which he experienced.

αυτοις dat. pro. "them" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

οσα pro. "how much" - AS MUCH AS. Accusative direct object of the verb "has done." Neuter = "all that."

πεποιηκεν [ποιεω] perf. "has done" - [THE LORD] HAS DONE. The perfect tense expresses the past act of exorcism with its ongoing effect of being free from possession. Obviously, "Lord" = "the Lord God."

σοι dat. pro. "for you" - TO YOU. Dative of interest, advantage; "for you."

ηλεησεν [ελεω] aor. "he has shown mercy on [you]" - [AND that] HE HAD MERCY UPON [YOU]. The aorist being punctiliar, indicates that one act of mercy, namely the exorcism, is in mind. So, **και** here has the force of correlating what was done for the demoniac and the mercy shown toward him. "tell them everything the Lord has done for you, how he had mercy on you."

v20

κηρυσσειν [κηρυσσω] pres. inf. "[began] to preach" - [AND HE LEFT AND BEGAN] TO PROCLAIM, ANNOUNCE, TELL, PREACH. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin." This word certainly has missionary precedence, telling of what Jesus (not God) had done. "Began to spread, the story", Phillips.

εν + dat. "in" - IN. Local; expressing space.

τη Δεκαπολει [ις εως] dat. "the Decapolis" - "Throughout the entire area of the land of ten cities", Junkins.

Ιησους "Jesus" - [AS MUCH AS] JESUS. Nominative subject of the verb "has done." Decker notes Mark's correlation here between "Jesus" and "Lord", v19, a designation which applies to both God the Father and Jesus.

αυτω "[had done] for him" - [DID] TO = FOR HIM. Dative of interest, advantage, so "for him", as NIV.

εθαυμαζον [θαυμαζω] imperf. "[the people] were amazed" - [AND ALL] WERE AMAZED, ASTONISHED, MARVELLED. The imperfect expresses durative action. As already noted, this "fear / amazement" word is very important for Mark, functioning as a precursor to faith. The central point of this story, namely, Jesus' power and authority over the dark powers, is maintained, not only in the response of the herdsmen and the people from the surrounding villages, but of the people of Decapolis who respond with amazement on hearing the story from the demoniac.

5:21-43

The journey begins, 1:1-5:43

6. The powers defeated, 4:35-5:43

iii] Sickness - Jairus' daughter and a woman with a haemorrhage

Synopsis

On returning to the western shore of lake Galilee, Jesus meets Jairus, an official of the local synagogue. Jairus pleads with Jesus to come and heal his daughter who is at the point of death. A large crowd has gathered, and all set off for the home of Jairus. On the way, a woman suffering from an ongoing haemorrhage which has made her ritually unclean, touches Jesus' robe for healing. Jesus feels the touch, and is soon able to declare "your faith has made you well." At this point, a message comes from Jairus' home saying that the girl has died. "Fear not", Jesus says to Jairus, "go on believing." Arriving at the home, Jesus, along with Peter, James and John, enters the home, takes the girl by the hand, raises her to life, and then reminds the amazed onlookers that the girl needs something to eat.

Teaching

Jesus is Lord over the dark power of death, and our participation in his victory is through a faith that keeps on keeping on.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:35-41. This episode is the third of a set of three which focus on Jesus' victory over dark powers, 4:35-5:43.

ii] Structure: *He heals the sick and raises the dead*:

Jairus makes his request, v21-24;

Jesus heals the woman with a haemorrhage, v25-34;

The bad news from the household of Jairus, v35-37;

The healing of Jairus' daughter, v38-43.

This episode entails the intertwining of two healing stories, the healing of the woman with a flow of blood, v24b-34, and the healing of Jairus' daughter, v21-24a, v35-43. As Lohmeyer notes, the healing of Jairus' daughter sets the frame for the episode, and does so in four scenes. The healing of the woman with a flow of blood is a typical miracle story:

Setting;

Request (which is not conveyed to Jesus);

Healing;

Response.

iii] Interpretation:

In this episode we witness a woman who evidences the touch of death and a girl who is actually dead. For Mark, the episode further demonstrates Christ's victory over the powers that possess and enslave humanity, here both the unclean state of death, and a state as good as dead. In both situations, we see again the general response of "fear and amazement", which, for some, moves to "faith", a "keep on trusting" reliance on Jesus. Again, Mark reveals to us that Jesus saves, 5:23, 28, 34, and that by his salvific power he proclaims the dawning of the kingdom of God.

iv] Synoptics.

Matt.9:18-26, Lk.8:40-56. Matthew's succinct working of this pericope again evidences that Mark's source-tradition is closer to the original eye witness account. The most notable difference is that Mark leaves us in some doubt as to whether the young girl is actually dead. Matthew implies that she is dead, and Luke reinforces the fact, 8:55.

It is usually held that Mark has woven together two separate pieces of tradition to form one of his typical *sandwiches* (an intercalation), and both Matthew and Luke have used Mark's arrangement of the tradition in their own gospels.

Marcus, cf., also Guelich, makes the point that the story "about Jairus is composed of short sentences dominated by the historical present, whereas the one about the women is made up of long sentences filled with participles and dominated by the aorist." The fact that all three synoptic gospels record the *sandwich* may indicate Mark's original hand, but it more likely indicates that two separate stories were woven together early in the period of oral transmission and then preserved as one. The syntax of all three accounts evidences an independent recording of the extant oral tradition rather than a mere copying of a Markan original.

v] Homiletics: *Power over life and death*



I regularly conduct services at the Woronora Crematorium, and what a beautifully maintained site it is, Yet, many years ago they were struggling to get the sequence of the committal right. They had installed curtains to soften the occasion, which, when closed, triggered the coffin's move on the

catafalque to the crematoria, although now there was a problem. The blast of the furnace fans could be heard as the coffin entered the crematoria, and if the back door was open, the wind blew the curtains out. This carefully planned sequence prompted gasps of horror, even fainting in the congregation. One person assured me that had seen their loved one swallowed up in flames. Imagine the intensity of the problem if the minister had adopted the hell and judgment line in his sermon. Anyway, the crematorium did get their sequencing right, in the end.

A friend of mine once made the comment that when a society employs secular celebrants to conduct funerals, rather than ministers of religion, then you know that the game is up for the church. He is probably right, although there has been a change in the way people want to say farewell. They don't want the religious minister going on about the sadness of loss and the distant hope of eternity for Fred, who was a good man, but People now want to celebrate a person's life. In a secular world there is only a person's past.

The story of Jesus' healing of a dead girl and a sick woman, presents a simple message. Through divine power, Jesus is victorious over the eternal slavery of death - because Jesus lives we may live also; his life can be our life as a gift of grace.

Text - 5:21

Jairus' daughter and the woman with the issue of blood, v21-43: i] The request, v21-24. Jesus returns to the north-western shore of lake Galilee, possibly to Capernaum, and a crowd gathers about him. A synagogue-ruler (an official of the local synagogue) makes an urgent plea that Jesus come and lay hands on his daughter. Jairus obviously believes that if Jesus comes, he can heal his daughter. The crowd presses in to watch Jesus' response, and goes with him to witness the healing.

διαπερασαντος [διαπεραω] aor. part. "**When [Jesus] had [again] crossed over**" - [AND JESUS] HAVING CROSSED OVER. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "Jesus" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal. cf., v2, typical non classical grammar. "**After** Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side."

παλιν adv. "**again**" - Sequential adverb. Due to textual variations, it is either Jesus crossed over the lake again, or a crowd gathered around him again.

εν + dat. "by [boat]" - IN [THE BOAT INTO THE OTHER SIDE]. Variant reading. The dative is either instrumental, expressing means, "by boat", or local, expressing space, "in the boat", ESV.

επ [επι] + acc. **"around"** - [A LARGE CROWD WAS GATHERED] UPON [HIM]. Spatial, "around, near", used instead of περι. "Crowds of people gathered to meet him", Barclay.

παρα + acc. **"by [the lake]"** - [AND HE WAS] BESIDE [THE LAKE]. Local, expressing space.

v22

και **"then"** - AND. Coordinative, as NIV; "and then."

των αρχισυναγωγων [ος] gen. **"[one] of the synagogue rulers"** - [COMES ONE] OF THE MANAGERS OF THE SYNAGOGUE (a lay official responsible for the management of the synagogue programme, facilities and complex). The genitive is adjectival, partitive; "one of the synagogue presidents", Phillips.

ονοματι [α] dat. **"named"** - BY NAME [JAIRUS]. Dative of reference. Omitted in some manuscripts. Possibly added for symbolic effect, given that the root meaning of the name is "he awakes."

ιδων [όρωα] aor. part. **"when he saw"** - [AND] HAVING SEEN [HIM]. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

πιπτει [πιπτω] pres. **"fall"** - HE FALLS DOWN [TOWARD THE FEET OF HIM]. Given his status, falling at the feet of Jesus as a supplicant indicates the depth of fear he has for his child. "He knelt at Jesus' feet", CEV. The preposition προς, "toward", expresses movement toward, although usually translated here as "at the feet."

v23

παρακαλει [παρακαλεω] pres. **"he pleaded [earnestly] with"** - [AND] HE BEGS, ASKS, BESEECHES / EXHORTS, COMFORTS [HIM MUCH, GREATLY, EARNESTLY]. The present tense "beseeches" is usually translated as a historic present "beseeched", although some texts have an imperfect tense which may indicate that the present was mistakenly carried over from the surrounding verbs. He beseeched Jesus much. Note how the alliteration παρακαλειν πολλα serves to emphasise his pleading; "he persistently pleaded."

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant.

ότι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech expressing what he is saying.

το θυγατριον **"little daughter"** - [MY] DAUGHTER. The diminutive is possibly implying "dear"; "my dear little girl."

εσχατως adv. **"dying"** - [HAS] DYING. The adverb εσχατως, "finally", with the verb εχει, "have", means to reach an extremity, here in the sense of being at the last gasp, at death's door, so "is dying."

ἵνα + subj. "[**please come and lay your hands on her**]" - THAT [HAVING COME YOU MAY LAY, PUT, THE HAND ON HER]. This *hina* clause is usually taken to stand in the place of an imperatival infinitive, although the participle **ελθων**, "having come" may be imperatival such that the infinitive is adverbial, expressing purpose; "come in order to lay your hands on her." Either way, the words are driven by panic; "Come and lay your hands on her."

ἵνα + subj. "**so that**" - THAT. This second *hina* clause is adverbial, final, expressing purpose.

σωθη και ζηση aor. pas. sub. "**she may be healed and live**" - SHE MAY BE HEALED AND LIVE. Both words have an interchangeable meaning: "healed / saved" and "live / live eternally." It seems likely that Jairus is asking that she be healed and so be able to live out her life, but the words rightly cue us to their deeper significance, such that what this girl needs, as we all need, is to be saved and gain eternal life.

v24

μετ [μετα] + acc. "**with [him]**" - [AND HE WENT] WITH [HIM]. Expressing association.

αυτω dat. pro. "[**followed**] **him**" - [AND A LARGE CROWD FOLLOWED] HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow."

συνεθλιβον [συνθλιβω] imperf. "**pressed around**" - [AND] THEY WERE PRESSING CLOSELY UPON, HUSTLING, CROWDING IN UPON [HIM]. At 3:9 the verb appears without the prefix, given that there it is only the danger of a crush; here it's the real thing.

v25

ii] Jesus' confrontation with dark powers continues in the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, v25-34. A woman with a haemorrhage, who was part of the crowd pressing in on Jesus, touches him. Her condition is not clearly identified, but is obviously vaginal and so makes her "unclean" and therefore cuts her off from her Jewish community. She has spent all her money on cures, but nothing has worked and now her condition is getting worse. She, like the synagogue-ruler, believes that Jesus can heal her. She obviously believes that by touching Jesus she can channel his healing power, and her touch completely heals her. Jesus is aware of the touch, and asks the healed person to identify themselves. No reason is given, but as Jesus' miracles visibly proclaim the gospel, it obviously needs to be exposed (if only to the true seeker), and then a word given to explain its true meaning. Only Mark makes the rather strange comment, "Jesus realised that power had gone out from him." Jesus sensed that his messianic power had reached out to someone. The woman comes forward, overcome by fear. Her fear

is well founded, for she is unclean and has knowingly touched a rabbi. After she explains what happened (obviously in the hearing of the crowd), Jesus explains her healing; her faith in him has resulted in a miracle.

The miracle reminds us that faith saves; the kingdom of God is entered through faith; salvation is appropriated through faith - faith frees us from the bondage of sin and death.

The first Gk. sentence covers v25-28. Between the noun, **γυνη**, "a woman", and the principle verb **ήψατο**, "she touched", v27, Mark has a string of subordinate participial clauses. The first set are adjectival, attributive, describing / limiting **γυνη**, "woman": **οὔσα**, "who had [an issue of blood]"; **παθουσα**, "and who had suffered [much from many doctors]"; **δαπανησασα**, "and who had spent / spending [all she had]"; **μηδεν ωφεληθεισα**, "without gaining anything / not having gained"; **ελθουσα**, "[but] who had become [worse] / having become [worse]." The next two participles, **ακουσασα**, "having heard", and **ελθουσα**, "having come", attend the main verb **ήψατο**, "she touched." Given that she is "unclean" and has touched a Rabbi, the participial clauses serve to gain our sympathy before telling us that she touched Jesus.

εν + dat. "**who had been subject to**" - [AND *there was* A WOMAN] WITH. Expressing association. Decker suggests "a marker of a state or condition."

αἵματος [α ατος] gen. "**bleeding**" - [A FLOW] OF BLOOD [TWELVE YEARS]. The genitive is verbal, subjective. She suffered from constant vaginal bleeding which rendered her unclean and unable to share in normal community life, Lev.15:25-30. "Who had constant menstrual bleeding for twelve years."

v26

παθουσα [πασχω] aor. part. "**suffered**" - [AND] HAVING SUFFERING [MUCH]. Adjectival participle, attributive, see above. "She had endured much under many physicians", NRSV.

ὑπο + gen. "**under the care of**" - BY [MANY PHYSICIANS]. Expressing agency, "by"; "at the hands of many doctors", Barclay.

δαπανησασα [δαπανω] aor. part. "**had spent**" - [AND] HAVING SPENT. The participle, attributive, as above. Emphasising that she spent everything she had for medical help without any benefit at all, serves to underline her desperate condition (as good as dead) in contrast to her healing.

τα "-" - THE [EVERYTHING WITH HER]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase **παρ αυτης παντα** into a nominal construction, direct object of the participle "having spent."

και "**yet**" - AND. Here adversative, "**but** having benefited nothing"; "but was no better off."

ωφεληθεισα [ωφελεω] aor. part. "**getting better**" - HAVING BENEFITED [NOTHING]. The participle, is adjectival, attributive, as above. "It had done her no good at all", Barclay.

ελθουσα [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**she grew**" - [BUT] HAVING BECOME. The participle, is adjectival, attributive, as above.

το χειρον comp. adj. "**worse**" - [INTO] THE WORSE *condition*. The articular adjective serves as a substantive. "On the contrary, she was getting worse."

v27

ακουσασα [ακουω] aor. part. "**When she heard**" - HAVING HEARD. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to touch", or adverbial, temporal, as NIV; "When she heard [the things] about Jesus."

τα "-" - THE THINGS. Variant reading; "the things concerning Jesus" = "The reports about Jesus."

περι + gen. "**about**" - ABOUT [JESUS]. Reference / respect; "concerning Jesus."

ελθουσα [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**she came up**" - HAVING COME. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to touch", or adverbial, temporal, "as she came from behind in the crowd, she touched"

οπισθεν adv. "**behind him**" - BEHIND. Local adverb; "from behind."

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE CROWD]. Local, expressing space.

ηψατο [απτω] "**touched**" - SHE TOUCHED. Jesus usually does the touching, although the gospels and Acts remind us of the common belief that healing can come by touching a healer's clothing, or even by coming under their shadow. Such a belief moves toward the magical, although in this episode, both the faith of the woman and its consequence is in no way derided.

ιματιου [ον] gen. "**his [cloak]**" - [THE GARMENT] OF HIM. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to take hold of." Luke has "take hold of the fringe of the garment of him", three genitives: direct object, partitive, possessive.

v28

γαρ "**because**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why she touched Jesus.

ελεγεν [λεγω] imperf. "**she thought**" - SHE WAS SAYING. The imperfect here really serves as a pluperfect, "she had been saying." The choice of an imperfect may be iterative, expressing repeated action, "she kept saying over to herself", but the discourse narrative, at this point, is backgrounding, so calling for a more remote tense.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what she said *to herself*.

εἰ + subj. "**if**" - IF, *as the case may be*, [I TOUCH EVEN THE GARMENTS OF HIM, *then* I WILL BE HEALED]. Introducing a conditional clause 3rd. class where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true.

καὶ "-" - A combination of **καί** and **αὐ** giving the sense "even if" = "at least"; "if I touch even his garments", ESV.

σωθησομαι [σωζω] fut. pas. "**I will be healed**" - In the context, "healed" is certainly in the woman's mind, but as already noted, the word's eschatological sense is always lurking in the background. The verb is used fourteen times by Mark and takes the sense "deliverance from the enemies of life that threaten authentic existence" and so is closely related to "gaining eternal life" and "entering the kingdom of God", so Boring. "I shall be alright", Phillips / "healed", Barclay.

v29

εὐθὺς adv. "**immediately**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. Temporal adverb; sometimes used for dramatic effect in a narrative, or to express immediate action, but often just to progress the narrative, as here, so "then"

τοῦ αἵματος [α ατος] gen. "**[her] bleeding**" - [WAS DRIED UP THE FOUNTAIN] OF THE BLOOD [OF HER]. The genitive is adjectival, probably best classified as partitive. "Her flow of blood was staunched", Barclay.

εἶπεν [γινωσκω] aor. "**she felt**" - [AND] SHE KNEW. She experienced a sense of physical well-being.

ὅτι "**that**" - [IN THE BODY] THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what she felt.

ἴαται [ἰαομαι] perf. pas. "**she was freed**" - SHE HAS BEEN HEALED, CURED. Usually taken as perfect, but this form may be present. The Perfect is used to indicate that the healing is complete, for good, without relapse. "She was cured of her complaint", Moffatt.

ἀπο + gen. "**from**" - FROM. Expressing separation; "away from."

μαστιγος [ἰξ ἰγος] "**her suffering**" - THE AFFLICTION. A strong word to emphasise her condition and therefore the power of the healing.

v30

εὐθὺς "**at once**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. Temporal; see above, v29. Here Mark seems to be stressing the immediacy of the healing following the touch of faith, even though it is a faith bordering on magic.

επιγνους εν ἑαυτῷ "[Jesus] realised" - [JESUS] HAVING KNOWN. The adverbial participle provides the verbal aspect of a temporal clause; "was at once conscious", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "-" - IN [HIMSELF]. Local, expressing space / sphere.

εξελθουσαν [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "had gone out" - *that* [THE POWER] HAVING GONE OUT [FROM HIM]. The participle introduces an object clause / dependent statement of perception; "Jesus realised that power had gone from him", ESV. The sense of the verb is probably more like "preceded" here than "come out"; "preceded from him" = "his messianic power of healing had gone forth", Nineham. The Greek certainly has Jesus aware of the transfer of power immediately upon it taking place, but not before. This may imply an automatic transfer, independent of the will of Jesus, or more rightly a transfer from the Father through Jesus, which transfer Jesus senses. "That the power proceeding from him went forth", RV.

επιστραφεις [επιστρεφω] aor. pas. part. "turned around" - HAVING TURNED AROUND. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; "he turned about and said." The crowd is pressing in on him and because the touch comes from behind; "Jesus turned around and asked."

εν + dat. "in" - IN [THE CROWD, HE WAS SAYING]. Local, space.

των ἱμαρτιων [ον] gen. "[who touched my] clothes?" - [WHO TOOK HOLD OF] THE GARMENTS [OF ME]? Genitive of direct object after the verb "to touch / take hold of." Calvin makes the point that Jesus already knew, while Cranfield argues he didn't know. Jesus may have wished to evidence the sign, or more likely he wanted to draw out the woman's minimal faith and reinforce it.

v31

αυτῷ dat. pro. "-" - [AND THE DISCIPLES OF HIM WERE SAYING] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

συνθλιβοντα [σιμθλιβω] pres. part. "crowding against" - [BEHOLD THE CROWD] CROWDING / PRESSING AGAINST [YOU AND YOU SAY, WHO TOUCHED ME]. The accusative participle may serve as an object complement, stating a fact about the direct object "crowd, people", namely that, they are crowding in, or, even though anarthrous, it may be treated as adjectival, attributive, "which is pressing in on you." The disciples' statement, "you see the crowd pressing you and you ask 'who touched me'", is less than gracious and so is softened by Luke and left out by Matthew.

v32

περιεβλεπετο [περιβλεπω] imperf. "kept looking around" - [AND] HE WAS LOOKING, LOOKING AROUND, LOOKING ABOUT. A verb used 7 times in the NT,

mostly in the gospels and with Jesus doing the looking. "Jesus turned to see who had touched him", CEV.

ιδειν [ὄραω] aor. inf. "**to see**" - TO SEE. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "in order to see."

την ... ποιησασαν [ποιεω] aor. part. "**who had done [it]**" - THE ONE HAVING DONE [THIS]. The participle serves as a substantive.

v33

δε "**then**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, here to a change in subject, from Jesus to the woman.

φοβηθεισα [φοβεομαι] part. "**fear**" - [THE WOMAN] WAS FEARING [AND TREMBLING]. This participle, as with *τρεμουσα*, "trembling", and *ειδυια*, "knowing", is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of her coming to Jesus; she *ηλθεν*, "came", fearing, trembling and knowing, although Decker classifies them as adjectival, attributive. Cranfield suggests that she is afraid because she knows a miracle has been performed on her. Gundry agrees. France leans toward the idea that she knows she has made Jesus ritually unclean, but he does accept that Mark does not draw this conclusion. Both fear and trembling are natural responses to what has happened, but none-the-less, they are also standard Biblical reactions to a theophany.

αυτη dat. pro. "**[what has happened] to her**" - [HAVING KNOWN WHAT HAD HAPPENED] TO HER. Dative of interest, advantage, "for her", or reference / respect, "with respect to her."

προσεπεσεν αυτω "**fell at [his] feet**" - [SHE CAME AND] FELL DOWN BEFORE. Does this action stem from a recognition of Jesus' authority?

αυτω dat. pro. "**his**" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the *προς* prefix verb "fall down before."

αυτω dat. pro. "**[told] him**" - [AND SAID] TO HIM [THE WHOLE TRUTH]. Dative of indirect object. "The whole truth" is a judicial term used even today in court - "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

v34

αυτη dat. pro. "**to her**" - [AND HE SAID] TO HER. Dative of indirect object.

θυγατηρ "**daughter**" - DAUGHTER. Jesus may be declaring her status in his family of faith. Vocative; "my young lady."

η πιστις [ις εως] "**faith**" - THE FAITH [OF YOU]. Marcus states that faith "implies not just intellectual assent but emotional involvement and commitment." It is for this reason he prefers the translation "trust". Her trust, her reliance, dependence, ... on God and his wonderworking power operative in his messiah Jesus, heals / saves. It is interesting how in John's gospel, it is often the other way

around; the miracle prompts faith / trust. Of course, this order is evident in the synoptic gospels as well where Jesus' miracles prompt either anger (when done on the Sabbath), amazement, or faith. The *faith heals* order reflects the *faith saves* order firmly fixed in the epistles. This has prompted the idea that the *faith heals* order is not original, being a reflection of early Christian preaching - such is an over critical conclusion.

σεσωκεν [σωζω] perf. "**has healed [you]**" - HAS SAVED, HEALED [YOU]. Possibly Mark intends both meanings, "healed" and "saved". The perfect tense indicating the completeness of her new condition, both physical and spiritual.

ὑπάγε εις ειρηνην "**go in peace**" - GO INTO PEACE. Idiomatic; go into wellbeing *rather than trouble*. A "formula for leave-taking", Cranfield. Taylor argues it carries the weight of the speaker and therefore, on Jesus' lips, it is a substantial blessing.

ἴσθι pres. imp. "**be [freed from your suffering]**" - [AND] BE [WHOLE FROM THE AFFLICTION OF YOU]. The present imperative of the verb to-be is durative, commanding a continuing state such that Jesus is declaring her ongoing health. "Go in peace and remain healed from your affliction", Boring.

v35

iii) The report that Jairus' daughter has died, v35-37. A message now comes to the synagogue-ruler that his daughter has died. Jesus overhears the report and seeks to draw out the revelatory nature of the sign he is about to perform (a point he has already made in the healing of the woman with the haemorrhage). Faith, rather than fear, is the means of appropriating the blessings of the kingdom. In typical style, Jesus sets out to keep the sign within a select circle - those with eyes to see.

λαλουντος [λαλεω] gen. pres. part. "**while [Jesus] was [still] speaking**" - [HE] SPEAKING. The genitive participle with its genitive subject **αυτου**, "he", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

ετι adv. "**still**" - STILL, AGAIN. Temporal adverb; "while he was still speaking."

ερχονται [ερχομαι] pres. "**some people came**" - THEY CAME. Historic / narrative present, probably used to indicate a new segment in the narrative discourse.

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM [*the house of* THE RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE]. Expressing source / origin.

οτι "-" - [SAYING] THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech expressing what they said. The participle "saying" is attendant on the verb "they came, approached", "they came and said", possibly modal, expressing the

manner of their coming up to Jairus; "as they approached they addressed him."

απεθανεν [αποθνησκω] aor. "**is dead**" - [THE DAUGHTER OF YOU] DIED. The perfect "has died" would be expected, but the aorist "is dead" serves to stress that she is actually dead.

τι "why" - WHY [STILL]. Interrogative pronoun.

σκυλλεις [σκυλλω] pres. "**bother**" - ARE YOU TROUBLING, ANNOYING [THE TEACHER]? Originally the word meant to flay, or skin, but had weakened over time. Those from the house of Jairus are making the point that from a human perspective, the situation is now hopeless, so Jesus' aid is no longer needed.

v36

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, another change in subject, from the members of Jairus' household to Jesus.

παρακουσας [παρακουω] aor. part. "**ignoring / overhearing**" - [JESUS] REFUSING TO LISTEN, IGNORING / HAVING OVERHEARD. The participle is adverbial, possibly modal, or even temporal, "instantly Jesus ignored the remark", Moffatt. The base meaning of the word is "hear beside", but can mean either "overhear" or "ignore", even "disobey. The NIV follows RV "not heeding", but the TNIV "overhear" is likely the intended meaning. In fact, Jesus does not ignore their words, for he tells Jairus to believe.

λαλουμενον [λελω] pres. pas. part. "**[what] they said**" - [THE WORD] BEING SPOKEN. The participle is best treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting / describing "the word", "the word which was said"; "the spoken message", Berkeley.

τω αρχισυναγωγω [ος] dat. "**him**" - [SAYS] TO THE RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE. Dative of indirect object.

μη φοβου [φοβεομαι] pres. imp. "**do not be afraid**" - DO NOT FEAR. The negative with the present imperative may serve as a command to cease doing something, so "stop being afraid", although modern grammarians do not hold with this classification.

πιστευε [πιστευω] pres. imp. "**believe**" - [ONLY] BELIEVE. The present durative tense may serve to make the point that Jairus is to "continue to believe."

v37

ουκ ... ουδενα "[he did] not [let] anyone" - [AND HE DID] NOT [LET, PERMIT] NO ONE. Emphatic double negative.

συνακολουθησαι [συνακολουθεω] aor. inf. "**follow**" - TO FOLLOW, ACCOMPANY. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the negated verb "did not allow." By allowing only three disciples and the parents to

witness the miracle, Jesus is obviously keeping the sign away from the unbelieving crowd, but at the same time, by including the three disciples he is providing witnesses for, what will be, an amazing messianic sign for those with eyes to see. The messianic secret, maintained by discreet miracles and gospel preaching in kingdom parables, is primarily theological rather than practical. Jesus is concerned that the gospel, in sign and word, is revealed to those with eyes to see (the good soil) and hidden from those who are not looking for / seeking the coming kingdom (hard, shallow and weed-infested soil). The practical implication of a population stirred by messianic signs is likely to be a secondary consideration.

μετ [μετα] + gen. "-" - WITH [HIM]. Expressing association / accompaniment, "go along together with", somewhat redundant.

ει μη "except" - EXCEPT. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception.

Ιακωβου [ος] gen. "[**the brother**] of James" - [PETER AND JAMES AND JOHN THE BROTHER] OF JAMES. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

v38

iv] The healing of Jairus' daughter, v38-43. By the time Jesus gets to the girl, the household is in full mourning. Jesus sends them packing with the claim that "the girl is not dead, but asleep." They laugh because, in their estimation, she is dead. Only Luke makes it patently clear that she is dead. Jesus' claim that she is "asleep" may imply a number of things: he knows she is in a deep coma; her present state is only temporary; he is making a theological statement about resurrection; or he is throwing the mourners (the unbelieving crowd) off the scent. The tradition records the actual words of healing in Aramaic. The girl responds and walks about, but sadly, the general response is amazement and not faith. Jesus could well have asked "Do you still have no faith?" Jesus has again focused the revelation of the kingdom of God (the gospel) on the true seeker, rather than the unbelieving crowd. Only the disciples, along with Jairus and his wife, get to see the sign. The rest are left in confusion; the evidence of a child they thought was dead, but who must have been asleep.

εις + acc. "**[he went] in**" - [AND THEY COME] INTO [THE HOUSE OF THE SYNAGOGUE LEADER]. Spatial. "Came to" the home is better than "came in" such that in v39 "went in" is not "went into" the court yard of the house from the bedroom to talk to the crowd, but rather "went into" the house and talked to the crowd."

κλαιοντας [κλαιω] pres. part. "**crying**" - [AND HE SEES AN UPROAR, TURMOIL, CONFUSION AND] CRYING [AND WAILING]. This, and its coordinate participle **αλαλαζοντας**, "wailing", is confused somewhat by the introductory

connective **και**; "he sees a commotion and weeping and much wailing." This prompts the AV to take the participles as substantives; "he seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly." Yet, they seem more descriptive / adjectival, possibly exegetical, explaining the commotion, so Cranfield, or as an object complement stating a fact about the commotion; "He observed the bedlam - loud weeping and wailing - and as he entered", Berkeley. It is often argued that the mourners are a professional group hired for the purpose of making loud wailings, but there has really not been time to bring in a team of local thespians, and so it is likely the mourners are family and household members. "Why are you crying and carrying on like this?", CEV.

πολλα adj. "**loudly**" - MUCH, GREAT = GREATLY. The adjective serves as a modal adverb here with the accusative intensifying the verbal aspect, cf., Zerwick. Probably modifying both participles.

v39

εισελθων [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "**he went in**" - [AND] HAVING GONE IN. The participle is possibly adverbial, temporal, "and when he was come in", AV, or simply attendant on **λεγει**, "said", "he entered and said."

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

το παιδιον "**this child**" - [WHY ARE YOU DISTRESSED AND WEeping? THE LITTLE CHILD. Often an affectionate term. Note the change from "daughter" to "little child." The terms reflect endearment, for the girl is 12 years old and not an infant, cf., v42.

αλλα "**but**" - [DID NOT DIE] BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction.

καθευδει [καθευδω] pres. "**asleep**" - IS SLEEPING. An example where the verb is in the present tense, but carries a perfect sense. The mob says she is dead; Jesus says she is alive. Jesus may be employing a euphemism for the death of a person about to be raised to life. The term "sleeping" is later used in the epistles to describe the state of a believer who has died (dead, not in a state of soul-sleep) and awaiting the day of resurrection.

v40

κατεγελων [καταγελαω] imperf. "**they laughed at**" - THEY WERE LAUGHING AT, DERIDING. They deride Jesus for his faulty diagnosis, presumably made without seeing the child. "They greeted him with a scornful laugh", Phillips.

αυτου gen. pro. "**him**" - Genitive of direct object after the **κατα** prefix verb "to laugh at."

εκβαλων [εκβαλλω] aor. part. "**after he put them [all] out**" - [BUT/AND HE] HAVING THROWN OUT, CAST OUT, PUT OUT [EVERYONE]. The participle is best

treated as adverbial, temporal, as NIV. For Mark, this is quite a strong word, taking the sense "cast out" rather than "dismiss", or "send away". The sign is not for unbelievers.

του παιδιου [ον] gen. "**child's [father and mother]**" - [HE TAKES THE FATHER] OF THE CHILD [AND THE MOTHER]. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. The faith of the parents and disciples privileges them to see the sign.

τους "**the disciples**" - [AND] THE *ones*. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase μετ αυτου, "with him", into a nominal construction, "the ones who were with him."

μετ [μετα] + gen. "**with**" - WITH [HIM]. Expressing association.

οπου "**where**" - [AND GOES INTO] WHERE [THE CHILD WAS]. Local conjunction.

v41

κρατησας [κρατω] aor. part. "**he took [her] by**" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN HOLD OF, GRASPED HOLD OF [THE HAND]. The participle is adverbial, temporal; "then he took the child's hand", Moffatt. A similar action to the healing of Peter's mother-in-law. The verb "to take hold of" takes a genitive direct object." Taking the child by the hand", NJB.

του παιδιου [ον] gen. "**her**" - OF THE CHILD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

αυτη dat. pro. "**to her**" - [HE SAYS] TO HER. Dative of indirect object.

εστιν μεθερμηνευομενον [μεθερμηνευω] pres. pas. part. "**which means**" - [TALITHA KOU, WHICH] BEING TRANSLATED *means*. The participle and the present verb to-be forms a periphrastic present construction. The actual words are stark and simple and so remove any sense of a magical incantation. Still, it has been noted that the use of a strange tongue and touching was common in pagan magic, but of course, the words Jesus uses are Aramaic, his own language and that of the family he is helping.

το κορασιον "**little girl**" - Interestingly, the word indicates that we are dealing with someone older than a young child.

σοι dat. pro. "**[I say] to you**" - TO YOU [I SAY ARISE]. Dative of indirect object.

v42

ευθως "**immediately**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY [THE LITTLE GIRL STOOD UP, AROSE]. The effect of Jesus' words is immediate, "the girl got up at once", Moffatt, but see v29. The faith of the parents and the disciples privileges them to see the sign. "At once she jumped to her feet and walked around the room", Phillips.

περιπατει [περιπατω] imperf. "**began to walk around**" - [AND] SHE WAS WALKING AROUND. The NIV takes the imperfect as inceptive, emphasising the beginning of the action, but possibly just expressing durative action.

γαρ "-" - FOR. More explanatory than causal, making the point that she wasn't a baby, but was able to walk by herself.

ετων δωδεκα gen. "**twelve years old**" - [SHE WAS] TWELVE YEARS. Predicate adjective, the genitive being adjectival, of measure.

εκστασει μεγαλη dat. "**completely [astonished]**" - [AND THEY WERE ASTONISHED, AMAZED] WITH A GREAT ASTONISHMENT, AMAZEMENT. Cognate dative, see Cranfield 191, Decker 142.. Such a response, particularly from the disciples, is disappointing. Faith is the proper response to such a sign. When the dead are raised then is the kingdom upon us. "They were completely amazed", Barclay.

εσθυσ "-" - IMMEDIATELY. Placement of this temporal adverb is awkward and has spawned a number of textual variants; "they were suddenly and completely amazed", Barclay.

v43

πολλα adj. "[**he gave**] **strict [orders].**" - [AND HE GAVE ORDERS] MUCH = EARNESTLY. Used as an adverb to intensify the verb; "he strictly ordered them." It is possible to argue that Jesus only wants the miracle hidden long enough to enable him to get away, and so for this reason he tells the parents to prepare some food for their daughter, something they would have naturally done sooner or later. The "sooner" gets Jesus and the disciples away before miracle-fever gets out of hand. Gundry suggests that the crowd would inevitably get wind of the miracle once the girl is seen alive, so there is no point in keeping it secret, but Jesus has already sowed the seed of doubt by telling them she was sleeping (in a coma). Her being alive only shows that Jesus was right in his diagnosis.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT [NO ONE SHOULD KNOW THIS]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus commanded them.

δοθηναι [διδωμι] aor. pas. inf. "**to give**" - [AND HE SAID] TO GIVE. The infinitive serves to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus "told them", namely that they should give her something to eat.

αυτη dat. pro. "**her**" - TO HER. Dative of indirect object.

φαγειν [εσθιω] aor. inf. "**to eat**" - *something* TO EAT. Usually taken as adverbial, expressing purpose, "in order to eat", but technically it seems to serve as a substantive, the accusative subject of the passive infinitive "to be given; "he

said that *something* to eat be given to her." "At the same time insisting that the girl was to be giving something to eat", Cassirer.

6:1-6

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

1. Growing division, 6:1-8:21

i] Jesus' own countrymen are astonished and take offence at his teaching

Synopsis

"Jesus now leaves Capernaum to preach in the villages of Galilee, and he begins twenty-five miles away in his native country of Nazareth. At first, his teaching in the synagogue astounds them, but they cannot forget that the Rabbi, whose fame is throughout all Galilee, had once been their village joiner. 'There is always a shadow under the lamp', says the Indian proverb. The Nazarenes were too near to appreciate the splendour of his words and works, and their unbelief left Jesus marvelling", Hunter.

Teaching

Jesus' words and deeds invalidate unbelief.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8. The Journey to God's Mountain, 6:1-10:52. The children of God, filled with distrust and discontent, reach Mount Sinai and receive God's law. Jesus similarly makes his way to the mountain surrounded by disbelief. Yet, the focus remains on Jesus who, like Moses, is the provider of the bread of life, the word of life. To a remnant who see, who believe, Jesus reveals God's word, but increasingly the response is disbelief. The crowds were amazed when Jesus displayed his lordship over nature, demons, disease and death, now it is Jesus who is amazed at their unbelief. This section in Mark's gospel is marked by a growing awareness of who Jesus is. Amazement and bewilderment lead to disbelief, but sometimes belief. This section heralds a thematic shift as Jesus' ministry begins to bite home.

The episode covering 6:1-6a serves to conclude the first section of the gospel and introduce the second section. The second section proper begins with the commissioning of the disciples. Despite "the increasing participation in Jesus' ministry, the disciples also display a decreasing spiritual IQ, asking stupid questions, doubting Jesus' capacity to save, and even demonstrating the quality of hard-heartedness which has previously been ascribed to Jesus' enemies, the Pharisees", Marcus.

The section presents in two parts, **growing division**, 6:1-8:21, and **growing faith**, 8:22-10:52.

In **growing division**, the response of amazement moves to either disbelief or belief; the blind are blinded to blind disbelief, while seekers are saved and follow Jesus.

In **growing faith** we witness the spiritual development of Jesus' disciples. Jesus' disciples are like a blind man struggling to see, 8:22-30, but inevitable they see and follow, 10:46-52. The lessons they learn are as follows: humility (dependence on Christ's cross-bearing), listening (hearing Christ), acquiescence (greatness is not found in privilege) inclusion (welcoming a fellow believer), receiving (kingdom blessings are received as a gift rather than earned by doing), and serving (a disciples serves as Jesus served).

1. Growing division, 6:1-8:21

Jesus' own countrymen are offended by his teaching, 6:1-6;
The twelve are sent out, 6:7-13;
John the Baptist's end, 6:14-29;
Feeding of the 5,000 - Manna for all in the wilderness, 6:30-44;
Jesus walks on the water - Lord over the darkness, 6:45-56;
The religious leaders are also without understanding, 7:1-23;
Israel's blindness forces Jesus amongst the Gentiles, 7:24-37;
Feeding the 4,000. Jesus again reveals his true identity, 8:1-21.

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

Christ heals the blind - the disciples begin to see, 8:22-30;
Jesus' teaches suffering and discipleship #1. Deny self, 8:31-9:1;
The transfiguration - a revelation upon God's mountain, 9:2-13;
Healing of a possessed boy - by grace through faith, 9:14-29;
Jesus teaches suffering and discipleship #2. Humility, 9:30-37;
Partners in discipleship, 9:38-50;
Ideals and principles, 10:1-16;
The rich young ruler – Faith apart from works, 10:17-31;
Jesus teaches suffering and discipleship #3. Service, 10:32-45;
A blind man sees through faith and follows Jesus, 10:46-52.

ii] Structure: *Jesus despised*:

Jesus teaches in the synagogue, v1-2a;
Amazement leads to a number of questions, v2a-3;
Jesus responds with a proverbial saying, v4;
 familiarity breeds contempt.
Editorial comment, v5-6:
 Jesus' restricted healing ministry;
 The people's lack of faith;

Jesus' teaching ministry.

iii] Interpretation:

Why was it that Jesus "could do no mighty work" in Nazareth? Obviously Jesus was not "powerless apart from men's faith", Cranfield, although it is often argued that faith is a necessary prerequisite for the performance of a miracle. Yet, Jesus performs many miracles without the evidence of faith, as against Guelich, "miracles do not take place in the absence of faith". So, what is going on here?

Surely the problem is not that Jesus' neighbours were short on faith, but that they had moved from amazement to unbelief; they had rejected Jesus' messianic credentials. When revelation is rejected it is removed, and so the gospel in word and sign (miracles) was no longer generally available to the people of Nazareth. Note how Matthew recasts this statement; "and he did not do many miracles there on account of their lack of faith", Matt.13:58. As Taylor says, "this passage is one of the boldest statements in the gospels since it mentions something that Jesus could not do".

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.13:53-58, Lk.4:16-30. Matthew's account of this pericope is very similar to Mark. Although Luke runs his own race in recording this tradition, he does mention with Mark that Jesus' rejection in Nazareth took place on a Sabbath day.

v] Homiletics: *Hard pressed*

Many of Jesus' sayings are now part of our common psyche. Well we know that "a prophet is not without honour, save among his own people." Put another way, "familiarity breeds contempt." Maybe the Christian church in Western societies is cursed by familiarity; it is certainly cursed by contempt.

Mark's positioning of this passage next to the mission of the twelve in Galilee, serves to place the mission in the context of unbelief and rejection; it serves to remind us that the mission of the church faces the same response as that faced by Jesus and his disciples. The church will always face a pattern of rejection, will always be hard-pressed, from within and from without.

So, don't be amazed when your world rejects you because of your faith in Jesus.

Text - 6:1

Jesus' rejection at Nazareth, v1-6. Leaving Capernaum, Jesus went South into the hill country, to Nazareth ("his own country"). During the previous year,

Jesus had focused on selecting and training his disciples. The team now took a break before the Galilean mission, 6:7-13.

εκειθεν "[Jesus left] **there**" - [AND HE CAME OUT FROM] THERE. Adverb of place. Serving as a link to the previous episode.

την πατριδα [ις ιδος] "[his] **hometown**" - [INTO] THE HOMETOWN, HOMETOWN [OF HIM]. That is, where he was raised, not where he was born, so Nazareth.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [AND THE DISCIPLES OF HIM FOLLOW] HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow"; "his disciples followed him." Mark, unlike Luke and Matthew, underlines the presence of the disciples and thus their witness to their master's rejection.

v2

On the Sabbath day, Jesus and his team visit the local synagogue and Jesus, as a visiting rabbi (accompanied by his disciples), is invited to expound the readings from the Law and the Prophets. His message, and probably also his teaching style, bowled the congregation over, but soon their reaction is anything but positive. They knew Jesus had trained as a carpenter-builder, and certainly not as a rabbi. So, where did his wisdom and power ("miracles") come from? There are two possibilities, either God, or the Devil. For Jesus' neighbours, God seemed a rather remote possibility.

γενομενου [γινομαι] gen. aor. part. "**when [the Sabbath] came**" - [AND THE SABBATH] HAVING BECOME. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "Sabbath" form a genitive absolute construction, usually treated as temporal, as NIV.

διδασκειν [διδασκω] pres. inf. "**to teach**" - [HE BEGAN] TO TEACH. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "began". In the early part of Jesus' ministry, he was able to attend the local synagogue and, as a visiting rabbi, was invited to speak.

εν + dat. "ιν" - IN [THE SYNAGOGUE]. Local, expressing space.

[οι] πολλοι adj. "**many**" - [AND] MANY. The adjective serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to be amazed." All who were present", Jeremias, although better, "the majority", Cranfield.

ακουοντες [ακουω] pres. part. "**who heard**" - HEARING, LISTENING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the substantive adjective **πολλοι**, "many", as NIV.

εξεπλησσαντο [εκπλησσω] imperf. pas. "**were amazed**" - WERE OVERWHELMED, ASTONISHED, AMAZED. The imperfect is durative, expressing ongoing amazement. Being "overwhelmed / surprised", usually in a positive sense; "knocked out / bowled over", Boring. "Amazement" is a key response for

Mark. The initial response to Jesus' words and signs is amazement / surprise and this then moves to acceptance / faith, or rejection / unbelief. Here we see a very quick movement toward unbelief, with the congregation both incredulous and scandalised.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "**they asked**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "were amazed"; "were amazed and said." The questions are likely to have come from the religious authorities, but the "many" may well indicate a general rejection; that is certainly indicated by v5-6..

τουτω dat. pro. "**this man [get these things]?"** - [FROM WHERE] THIS ONE [THESE THINGS]. Dative of interest, advantage, "from where these things for this man?" = "where did he get all this?" Berkeley. The use of **τουτω** is probably contemptuous - used three times. This is the first of five questions asked by the congregation concerning Jesus, v2-3.

και "-" - AND. Coordinative for a series, here the second question.

τις "**what's**" - WHO, WHAT, WHY. Interrogative pronoun.

η σοφια [α] "**this wisdom**" - THE WISDOM. Mark's only use of the word "wisdom"; the word meaning depth of knowledge regarding spiritual matters. Obviously the "wisdom" the congregation is referring to is the gospel, here both expressed in words ("wisdom") and signs ("powers" = "miracles").

η δοθεισα [διδωμι] aor. pas. part. "**that has been given**" - HAVING BEEN GIVEN. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "wisdom", "what wisdom is this which has been given to him." As is often the case, a passive in such a setting can be classed as a divine / theological passive, ie., the wisdom originates from God. Yet, this is always an assumption and given the context, it is more likely that the congregation views Jesus' wisdom as derived from other than divine sources. So, "where did his wisdom come from, from heaven, or earth, or even Satan?"

τουτω dat. pro. "**to him**" - TO THIS *one*. Dative of indirect object. Again, the address is somewhat contemptuous.

και "-" - AND. Coordinative in series, here the third question. The more difficult reading is followed among the variants for this clause, see Metzger. Again, in this the third question, the congregation is questioning the origin of Jesus' mighty works / miracles / mighty deeds (signs - "events that proclaim God's acts on behalf of God's people", Guelich).

οτι "**that**" - THAT. This variant, which was incorporated into Textus Receptus, serves to introduce an exegetical clause explaining the nature of "these things", as NIV. The TNIV follows the more widely accepted reading without

ὅτι, but with an assumed interrogative τίς, "what are these remarkable miracles he is performing?"

τοιαυται pro. "-" - *what are* THESE. Emphatic by position = "and *what are* mighty works of such a kind coming about by the hand of him" = "how can he perform such miracles?" Barclay.

αι δυναμεις [ις εως] "**miracles**" - POWERS. Nominative subject of an assumed verb to-be. Acts of power = "miracles", as NIV.

δια + gen. "-" - BY MEANS OF, THROUGH [HIS HAND]. Instrumental, expressing means / agency.

γινομεναι [γινομαι] pres. part. "**he even does / he is performing**" - BECOMING? The participle is adjectival, attributive, modifying "hand", "which his hands perform". The mention of hands "reflects Semitic idiom", Cranfield.

v3

Jesus' neighbours knew of his origins and they are anything but impressed. The question, "Isn't this the carpenter?" draws out the implication that Jesus is nothing more than a common labourer. Such a person would not possess divine knowledge. Also, the question "Isn't this Mary's son?" infers that Jesus is illegitimate (otherwise they would have said "Joseph's son", even though Joseph is now dead). The congregation knows Jesus' brothers and sisters and so they think they know Jesus. In response, they refused to believe in him.

The issue of Mary's perpetual virginity is raised here. The reference to brothers and sisters is most likely to natural siblings, but some do argue that they are half-brothers and sisters.

ουχ "**isn't**" - [IS] NOT [THIS *one*]. This negation is used in a question expecting the answer "yes".

ὁ τεκτων [ων ονος] "**the carpenter**" - THE CARPENTER. Predicate nominative. Possibly "carpenter-builder", and this because Jesus is inclined to building construction allusions, rather than carpentry allusions, eg., plum-bob. The variant, "the son of the carpenter, the son of Mary", probably conflates Mark's quote with Matthew.

της Μαρίας "**Mary's [son]**" - [THE SON] OF MARY [AND BROTHER OF JAMES AND JOSES, AND JUDAS AND SIMON]? The genitive is adjectival, relational. This is a very unusual statement as Jesus would be properly identified with his father, not with his mother, even if his father were dead. If Mary had a more important pedigree she may replace Joseph, but Joseph is the one with the Davidic pedigree, and so Jesus would be identified by his neighbours as "Joseph's son". Marcus suggests that the identification of Jesus as Mary's son is hostile in nature, alluding to Jesus' illegitimacy.

προς + acc. "[here] with [us]" - [AND ARE NOT THE SISTERS OF HIM HERE] TOWARD, TO [US]? Here expressing association, so "with us / in company with us."

εσκανδαλιζοντο [σκανδαλιζω] imperf. pas. "they took offence" - [AND] THEY WERE TAKING OFFENCE. The word expresses the sense, enmeshed in, or falling into a trap, often in relation to sin. So, reacting to Jesus in a negative way, being scandalised by him, offended, repelled and therefore turning away from him. "And they refused to believe in him", Guelich.

εν "at [him]" - IN, ON [HIM]. The use of this preposition in the phrase "they took offence in him", follows Hebrew usage of σκανδαλιζω in Sir.9:5, 23:8, 35:15. Treated as causal, "because of him", cf., Zerwick, or reference / respect, referencing the one toward whom the feeling is directed, so "at him", cf., BAGD III3b, even instrumental, "so they were repelled by him", Moffatt.

v4

Jesus replies with a contemporary proverb. It was generally accepted that the prophets faced rejection and martyrdom and this often among their own people. The saying possibly reflects a more common version, "a physician is unable to heal those who know him", exegeted in v5, but such is speculative. It is unlikely that Jesus is suggesting that he is a prophet since he is "more than a prophet", Guelich.

αυτοις dat. pro. "to them" - [AND JESUS WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "-" - Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech.

ει μη "only" - [A PROPHET IS NOT DISHONOURED] EXCEPT. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception; "a prophet is not without honour except where he grew up and among his own family." The double negative construction ουκ ει μη is best expressed as a positive, so BDAG, "honoured everywhere except" The word "prophet" is used of a forth-teller of divine revelation, not a fore-teller. The word "dishonoured" takes the sense, "not to receive one's due honour and respect", TH.

εν + dat. "in" - IN [THE HOMELAND / NATIVE PLACE OF HIM]. Local, expressing space.

εν τοις συγγενευσιν αυτου "among his relatives" - [AND] IN THE RELATIVES / KIN OF HIM. The preposition εν expresses association here; "with / among". This phrase is missing in Matthew's account, but is virtually taken up in the phrase "in his own house", since there is little difference in meaning. Some have suggested that the duplication is Mark's way of emphasising Jesus' rejection by his family members, so Gundry p299.

εν τη οικια αυτου "in his own house" - [AND] IN THE HOUSE OF HIM. The preposition **εν** as above. "Their own family", CEV.

v5

This verse gives rise to two untruths: that Jesus' power is limited and that faith is a prerequisite for healing (see "Interpretation" above). Jesus' miracles are not dependent on the faith of the recipient, although it is true to say that a person's faith places them in the centre of God's will and therefore enables them to experience His work of grace. As for the work itself, "Jesus' power as saviour knows no bounds, but the use of it does", Ridderbos. It seems likely that Jesus has the power to perform messianic signs, but chooses not to, due to the people's rejection of his messianic credentials.

ποιησαι [ποιεω] pres. inf. "**could not do**" - [AND HE WAS NOT ABLE] TO DO [THERE]. Complementary infinitive completing the sense of the negated verb "he was not able".

ουδεμιαν adj. "**any**" - NOTHING [POWERS = MIGHTY WORKS, MIRACLES]. Double negative, "**not** able to do **nothing**." Drawing out the stark nature of the situation; "he was not able to do there even one work of power", Wuest. Mark's words here may indicate a distinction between a "work of power", ie. a messianic sign, and the general healing of some sick people, ie., an act of mercy, yet, does such a distinction exist?

ει μη "**except**" - Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception. The exceptive clause "seems to be a correction of a too radical statement of Jesus' inability", Boring.

επιθεις [επιτιθημι] aor. part. + dat. "**lay [his hands] on**" - HAVING LAID UPON [THE HANDS]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "healed"; "he laid and healed; but possibly adverbial, modifying the verb "healed", modal, expressing manner, or instrumental, expressing means, "by means of", so Rogers. Heal, "attend / treat / cure", Zerwick. "Except that he healed a few of those beset by ill health through laying his hands on them", Cassirer.

αρρωστοις dat. adj. "**[a few] sick people**" - A FEW SICK, ILL *persons* [HE HEALED *them*]. The adjective serves as a substantive, dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to place on." In a state of powerlessness due to illness.

v6

Mark constantly uses the word "amazed" to describe the common response of Israel to Jesus, but now it is Jesus who is amazed. Our Lord was obviously quite taken aback by the unbelief of his long-time neighbours. Mark wants us to

note the consequence of "their lack of faith", namely, the withdrawal of the gospel in word and sign - Jesus leaves them with their unbelief.

The division of this literary unit is in dispute. The division is taken either at the end of the verse, or in the middle, as NIV.

εθαυμάζεν [θαυμάζω] imperf. "**he was amazed**" - [AND] HE MARVELLED, WAS AMAZED. Again, Mark chooses the imperfect tense, as he did with the neighbours' amazement and offence, and Jesus' "not able to do" signs, so meshing the actions of Jesus and the neighbours, so Gundry. Interestingly, this is the one of the two occasions when we are told that Jesus was "amazed", cf., Matt.8:10. Probably best taken to mean "he was surprised / taken aback", even "puzzled", so Guelich.

δια + acc. "**at [their lack of faith]**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF [THE UNBELIEF OF THEM]. Probably causal, but usually translated "as the object of the surprise of Jesus", TH, as NIV. "He marvelled because of their unbelief", Wuest.

περιηγεν [περιαγω] imperf. "**he went around**" - [AND] HE WAS GOING AROUND [THE VILLAGES]. Imperfect is durative, expressing ongoing action, although Mark will often use the imperfect for background information.

κυκλω dat. "-" - ABOUT, AROUND. Adverbial dative, modal, expressing manner, modifying "he went around." Possibly here making the point "he went around in a circuit", so possibly as in the NIV, "from village to village." "He went around among the adjacent villages teaching", TH.

διδασκων [διδασκω] pres. part. "**teaching**" - TEACHING. The participle is probably modal, identifying the manner in which the main verb "went around" is accomplished. Why "teaching" rather than "preaching [the gospel]"? Mark does often describe Jesus' word ministry in terms of "teaching", since he is a rabbi and this is what you do in a synagogue, although when the gospel is in mind, he tends to use **κηρυσσω**, "preach [the gospel]".

6:7-13

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

1 Growing division, 6:1-8:21

ii] The twelve are sent out

Synopsis

Following his rejection in Nazareth, Jesus commissions the twelve and sends them out on an extended mission throughout Galilee. He sends them two by two, to preach the gospel in both word and sign. They are to wear the garb of a roving prophet, leaving a blessing where they are accepted, and a curse where they are rejected.

Teaching

With authority and power, both in word and sign, Jesus sends his disciples into the world / Israel to proclaim the dawning of the last days.

Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-6. The second major section in Mark's gospel, 6:1-10:52, is introduced by a short outline narrative which sets the theme for the section - a ministry of the Word prompting either opposition / rejection, or faith, 6:1-6. This is followed by a Markan sandwich: the mission of the twelve, 6:7-12, the Baptist's death, 6:14-29, and the account of the disciples' return from mission, 6:30.

ii] Structure: *Jesus sends out the twelve:*

The disciples are commissioned, v7;

Instructions, v8-11:

for the road, v8-9;

for the home, v10-11;

The mission is described, v12-13.

iii] Interpretation:

"First the call, then the choice, and finally the commission of the disciples. The time has come to test the results of their training (and to prepare them for future missions beyond the Cross). Jesus sends them forth two by two, no doubt on the scriptural and common-sense basis that 'two are better than one', Ecc.4:9. If we ask what is the purpose of the Mission, the answer is that it was to gather the People of God. He sends them out 'like men carrying the Fiery Cross through a Highland glen', and before they go he gives them their 'marching orders': First, they are to travel light; second, they are to preach and heal; third, they are to observe certain rules

of hospitality; fourth, they are to remember whose ambassadors they are", Hunter.

Although it is not initially stated, the purpose of the mission is to preach the gospel - "the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe", v12. This proclamation in words is supported by a proclamation in signs, the most evident sign of the realised reign of God in Christ, is the binding of dark powers. So, Jesus sends his disciples out with the authority to cast out demons, cf., v6. The imperfect *εδίδου*, "he was giving", may imply the gift of an ongoing authority, but then, why do the disciples fail to cast out the demon in 9:18? Note the other synoptic gospels for their answer. Even if it is an ongoing authority, it is surely limited to the apostolic mission to the Jews. The authority to cast out demons comes directly from Christ and sets the apostles apart as his emissaries. Exorcism serves as the most significant of the signs of the coming kingdom for Israel, and as such, serves to act out the gospel message. If this sign is for Israel, what is the sign for Gentiles?

Oral transmission has obviously abbreviated Jesus' instructions to the disciples, but their point is clear enough, the disciples are to convey, by dress and behaviour, the cultural identifiers of a messenger of God's word, eg., a missionary accepts the hospitality on offer rather than seeks out a better offer, v10. Missioners are not only under orders to communicate *the News*, the gospel, they are bound to reveal the consequences of rejection, v11.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.10:1, 5:-15, Lk.9:1-6. The priority of Mark is indicated by the truncated nature of what is a highly significant event in the ministry of Jesus - it is assumed that he would not abbreviate this tradition if a more fulsome one was available to him. Mark's glaring omission of the purpose of the mission is picked up by Luke when he adds; "he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal", v2. Although note how Matthew, like Mark, leaves out the purpose of the mission, 10:1 While Mark's account is very similar to Luke, Matthew's account is, in comparison, detailed and expansive.

v] Homiletics: *An evangelistic model*

Some years ago, a leading light in the Anglican church in Sydney, argued that a believer can choose only two possible paths in the Christian life, either became an evangelist, or work to finance evangelism. Christianity is not all about evangelism, it's all about many things, but evangelism is an important part of the mix.

When it comes to the business of mission, we need to understand that it is Christ who gathers and builds his church; we simply share in his work. Our reading today gives us some hints on the means and the message.

The means

Jesus takes the accepted medium of communication for his day, and uses it as a vehicle for mass communication. His methodology is both traditional and theatrical. The disciples' garb gathers the crowd and their antics drive home the message - dusting off their shoes in the front of a Jewish audience is certainly powerful street theatre. Our access to mass media today gives us opportunities for communicating the gospel like never before.

The message

Jesus instructed his disciples to proclaim the news of God's dawning kingdom in both words and signs, calling on all to "repent". The gospel presents as a simple message; it is the good news that Jesus freely offers us life eternal, ours for the asking. As for proclaiming the gospel in signs, Jesus taught that the sign of God's dawning kingdom to the Gentile world is the sign of love - "love one another", cf., Jn.17:20-23. God's reign in Jesus Christ is visibly displayed in our compassion, one to another.

Text - 6:7

The mission of the twelve, v7-13: i] The commission, v7. Following his rejection in Nazareth, Jesus moves throughout Galilee, village to village, on a teaching mission, v6b. This is the third time Mark mentions such a mission. Jesus now expands this ministry. Jesus then gathers his disciples and prepares to send them out two by two. In calling and training his disciples, Jesus has prepared for the day when he will commission them as his representatives ("the sent one is as the man who commissions him", Jewish law). Jesus sends the disciples to proclaim the coming kingdom, both in word and sign. The authority to expel demons is the sign of greatest significance.

προσκαλείται [**προσκαλεομαι**] pres. "**calling**" - [AND] HE CALLS TO SELF, SUMMONS [THE TWELVE]. Narrative / historic present, probably used to indicate a change in narrative sequence. The word is often used in Mark of Jesus calling disciples or others to himself. It is likely that Jesus is drawing the 12 from a larger group of followers.

αποστελλειν [**αποστελλω**] pres. inf. "**he sent**" - [AND HE BEGAN] TO SEND OUT [THEM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the verb "began", "he proceeded (began) to send them out", Moffatt. Jesus sends them as his qualified representatives.

δυσ δυσ "**two by two**" - Distributive; an unusual form in Greek and therefore most likely influenced by the Aramaic. The disciples' going out in pairs may reflect custom, and / or the law's requirement of at least two witnesses, and / or the practicalities of life.

εδιδου [**διδωμι**] imperf. "**gave**" - [AND] HE WAS GIVING [AUTHORITY]. The other synoptic gospels have an aorist tense. The imperfect may imply an ongoing authority, or it may simply reflect the presence of direct speech in the giving of the authority. "Sent them out two by two with power over evil spirits", CEV.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

των πνευματων [**α ατος**] gen. "**[impure] spirits**" - OF THE [UNCLEAN] SPIRITS. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic, of subordination; "over", as NIV.

v8

ii] Instructions for the road, v8-9. Jesus' instructions for the mission are interpreted in various ways. It is often suggested that the requirements were designed to teach the disciples about dependence on God. Yet, it is more likely that they were cultural behaviour-codes for wandering teachers / prophets. The disciples went "two by two" (v7) because truth is established "by the mouth of two witnesses", Deut.17:6, while their dress defined their business - they were messengers from God. So, these are likely markers for a wandering teacher / prophet, something like the clerical collar, a marker used by clergy up to the end of twentieth century (before we decided it was better to blend in!!!).

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [AND HE COMMANDED, INSTRUCTED, GAVE ORDER TO] THEM. Dative of direct object after the **παρα** prefix verb "to command, give order to."

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of direct speech, expressing the content of the instructions.

αιρωσιν [**αιρω**] pres. subj. "**take [nothing]**" - THEY SHOULD LIFT UP, TAKE AWAY [NOTHING]. Jesus' instruction is emphasised by using the present tense of the subjunctive verb.

εις + acc. "**for [the journey]**" - INTO [THE WAY]. Probably here expressing purpose / end view; "for the purpose of the way / journey."

ει μη "**except [a staff]**" - EXCEPT [A WALKING STICK, STAFF ONLY]. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception. The instruction is emphasised by the addition of **μονον**, "only". The purpose of this exception is unclear. Defence seems unlikely, but possibly it is all part of the dress-code for a wandering prophet - it has the Moses / Charlton Heston look about it! The person with the stick gets to speak!!

πηραν [α] "[no] bag" - [NOT BREAD, NOT] KNAPSACK. Probably "no haversack", NJB, although "no begging bag" is possible. The disciples must rely on the hospitality of the villages they visit.

εις + acc. "in [your belt]" - [NOR COPPER] INTO [THE GIRDLE, BELT]. Spatial, expressing arrival at here. The girdle can serve as a form of money belt. "No money in their pockets", Phillips.

v9

αλλα "-" - BUT. Adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "no money in your belt, but it is OK to wear a pair of sandals."

υποδεδεμενους [υποδοεομαι] perf. mid. part. "wear [sandals]" - HAVING HAD TIED ON [your feet SANDALS to journey]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "do [not] dress", so also imperatival / permissive; "wear sandals." The accusative participle, with its accusative object, "sandals", probably stands as the accusative subject of an assumed infinitive, so Hort 99. Cranfield suggests πορευεσθαι, "to journey". "It's alright to wear sandals", CEV.

και "but" - AND. Coordinative, continuing the negative instructions; "and do not put on two shirts."

μη ενδυσησθε [ενδυω] aor. subj. "[no extra shirt]" - DO NOT PUT ON, WEAR, BE CLOTHED IN [TWO SHIRTS]. Subjective of prohibition, Decker, although the ινα construction from v8 continues. On the face of it, the prohibition is that they are not to put one "tunic" over another. This is a rather strange instruction; it may serve to limit luxurious dress, but, given the context, it is likely a prohibition against taking an extra tunic. Clearly the instructions concern the present mission, and are more related to culture than poverty. Note Manson's observation that similar instructions were in vogue regarding attendance at the Temple, although would Jesus direct his disciples to practise pharisaic piety.

v10

iii] Instructions for the home, v10-11. A village may either accept or reject the prophet and his message. Those who accept the prophet, following custom, offer hospitality, while those who reject, face the sign of judgement. A Jew, leaving Gentile territory, would normally dust themselves off, dissociating themselves from the judgement hanging over that land. So, the "dust off your feet" is a piece of pointed street-theatre. Cranfield suggests that the instruction on staying in the same house serves to stop a disciple becoming *upwardly mobile* if better accommodation is offered - a genuine prophet does not act this way.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [AND HE WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object. Some suggest that the editorial note "and he said to them" indicates that

the instruction comes from another source, others that it simply serves to refocus the reader on the source of the words, namely, Jesus.

ὅπου εἰαν + subj. "**whenever**" - WHENEVER [YOU ENTER INTO A HOUSE]. Introducing a temporal conditional clause 3rd. class where the condition has the possibility of coming true; "whenever, *as the case may be, then ...*"

ἕως ἄν + subj. "**Until**" - [REMAIN, ABIDE, CONTINUE THERE] UNTIL. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, expressing future, or habitual action.

ἐκεῖθεν adv. "**that town**" - [YOU LEAVE] FROM THERE. Adverb of place, referring to a locality; "that place", Barclay.

v11

ὅς ἄν + subj. "**if any**" - [AND] WHATEVER. Introducing a relative conditional clause, third class, where the condition has the possibility of coming true; "whatever, *as may be the case, then*".

τοπος "**place**" - PLACE. Nominative subject of the verb "to receive." Possibly here a "household". The point is, there will be some villages where all the households will reject the messengers.

δεξίται [δεχομαι] aor. subj. "**will [not] welcome**" - WILL [NOT] WELCOME, RECEIVE [YOU]. "Wherever they will not receive or listen to you", Weymouth.

ὑμῶν gen. pro. "**you**" - [NOR LISTEN TO] YOU. Genitive of direct object after the verb **ακουω**, "to hear."

εκπορευομενοι [εκπορευομαι] pres. part. "**leave**" - GOING OUT FROM [THERE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the imperative verb "to shake off", and so similarly imperative, as NIV.

εκτιναξατε [εκτινασσω] aor. imp. "**shake [the dust] off**" - SHAKE, SHAKE OFF [THE DUST]. Alluding to the practice of pious Jews who carefully remove the dust of a heathen land before re-entering Jewish territory. A gesture of disassociation. "Shake the last speck of dust from your feet as you would do if you were leaving a heathen town", Barclay.

τον "-" - THE [UNDER THE FEET OF YOU]. The article serves as an adjectivizer turning the prepositional construction "under your feet" into an attributive modifier; "the dust which is under your feet."

εις + acc. "**as**" - INTO = TO/FOR [A TESTIMONY, WITNESS]. The preposition expresses purpose here.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**against them**" - TO THEM. Dative of interest, disadvantage, as NIV. A witness to/against the people of that place, either to the people themselves, or to God. If a sign to the people, the gesture may serve to prompt a change of heart, but it seems more likely a gesture "against", in the sense of a sign of judgment. Rejecting the messenger and their message is dangerous.

"Shake off the very dust from the soles of your feet as a warning to them", Williams.

v12

iv] Mark gives a thumb-nail description of the mission, v12-13. Mark summarises the mission in terms of a proclamation by word and sign. The disciples proclaim the coming kingdom in the message of the gospel, and they also proclaim it in the messianic signs of exorcism and healing. Mark summarises their message as a call for repentance. In the face of the coming kingdom and the judgment it brings, we can only but turn toward ("repent") the living God and seek his mercy. The reference to the use of oil in healing is interesting. Although part of ancient medical treatment, it was probably only used by the disciples as a theatrical prop. It was the messiah's power in healing that proclaimed the kingdom's coming.

κηρυξαν [κηρυσσω] aor. "**preached**" - [AND HAVING GONE OUT] THEY PREACHED, PROCLAIMED. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "preached", as NIV. The purpose of the mission, namely, preaching the gospel in word and sign, is not mentioned in the initial charge, v7. None-the-less, it is obvious that proclamation is central to the mission. They preached the gospel (message) of the coming kingdom.

ινα + subj. "**that**" - THAT. Here introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the disciples preached.

μετανοωσιν [μετανοεω] subj. "**people should repent**" - THEY SHOULD REPENT, CHANGE THEIR MIND, TURN ABOUT. Mark reminds us of the expected response to the message which he has already summarised in 1:15. Repentance involves an acceptance of God's reign in Christ by turning to Jesus for forgiveness. Note, repentance is not a feeling of sorrow for past actions, although sorrow is certainly a byproduct. "Turn to God", CEV.

v13

εξεβαλλον [εκβαλλω] imperf. "**they drove out**" - [AND] THEY WERE CASTING OUT [MANY DEMONS]. The imperfect, being durative, may imply an ongoing success in casting out demons, although Mark's choice of imperfect verbs in this verse may serve to express action that is associated rather than primary, so Decker. Jesus casts out a few, his disciples "many". The mission serves to extend Jesus' authority to the many. The casting out of demons, as noted above, serves as a powerful sign of the dawning kingdom. "If I by the finger of God cast out demons then the kingdom of God is come upon you."

ηλειφον [αλειφω] imperf. "**anointed**" - [AND] THEY WERE ANOINTING [MANY SICK PEOPLE]. Most commentators see the anointing as symbolic rather than

medicinal, even though olive oil was used as a cure-all. Yet, what was the point of the symbol, particularly as Jesus doesn't use oil himself? The only other reference to the use of oil in healing is in James 5:14, so we are at a bit of a loss to understand the point of its use here.

ελαιω [ον] dat. "-" - WITH OIL. The dative is instrumental, expressing means.

εθεραπευον [θεραπευω] imperf. "**healed them**" - [AND] THEY WERE TREATING, CARING FOR, HEALING [*them*]. "And cured them", Barclay.

6:14-29

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

1. Growing division, 6:1-8:21

iii] John the Baptist's end

Synopsis

The mission of Jesus has come to the ears of Herod Antipas, who thinks that Jesus is John the Baptist come back to life. Mark goes on to recount the story of John's execution by Herod, of how John was imprisoned in the fortress of Machaerus near the Dead Sea for offending his wife Herodias, and of how her daughter Salome charms Herod into presenting John's head to her on a plate.

Teaching

The gospel proclaims the arrival of one greater than John the Baptist.

Issues

i] Context: See 6:7-13

ii] Background: Josephus, the Jewish historian, in his work *Jewish Antiquities*, c.93AD, also relates the story of the Baptist's execution. There are a number of differences in the story, eg. he names Herod's stepdaughter as Salome, not Herodias, see v22.

iii] Structure: *John the Baptist's end*:

King Herod assumes that Jesus is a resurrected Baptist, v14-16;

The grounds for Herod's superstition is laid out, v17-29:

Background, v17-20:

John's imprisonment, v17a;

Reason for the Baptist's execution, v17b-18;

Herod's resistance to the execution, v19-20.

The execution of the Baptist, v21-29:

The provocative dance routine and a foolish oath, v21-24;

Herod's pride resulting in the Baptist's execution, v25-28;

A dignified burial, v29.

iv] Interpretation:

This episode serves to illustrate the effect of the apostles' mission described in the previous episode, 6:7-13. The preaching of the gospel in word and sign has touched the whole Galilean countryside. Even Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, hears of the mission undertaken in Jesus' name. Yet Herod, affected by guilt and remorse as a consequence

of his execution of John the Baptist, is overcome by superstition. As far as Herod is concerned, Jesus is the Baptist risen from the dead. The episode illustrates the exceeding value of the Baptist, and by implication, the value of the "one more powerful."

There is a sense where this episode prefigures Jesus' own execution. Herod rightly links Jesus with the Baptist, although he fails to see him as the "one more powerful." Both will stand together in death, unjustly condemned by an evil tyrant, yet death will not constrain the divine Son, and thus will not constrain the forerunner.

Mark has nicely woven together two separate elements of the apostolic tradition into a single episode - the link is the confusion of the populous and the confusion of Herod (is the Baptist *redivivus*?). This confusion illustrates the impact of the mission of the twelve, 6:7-13. The mission clearly causes a wide-ranging response, but not a response of belief in Jesus as the Christ / Messiah. Amazement yes; faith no.

v] Synoptics:

Matt.14:1-12; Lk.9:7-9. Mark's account aligns with Matthew with little indication of priority, or either dependence or independence. Luke's condensed account serves to draw out the confusion caused by the disciples' mission; "Herod heard all that was happening and did not know what to make of it", 9:7

vi] Homiletics: *It's all in the moves*

OK, I have to admit, I'm an old movie buff. I just love old Hollywood moves. Westerns! I can never get enough of them. And yes, I even go for the Biblical epics - the colour, the drama, the poor acting, Bring back the epics I say! There was no way our reading today wasn't going to become a Hollywood blockbuster and so in 1953 Rita Hayworth and Steward Granger starred in the epic, *Salome* - and what a blast it was.



Some stories are so rich in imagery that they live from generation to generation. The seductive Salome dancing before her stepfather Herod; Herodias plotting the death of the Baptist, and then both of them enthusiastically going for the kill, while a vacillating Herod protects his social standing - what a great story!

The characters in this Bible story are so real, Shakespearian even: Herod, the status-driven leader now overtaken by guilt and haunted by apparitions; the youthful Salome flaunting her sexual power; Herodias, embittered by her selfishness; John, the righteous man, overcome by circumstance.

There's Herod, with his dark phantoms, and he hears of the "miraculous powers" at work in Jesus. The mission of the twelve has stirred up the whole countryside, and yet, as is so often the case when the gospel is proclaimed, the crowd is confused. Who is this Jesus? For some, he is Elijah, the one who prepares for the coming messiah; for others, he is like a wonder-working prophet. As for Herod, this Jesus is a manifestation of John the Baptist, come back from the dead to haunt him.

This powerful tragedy, this pure piece of theatre, is actually divine revelation. The story constantly projects the greatness of the good man done in by evil intent, yet whose greatness uplifts "the one more powerful" who follows in his footsteps. He too will be overcome by political intrigue and vacillating authority, but of course, "you can't keep a good man down!" Evil may have its day, but good will triumph.

Text - 6:14

The Baptist's end: i] King Herod receives inconclusive reports about Jesus' mission: he is a resurrected Baptist, Elijah, a prophet. Herod opts for the first option - Jesus is the Baptist *redivivus*, v14-16.

οἩρωδης "king Herod" - [AND THE KING], HEROD. "Herod" stands in apposition to "the king." Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, 4BC-39AD. Officially, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, but not king. Under Roman administration, a tetrarch was an appointed ruler of an oriental province. Antipas' well-known desire to be king, reflected by Mark's use of the term here, ultimately brought the Romans down on him.

γαρ "for" - [HEARD *reports*] BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Herod had heard, namely, Jesus' activities were well known.

το ονομα [α ατος] "[Jesus'] name" - THE NAME [OF HIM BECAME WELL KNOWN]. "Name" in the sense of Jesus' person. Mark underlines the effectiveness of the disciples' mission, v7-13. "For" even Herod hears of their words and signs, although in a state of guilt he assumes that John the Baptist has risen from the dead. Mark goes on to explain why Herod was so guilty. Cranfield's suggestion that Mark adds the story because he hasn't any information covering the period of the mission, is rather thin.

οτι "-" - [SAYING] THAT. Indicating an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Herod heard.

ὁ βαπτίζων [βαπτίζω] pres. part. "[John] the Baptist" - [JOHN] THE ONE BAPTISING. The participle serves as a substantive standing in apposition to "John".

εγηνεργεταί [εγειρω] perf. "has been raised" - HAS BEEN RAISED UP, WOKEN. It is likely that Jesus' public ministry did not begin until after the arrest of John.

εκ + gen. "from" - OUT OF, FROM [*the* DEAD]. Expressing source / origin. A common phrase in the NT, with νεκρων always anarthrous; "from *the* dead."

δια + acc. "that is why" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF [THIS]. Causal construction.

δυναμεις [δυναμις] "miraculous powers" - POWERS, POWERFUL WORKS, MIRACLES. Most likely meaning "miracles" rather than "powers" or "acts of power", and as such refer to the signs performed by Jesus and the disciples. Although John didn't perform any miracles, a superstitious and guilty person like Herod would tend to miss the obvious. "Who had come back to life with the power to perform miracles", CEV.

εν + dat. "in [him]" - [ARE AT WORK] IN [HIM]. Local, expressing space. Note that the miraculous powers are identified at work in Jesus, not the disciples. Since the disciples perform the signs in Jesus' name there is no need to argue that the episode is dislocated and has no relevance to the ministry of the twelve.

v15

ελεγον [λεγω] imperf. "[others] said" - [BUT/AND OTHERS] WERE SAYING. The imperfect indicating ongoing action / imperfective. Mark continues to explain the popular understanding of Jesus. They say of him that he is the foretold Elijah who prepares the way of the Messiah, or that he is like one of the wonder-working prophets, eg. Elisha. Sadly, Jesus is not recognised as the Messiah.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement, taken as direct speech by NIV.

ὡς "like" - [IT IS ELIJAH, AND OTHERS WERE SAYING THAT] AS, LIKE. Comparative.

των προφητων [ης ου] gen. "of the prophets" - [ONE] OF THE PROPHETS. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

v16

Herod has heard of the different conclusions drawn by the people concerning Jesus and as far as he is concerned, Jesus is an apparition of John the Baptist - the one he beheaded has come back to haunt him.

ακουσας [ακουω] aor. part. "when [Herod] heard" - [BUT/AND HEROD] HAVING HEARD *these things*. The participle is adverbial, temporal. Herod hears the different views and we are given his opinion.

Ἰωαννην [ης] "**John**" - *said* [WHOM I BEHEADED,] JOHN. The nominal phrase ὃν ἐγὼ ἀπεκεφάλισα, "whom I beheaded", stands in apposition to "John". The phrase emphasises the obvious alarm felt by Herod, although we have no record of him seeking to do Jesus harm. None-the-less, Jesus tends to keep Herod at arms-length. "John, he whom I beheaded, this one has been raised."

οὗτος pro. "-" - *THIS one*. The phrase "whom I beheaded, John", is a *casus pendens*, an independent nominal phrase which is resumed by the pronoun οὗτος, "this one." Here the phrase is "drawn into the accusative by attraction to the relative", Cranfield, 207, but see Decker.

ἠγερθη [εγειρω] aor. pas. "**has been raised from the dead**" - WAS RAISED UP, WOKEN. We are unsure if Herod thinks that Jesus is actually a resurrected John the Baptist, or an apparition, or a person possessed by the Baptist's spirit.

v17

ii] The ground for Herod's superstition is laid out, namely his execution of the Baptist, v17-29. In the rest of the passage Mark explains what has led Herod to the rather strange conclusion that Jesus is a fleshly, or spiritual, embodiment of John the Baptist. Guilt, acting on a superstitious mind, can produce bizarre results.

Mark sets the background, v17-20. First, the reasons for John's imprisonment, v17-18. On the basis of Levitical law, John the Baptist openly criticised the marriage of Herodias to Antipas. In seeking revenge for this insult, Herodias drove her husband to arrest John and inevitably tricked him into taking his life, the life of a person Herod admired.

γὰρ "**for**" - *BECAUSE*. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Herod is agitated.

αυτος "**himself**" - [HEROD] HIMSELF. The NIV takes the pronoun as emphatic, but it could serve to reference, "the aforesaid", or simply anticipating the noun, "Herod", and so left untranslated.

ἀποστείλας [ἀποστελλω] aor. part. "**had given orders**" - *HAVING SENT guards*. Attendant circumstance participle expressing accompanying the main verb "arrested"; "for Herod has sent his guards to seize John and secure him in prison."

ἐκρατήσεν [κράτω] aor. "**arrested**" - *SEIZED, ARRESTED* [JOHN AND BOUND HIM IN PRISON]. The action is somewhat consecutive; John was arrested as a result of Herod's orders. Josephus says that John was imprisoned in the fortress palace of Machaerus in Perea.

διὰ + acc. "**because of**" - *BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF* [HERODIAS]. Causal. The arrest was orchestrated by Herodias.

του αδελφου [ος] gen. "[his] brother" - [THE WIFE OF PHILIP] THE BROTHER [OF HIM]. Genitive, standing in apposition to Phillip. Actually, his half-brother.

ὅτι "whom" - BECAUSE [HE MARRIED HER]. Here causal, "because he had married her", ESV. Under Roman law Herodias was legally able to divorce her husband Philip, but under Levitic law, Antipas was not permitted to marry his brother's wife, Lev.18:16, 20:21. Interestingly, Josephus, the Jewish historian, says that Herodias was married to Herod the son of Herod the Great and Mariamne II and that Philip the Tetrarch, son of Herod the Great and Cleopatra, actually married Salome. It is not easy to identify the actual relationships and names, common and proper, of Herod's family.

v18

γάρ "for" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Herodias had orchestrated the arrest of John.

ελεγεν [λεγω] imperf. "had been saying" - [JOHN] WAS SAYING. Translated as a pluperfect. The sentence explains why Herodias was so bitter against John, a bitterness that drove her to have him arrested and murdered.

τῷ Ἡρώδῃ dat. "to Herod" - TO HEROD. Dative of indirect object.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement / indirect speech, expressing what John was saying; "saying to Herod that"

σοι dat. "for you" - [IT IS NOT RIGHT, PROPER, LAWFUL] FOR YOU. Dative of reference.

εχειν [εχω] pres. inf. "to have" - TO HAVE [THE WIFE OF THE BROTHER OF YOU]. The infinitive forms a nominal clause which functions as the subject of the verb "is [not] permissible/lawful"; "to have the wife of your brother is not permissible." "John had told Herod that he had no right to marry his brother's wife", Barclay.

v19

Herod's unwillingness to execute the Baptist, v19-20. Initially, Herodias' murderous intent was frustrated by Herod's respect for John. He even gave him a hearing, although with limited understanding.

δε "so" - BUT/AND [HERODIAS]. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, possibly consecutive; "and so."

αυτῷ dat. "against John" - [BORE A GRUDGE AGAINST, ANGRY WITH] HIM. When the verb takes the sense "bore a grudge against" it takes a dative of direct object, as here. "Had it in for him."

απεκτειναι [απεκτεινω] aor. inf. "to kill" - [AND DESIRED] TO KILL [HIM]. Complementary infinitive, completing the sense of the verb "wanted / desired". Note the literary parallel between Ahab and Jezebel's interaction with Elijah, and

also Pilate and the Jew's interaction with Jesus. The righteous man, the wicked persecutor and the weak fence-sitter, prompts the question, "who do I stand with?"

και "but" - AND [SHE COULD NOT]. Here with an adversative sense; "but she could not."

v20

γαρ "because" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Herod didn't execute John at the behest of Herodias.

ειδως [οιδα] perf. part. "**knowing**" - [HEROD FEARED (had a deep respect for) JOHN] HAVING KNOWN [HIM TO BE A RIGHTEOUS AND HOLY MAN HE AND WAS PROTECTING HIM]. The participle is adverbial, probably best taken as causal; "for he well knew that John was a good and holy man", Barclay. Again, **και** is consecutive, "**and so** he was protecting him", protecting him from Herodias.

ακουσας [ακουω] aor. part. "**when Herod heard [John]**" - [AND] HAVING HEARD [HIM]. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, as NIV.

ηπορει [απορευω] imperf. "**puzzled**" - HE WAS AT WITS END, IN DIFFICULTIES, PERPLEXED [GREATLY]. The only example of this verb in the active voice in the NT. Herod was "very much perplexed", NAB, or "greatly disturbed", REB, by the mystery of the coming kingdom as proclaimed by John.

και "and yet" - AND. Here with an adversative edge, as NIV; "and yet."

αυτου gen. "**listen to [him]**" - [GLADLY HE WAS LISTENING TO] HIM. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to hear."

v21

iii] The execution of the Baptist, v21-29. The provocative dance routine and a foolish oath, v21-24. So it was that an opportune day came when Herodias could force Herod to take John's life. It was at a birthday party when the leading courtiers of the realm were present. The daughter of Herodias, Antipas' stepdaughter, now a teenager, danced before Herod and his guests. In polite society, dancing was usually performed by servants or prostitutes, but in first century Rome it was now "anything goes." Herod was so taken by her performance that he offered her a handsome reward. Obviously, she would know that Herod's offer of half his kingdom was nothing more than a gesture, but the offer did have weight.

γενομενης [γινομαι] aor. part. "**finally [the opportune time] came**" - [AN OPPORTUNE, CONVENIENT, SUITABLE DAY] HAVING COME. The genitive participle, and its genitive object "opportune day", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal; "Finally, Herodias got her chance", CEV; "Then came a holiday", Moffatt.

ότε "-" - WHEN [HEROD]. Introducing a temporal clause.

τοις γενεσιοις [α] dat. "[his] birthday" - ON THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS [OF HIM]. Dative of time; on one's birth.

τοις μεγαιστασιν [αν ανος] dat. "for [his] high officials" - [MADE A DINNER] TO = FOR THE COURTIER, NOBLES, CHIEF MEN, AND FOR THE MILITARY COMMANDERS]. Dative of interest, advantage, as NIV; "for his nobles". Is the party in Perea, or Galilee?

τοις πρωτοις dat. adj. "the leading men" - [AND] FOR THE FIRST, PROMINENT *persons*. The adjective is used as a substantive, "prominent persons." "The aristocracy of the country", BAGD.

της Γαλιλαιας [α] gen. "of Galilee" - OF GALILEE. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic, of place; "located in Galilee."

v22

εισελθουσης [εισερχομαι] gen. aor. part. "when [the daughter of Herodias] came in" - [AND] HAVING COME IN, GONE IN, ENTERED, [THE DAUGHTER OF HIM, HERODIAS, AND HAVING DANCED]. The genitive participle and its genitive direct object, "the daughter of him", along with "Herodias", genitive in apposition, and the genitive coordinate participle "having dances", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. A stronger variant reading *αυτου* of the pronoun produces the translation, "his daughter, Herodias." It is possible that Herod had a daughter with Herodias and named her the same as her mother, but it is far more likely that it was his stepdaughter who danced, the girl known as Salome. Cranfield opts for the translation "the daughter of Herodias herself", but notes that the *αυτης* may be a redundant pronoun anticipating the noun "Herodias" - an Aramaism. She would have been a teenager at this point in time, traditionally held to be a seductress. "When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced."

ηρεσεν [αρεσκω] aor. "she pleased" - SHE PLEASED [HEROD]. There are obvious sexual connotations in the use of this word. Not only did Herod take his brother's wife, he probably wanted the daughter as well.

τοις συνανακειμενοις [συνανακειμαι] dat. pres. part. "his dinner guests" - [AND] THE ONES RECLINING AT TABLE WITH *him*. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of direct object after the verb "to please." Those who reclined at the table with Herod; "his guests", Barclay.

τω κορασιω [ον] dat. "to the girl" - [THE KING SAID] TO THE YOUNG GIRL. Dative of indirect object. As noted above, she is probably a teenager.

ὃ εαν + subj. "for anything" - [ASK] WHATEVER [YOU WISH]. Introducing a relative conditional clause, 3rd. class, where the condition has the possibility of coming true; "whatever, *as the case may be*, then [I will give to you]"

δωσω [διδωμι] fut. "I'll give it" - [AND] I WILL GIVE *it*. The extravagance of the offer and its acceptance, serves to emphasise the value of John the Baptist and by implication, Jesus.

σοι dat. pro. "to you" - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

v23

ωμοσεν [ομνυω] aor. "he promised" - [AND] HE MADE A PROMISE, SWORE, VOWED, TOOK AN OATH. The offer of "half my kingdom" is, of course, an offer the stepdaughter of a dictator would *graciously* decline!

αυτη dat. pro. "her" - TO HER. Dative of indirect object.

πολλα adj. "-" - MUCH. Variant, the adjective is used as an adverb. Numerous meanings are possible, eg., "solemnly / loudly / repeatedly."

ὅ τι εαν + subj. "whatever" - THE WHAT IF = WHATEVER [YOU ASK ME]. Conditional clause, as above.

σοι dat. pro. "to you" - [I WILL GIVE] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

ἕως + gen. "up to" - UNTIL = UP TO [HALF OF THE KINGDOM OF ME]. Here expressing degree / measure; "up to / as far as" = "as much as."

v24

εξελθουσα [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "she went out [and said]" - [AND] HAVING GONE OUT. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said".

τη ματρι [ηρ ρος] dat. "to [her] mother" - [SHE SAID] TO THE MOTHER [OF HER]. Dative of indirect object.

τι αιτησωμαι [αιτεω] aor. subj. mid. "what shall I ask for" - WHAT SHOULD I ASK *for*? Deliberative subjunctive. The aorist is futuristic. Because the word is in the middle voice, it may mean "what claim shall I make [on Herod]."

του βαπτιζοντος [βαπτιζω] gen. pres. part. "[John] the Baptist" - [THE HEAD OF JOHN] THE ONE BAPTISING. The participle serves as a substantive, genitive, standing in apposition to "John".

v25

The consequences, v25-28: Her mother prompts her to ask for the head of John the Baptist and she enthusiastically obliges. Herod is caught in a social trap and can't escape. His distress again illustrates John's worth, and by implication, the worth of Jesus.

ευθυς adv. "at once" - IMMEDIATELY. Temporal use of the adverb is likely. The girl seems to be eager to carry out her mother's suggestion. Did they plan to entrap Herod together?

εισελθουσα [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "-" - HAVING COME. Attendant circumstance participle; "at once she came with haste to the king and asked, saying."

μετα σπουδης [η] "**hurried**" - WITH HASTE, SPEED [TOWARD THE KING]. The prepositional phrase is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of her coming. Again, indicating the girl's eagerness. Possibly "eagerly."

λεγουσα [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - [SHE MADE *her* REQUEST] SAYING. Attendant circumstance, redundant.

θελω pres. "**I want**" - I WILL, WISH, DESIRE. As in NIV, the request is most likely demanding. It is possible that linked with *hina* the construction produces a formal request, "please give me"

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT [YOU GIVE]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what she wants / desires.

μοι dat. "**me**" - TO ME. Dative of indirect object.

εξαυτης adv. "**right now**" - AT ONCE, IMMEDIATELY. Temporal; expressing eagerness.

επι + dat. "**on [a platter]**" - [THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST] UPON [A PLATE]. Spatial.

v26

γενομενος [γινομαι] aor. part. "**was**" - HAVING BECAME. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verbal phrase "did not what to refuse her", but possibly adverbial, concessive, "although he was greatly distressed", Decker.

περιλυπος adj. "**greatly distressed**" - SORROWFUL, SAD, DEEPLY GRIEVED. Predicate adjective. A strong word again illustrating the worth of John. The description is of a person in a social trap and unable to escape. It is possible that the sense here is of anger, annoyance; "the king was very vexed", Moffatt.

δια + acc. "**but because**" - [THE KING,] BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF. Causal. The sense here is a little confusing. Was Herod "distressed / annoyed because of the vow and the guests" or "because of the vow and the guests he did not want to refuse her"? Most translators opt for the second option. "The king was very distressed, but because he had given her his sworn promise in front of his guests, he would not break his word to her", Barclay.

τους ακακειμενους [ανακειμαι] pres. part. "**his dinner guests**" - [THE PROMISE AND] THE ONES RECLINING AT TABLE *along with him*. The participle serves as a substantive.

αθετησαι [αθετω] aor. inf. "**to refuse [her]**" - [HE DID NOT WANT] TO SET ASIDE, DISAPPOINT, BREAK *his* WORD TO [HER]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "he did [not] want". The NIV follows BAGD,

but "disappoint" is possible. Herod's reluctance again illustrates the worth of John. "He did not want to break his word to her", ESV.

v27

αποστειλας [αποσπελλω] aor. part. "**so he [immediately] sent**" - [AND IMMEDIATELY THE KING] HAVING SENT. Attendant circumstance participle, but possibly adverbial, consecutive, as NIV; "so as a result he immediately sent .."

σπεκουλατορα [σπεκουλατωρ] "**an executioner**" - A MILITARY SCOUT, MEMBER OF THE HEADQUARTERS' STAFF, A SOLDIER WITH A SPECIAL COMMISSION. He might have been a member of Herod's bodyguard.

επεταξεν [επιτασσω] aor. "**with orders**" - HE ORDERED, COMMANDED, INSTRUCTED *him*. The sense is "sent with orders."

ενεγκαι [φερω] aor. inf. "**to bring**" - TO BEAR, BRING, CARRY [THE HEAD OF HIM]. The infinitive introduces a dependent statement of indirect speech / commanding, "he commanded that" "At once ordered a soldier of his guard to bring his head", Williams.

απελθων [απερχομαι] aor. part. "**the man went**" - [AND] HAVING LEFT. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "beheaded."

εν + dat. "in" - [HE BEHEADED HIM] IN [THE PRISON]. Local, expressing space.

v28

τω κορασιω [ον] dat. "**[presented it] to the girl**" - [AND HE BROUGHT THE HEAD OF HIM UPON A PLATE AND GAVE IT] TO THE GIRL [AND THE GIRL GAVE IT TO THE MOTHER OF HER]. Dative of indirect object.

v29

John's disciples, a group which continues to operate even after Jesus' death, takes his body and lays it in a tomb.

ακουσαντες [ακουω] aor. part. "**on hearing of this**" - [AND] HAVING HEARD *about this*. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal; "when his disciples heard of it", ESV.

ουτου pro. "**John's [disciples]**" - [THE DISCIPLES] OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. The existence of an identifiable group of John's disciples is again noted in scripture. It is likely that most of Jesus' disciples were originally members of this group.

το πτωμα "body" - [CAME AND CARRIED AWAY] THE CORPSE [OF HIM]. This word is only used once in Mark.

εν + dat. "in" - [AND PLACED IT] IN [A TOMB]. Local, expressing space. "They laid it in a grave."

6:30-44

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

1. Growing division, 6:1-8:21

iv] The feeding of the 5,000

Synopsis

The disciples, wearied by the Galilean mission, draw aside "to a quiet place", to "rest" in the shepherd's care. Yet, the crowds follow, and so Jesus, having "compassion on them", "began teaching them many things". Then, later in the day, with the contents of a ploughman's lunch, Jesus feeds all those who have gathered to hear him speak. The crowd numbered over five thousand.

Teaching

Jesus is Israel's faithful shepherd, who, like the Lord of the wilderness, sustains his people.

Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-6. With the feeding of the five thousand and the feeding of the four thousand, 8:1-21, we have an extended Markan sandwich focused on the bread / manna supplied by Jesus. This bread is the word of God, and it is consumed by faith. The feeding of the five thousand is followed by Jesus' walking on water, again an episode exuding exodus typology. The meaning of this sign alludes the disciples because "they did not understand about the loaves", 6:45-56. The theme continues in the next two episodes: "loaves" / bread not consumed by Israel's religious leaders, 7:1-23, but consumed by Gentiles, 7:24-37. The Markan sandwich concludes with the feeding of the four thousand. This episode further develops the theme of the word / bread, with the Pharisees' demand for a sign, and the disciple's discussion on the issue of forgotten bread, 8:1-21.

ii] Structure: *Sheep without a shepherd*:

A scene-setting introduction, v30-34:

the people are like sheep without a shepherd;

A conversation sets up the miracle, v35-38;

The feeding miracle itself, v39-42;

A concluding observation, v43-44:

all are satisfied.

iii] Interpretation.

The significance of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand is open to some debate. It may just be an act of divine power prompted by

Jesus' compassion. Yet, it is more likely a "sign", a revelation of the mystery, a proclamation that "the kingdom of God is at hand."

Messianic fulfilment is the revolutionary aspect of the miracle, and this is expressed in Jesus' role as shepherd to the people of Israel, a people who are "like sheep without a shepherd." As Moses, under the hand of God, sustained Israel in the wilderness, so Jesus, in a "deserted place", feeds the people of Israel. He sustains them with the bread of life, both spiritual and physical - he taught them "many things", "and all ate and were filled."

Cranfield underlines this fulfilment motif quoting *Qoheleth Rubba* on Ecclesiastes 1:9, "As the first Redeemer caused manna to descend, so shall also the last Redeemer cause manna to descend." Lane expresses a similar fulfilment motif when he writes "in contrast to the drunken debauchery of the Herodian feast, Mark exhibits the glory of God unveiled through the abundant provision of bread in the wilderness where Jesus is Israel's faithful shepherd."

France rightly reminds us that applying the "sign" value of a miracle is by no means clear cut. None-the-less, he sees the sign as "a foretaste of the messianic banquet, an introduction to the communal life of the kingdom of God." We should also note that the miracle has often been used to teach Christ's divinity, although Mark does not seem to draw out this conclusion.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.14:13-21; Lk.9:10-17 (John 6:1-14). Mark's account is closer to Matthew than Luke, sharing the liturgical words "took", "gave thanks", "broke" and "gave". Of course, it is unclear whether liturgical practice has shaped the account, or the account has shaped liturgical practice. Mark's vivid wording reflects the account of an eyewitness. There is considerable alignment between Mark and Matthew from this point, with some of Mark's accounts somewhat condensed. Markan priority is usually assumed, although why does Matthew leave out significant episodes found in Mark, eg., 7:32-37, 8:22-26? This alignment argues against mutual independence.

Text - 6:30

The feeding of the five thousand: i] Setting - The apostles report on their mission and, given the press of the crowds, Jesus decides to take them away for a break / a debrief, v30-34. The "apostles" (literally, "the sent ones") return from the Galilean mission and report to Jesus. Their mission has stirred interest and so various groups come looking for them. Jesus draws the disciples into the wilderness. Mark stresses this fact, for the wilderness is where God speaks to his people, and thus, where they may find "rest" (the Sabbath rest, eternity). It is possible that the disciples' mission is to draw out into the wilderness these "sheep

without a shepherd." This description of the crowd draws on Num.27:17 and Ezk.34:5. Jesus fulfils prophecy as the Mosaic shepherd who leads God's people through the wilderness to the rest of the promised land.

οἱ ἀποστολοὶ [ος] "**the apostles**" - [AND] THE APOSTLES. Nominative subject of the verb "to gather together." Cranfield notes that the word is derived from the Hebrew meaning "authorised agent or representative." The sense here is possibly not technical, so "the missionaries", Taylor.

προς + acc. "**around**" - [GATHERED TOGETHER] TOWARD [JESUS]. Spatial; usually taken with the sense "around" here. "After the apostles returned to Jesus", CEV.

ἀπηγγείλαν [ἀπαγγέλλω] aor. "**reported**" - [AND] THEY ANNOUNCED, REPORTED, TOLD THE NEWS. "Told him all about what they had done and taught", Barclay.

αὐτῷ dat. pro. "**to [him]**" - TO HIM [EVERYTHING WHICH THEY DID AND WHICH THEY TAUGHT]. Dative of indirect object.

v31

γὰρ "**because**" - [AND] BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Jesus has called the disciples aside; "because".

πολλοὶ adj. "**many**" - [THERE WERE] MANY. Predicate adjective.

οἱ ἐρχόμενοι [ἐρχομαι] pres. mid. part. "**people were coming**" - THE ONES COMING [AND THE ONES GOING]. These two articular participles serve as substantives; "because there were many people spending time with Jesus."

φαγεῖν [εσθιω] aor. inf. "**to eat**" - [AND *they did* NOT HAVE OPPORTUNITY] TO EAT. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "have opportunity".

αὐτοῖς dat. pro. "**[he said] to them**" - [HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

δευτε "**come with me**" - COME *with me*. An adverb serving as an interjection. "With me" is understood.

κατ' ἰδίαν "**by yourselves**" - [YOU YOURSELVES] ACCORDING TO ONE'S OWN = PRIVATELY, ALONE. Idiomatic; "Apart by yourselves", Cranfield.

ἐρημον adj. "**a quiet place**" - [INTO A] DESOLATE, WILDERNESS [PLACE AND REST, REFRESH, A LITTLE]. Here not the noun "desert", but rather serving as an attributive adjective limiting "place"; "a deserted, lonely place"

v32

The quiet break for Jesus and his disciples turns into a major teaching occasion when it is invaded by crowds of people. Taylor and others identify the "wilderness place" as the north-east side of the lake.

κατ ιδιαν "by themselves" - [AND *so* THEY DEPARTED] ACCORDING TO ONE'S OWN = PRIVATELY. Idiomatic.

εν + dat. "**in [a boat]**" - IN [THE BOAT TO A DESERT PLACE]. Local; expressing space.

v33

ειδον aor. "**saw**" - [AND MANY] SAW. Cranfield suggests that "many" is the subject, as NIV, but possibly an impersonal verb, "people saw", in which case "many" would be the subject of "recognised". "The people saw them going, and many recognised them", Weymouth.

υπαγοντας [υπαγω] pres. part. "**leaving**" - [THEM] GOING. The participle serves as the complement of the direct object **αυτους**, "them", standing in a double accusative construction; "the crowd saw the disciples and Jesus leaving for some R&R"

επεγνωσαν [επιγνωσκω] aor. "**recognised**" - [AND] KNEW *where they were heading*. Possibly "knew = worked out where they were going."

συνεδραμον [συντρεχω] aor. "**ran**" - [AND *so*] THEY RAN TOGETHER. Used of people running to a place and gathering there.

πεζη adv. "**on foot**" - ON FOOT. Adverb of manner. As opposed to going by boat; "ran by land"

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM. Expressing source / origin.

των πολεων [ις εως] gen. "**the towns**" - [ALL] OF THE TOWNS [AND THEY ARRIVED AHEAD OF, CAME AHEAD OF, ARRIVED BEFORE THEM]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative. "So, people from every town ran on ahead and got there first", CEV.

v34

εξελθων [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "**when Jesus landed**" - [AND *Jesus*] HAVING GOTTEN OUT, COME OUT *from the boat*. "Jesus" understood. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV; "when Jesus disembarked", Barclay.

εσπλαγχνισθη [σπλαγχνιζομαι] aor. pas. "**he had compassion**" - [HE SAW A LARGE CROWD AND] HE HAD COMPASSION, FELT SORRY, HAD PITY. "Pity which expresses itself in active assistance", Cranfield. "His heart went out to them", REB.

επι + acc. "**on [them]**" - UPON [THEM]. A particular use of the preposition, expressing feelings toward / with respect of / for another.

οτι "**because**" - BECAUSE. Here introducing a causal clause, "because", as NIV. cf. Num.27:17, 1Ki.22:17, Ezk.34:5.

ως "**like**" - [THEY WERE] LIKE. Comparative.

μη εξοντα [εχω] pres. part. "**without**" - [SHEEP] NOT HAVING [A SHEPHERD]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "sheep"; "they were as sheep which did not have a shepherd."

διδασκειν [διδασκω] pres. inf. "**teaching**" - [AND HE BEGAN] TO TEACH [THEM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "he began". The need of the "crowd / multitude / people" is that they be taught. The word takes priority over signs.

πολλα "**many things**" - MANY things Probably here serving as a substantive, as NIV, but possibly adverbial, "much"; "he proceeded to teach them at length", Moffatt.

v35

ii] The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, v35-44. The miracle is presented in three parts: First, the scene is set for the miracle with a discussion between Jesus and his disciples, v35-38: The disciples obviously feel responsible for the crowd which has followed them, but like Moses long ago, they cannot conceive how they should provide for them. "Where shall I find meat to give to all these people?" Num.11:13,22. Mark well describes their lack of understanding, even disrespect toward Jesus. cf., 6:52.

γενομενης [γινομαι] gen. aor. part. "**it was**" - [AND ALREADY *the* HOUR] WAS BECOMING [MUCH]. The genitive participle, with its genitive subject, "hour", and genitive predicate, "much", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal; "when it grew late", ESV. "It was getting late in the afternoon", "as the day wore on", Phillips.

προσελθοντες [προσερχομαι] aor. part. + dat. of persons "**came to**" - [*and* THE DISCIPLES OF HIM] COMING TO. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "were saying"; "his disciples came to him and said."

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM [SAYING]. Dative of direct object after the **προς** prefix participle "was coming to / approaching."

οτι "-" - THAT. Here introducing a dependent statement of direct speech expressing what the disciples said.

ερημος adj. "**a remote place**" - DESERTED [IS THE PLACE]. Predicate adjective; "because the place is desolate", "a deserted place."

ωρα πολλη "**very late**" - [AND BY NOW, ALREADY] *it is* AN HOUR MUCH = A LATE HOUR. Predicate nominative with an assumed verb to-be.

v36

ινα + subj. "**so**" - [SEND AWAY, DISMISS THEM] THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that".

απελθοντες [απερχομαι] aor. part. "**they can go to**" - HAVING DEPARTED, GONE AWAY. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "they may buy". Virtually redundant, cf., Moffatt.

τους κυκλω **"the surrounding"** - [INTO] THE SURROUNDING, AROUND, NEARBY [FARMS AND VILLAGES]. Adverb used as a substantive.

ἐαυτοις dat. reflex. pro. "**themselves**" - [THEY MAY BUY] TO = FOR THEMSELVES. Dative of interest, advantage; "for themselves."

τι **"something [to eat]"** - WHAT [THEY MAY EAT]. The interrogative pronoun is used as the substantive object "something" (the Gk. adjusted by Matt. and Lk.), which is controlled by the subjunctive verb "may buy", and further modified by the deliberative subjunctive, "they may *choose to eat*."

v37

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "**[but he] answered**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING ANSWERED [HE SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle redundant. It could also be classified as adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, "he said by answering", although a bit over fussy.

υμεις **"you"** - YOU. Emphatic by position and use. "Give them some food, yourselves", Moffatt; "I mean *you*", Boring.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [YOU GIVE] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

φαγειν [φαγω] aor. inf. "**to eat**" - *something* TO EAT. As with its use at the end of the verse, the infinitive serves as a substantive, direct object of the verb "to give", "you give *something to eat* to them."

απελθοντες [απερχομαι] aor. part. "**are we to go and ...?**" - [AND THEY SAY TO HIM,] HAVING GONE, DEPARTED. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "they may buy". "Are we to go and buy ..."

αγορασωμεν [αγοραζω] aor. subj. "**spend that much**" - MAY WE BUY [OF DENARII TWO HUNDRED BREAD]. A deliberative subjunctive. The genitive "of denarii two hundred" is adjectival, idiomatic / of price; "It would take almost a year's wage", CEV.

δωσομεν [διδωμι] fut. "**give it**" - [AND] WILL WE GIVE. The future used to express purpose, "in order to give", although the variant subjunctive is better grammar.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [*something* TO EAT] TO THEM? Dative of indirect object.

v38

ποσους pro. "**how many**" - [AND HE SAYS TO THEM] HOW MUCH, HOW MANY. The pronoun serves as an adjective, "much". "Much bread" serves as the direct

object of the verb "to have;" "Do you have much bread?" = "How much bread do you have?", CEV.

αρτους [ος] "loaves" - BREAD [DO YOU HAVE]? Here probably "barley bread" and it would most likely be flat bread. Bread served as the main staple of a meal with the dried / salted fish; the fish serving as a condiment. The bread has often been taken as a symbol of teaching with the number five representing the five books of Moses. An Aramaic mind would naturally conjure up such symbolism, although the idea adds little to the revelational intention of the miracle.

υπαγετε ιδετε imp. "go and see" - GO SEE. "The two imperatives have a very decisive tone", Taylor.

γνοντες [γινωσκω] aor. part. "when they found out" - HAVING KNOWN = FOUND OUT [THEY SAY, FIVE AND TWO FISH]. The participle is adverbial, probably forming a temporal clause, as NIV.

v39

The miracle of the feeding, v39-42: Describing the scene, Mark underlines two wilderness images. First, the desert pasture is "green"; the cursed land is transformed in the presence of the true shepherd - the sheep now feed on the fat of the land, cf. Ezk.34:26f. Second, the groups of hundreds and fifties images the Mosaic camp-formation in the wilderness, Ex.18:21. The wilderness blooms before Jesus, the second Moses, and the flock finds a secure rest. Jesus' thanksgiving for God's provision of food is in line with Jewish custom, although instead of looking down, as was the normal practice, Jesus looks up. The Lord "opens his hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing", Ps.145:16.

αυτοις dat. pro. "them" - [AND HE COMMANDED] THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ανακλιναι [ανακλινω] aor. inf. "to have [all] the people sit down" - TO RECLINE, LEAN UPON, LIE DOWN. The infinitive introduces a dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing the content of Jesus' command, "he commanded that everyone lie / sit down. In the active, this verb is causative, "cause to sit down." "Jesus told his disciples to make the people sit down on the green grass", CEV.

συμποσια συμποσια "in groups" - [EVERYONE] PARTY, GROUP BY PARTY, GROUP. The two words together produce a distributive sense denoting groups of people eating together.

επι + dat. "on" - UPON [THE GREEN GRASS]. Spatial. The people sit upon "green" grass, possibly drawing on the symbolism of the blossoming of the desert in the new age of the kingdom.

v40

πρασιαι πρασιαι [α] "in groups" - [AND THEY RECLINED] GROUP BY GROUP. The ordered rows of a garden bed is used to describe the way the crowd sat. Again, the repetition of the noun produces a distributive sense. "They sat down in ordered groups", possibly "squares", NJB.

κατα + acc. "of [hundreds]" - ACCORD TO [HUNDREDS AND] ACCORDING TO [FIFTIES]. Distributive use of the preposition. So most translations, but possibly "a hundred rows of fifty", Manson, or "a great rectangle, a hundred by fifty", Moule. The numbering of the groups alludes to the numbering of Israel in the wilderness, cf. Ex. 7:4, 13:18, 18:21, 25.

v41

λαβων [λαμβανω] aor. part. "taking" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN [THE FIVE LOAVES AND THE TWO FISH, AND HAVING LOOKED UP INTO HEAVEN]. The two participles, "having taken" and "having looked up" are attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the main verb "he blessed", but they could be treated as adverbial, temporal. The verbs "took", "gave thanks", "broke", and "gave", may just fit with the normal actions of a family meal, but may also be alluding to the Lord's Supper and thus further reinforcing the symbolism of the coming eschatological banquet represented in this feeding miracle.

ευλογησεν [ευλογω] "he gave thanks" - HE BLESSED. Taylor argues that the verbs **ευλογω** and **ευχαριστω** take the same meaning when used of a prayer said over food - "the act is of thanksgiving to God." This interchangeability of both words is not accepted by the majority of translators, so for example, "he looked up to heaven and said the blessing", Barclay; so to NJB, REB, NAB, NRSV, CEV, Moffatt, Weymouth, Goodspeed, Williams.

αυτους "-" - THEM. Variant, so he gave thanks over the bread, or blessed the bread, although if Jesus is offering a blessing, rather than a thanksgiving, then "the Lord" is the understood object - eg. "blessed art thou, O Lord." So, "blessed the food", CEV, is unlikely, rather "said a blessing", NJB. None-the-less, "gave thanks", NIV, is preferred.

ειδου [διδωμι] imperf. "he gave them" - [AND BROKE THE LOAVES AND] HE WAS GIVING, DISTRIBUTING *them*. The imperfect, being durative/imperfective, expresses "successive distributions", Taylor.

τους μαθηταις [ης ου] dat. "to [his] disciples" - TO THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object. See Metzger for variant "his".

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT [THEY MIGHT SET BEFORE]. Expressing purpose, "in order that".

αυτοις dat. pro. "**the people**" - THEM. Dative of direct object after the **παρα** prefix verb "to set before." "And gave them to the disciple to set before the people", ESV.

εμερισεν [**μεριζω**] aor. "**he [also] divided [the two fish]**" - [AND THE TWO FISH] HE DIVIDED, DISTRIBUTED. "He divided the two fish among them all", Phillips.

πασιν dat. adj. "**among them all**" - TO ALL = EVERYONE. Dative of indirect object; "distributed it to everyone."

v42

εχορτασθησαν [**κορταζω**] aor. pas. "**were satisfied**" - [AND EVERYONE ATE AND] THEY WERE FILLED, SATISFIED. This was not just a symbolic meal; it was the real thing, and therefore a miracle, a sign of the coming eschatological banquet; "they ate until they could eat no more", Barclay.

v43

The effects of the miracle - the people ate and were full and still there was an abundance of food left over, v43-44. The crowd is satisfied, such that twelve baskets of scraps (most likely uneaten whole pieces) remain. This is simple food, like the manna of long ago, yet the crowd knows little of its origin. Only the disciples see the miracle, but sadly there is little evidence that they understand its significance. Here is the long-awaited shepherd who will soon guide the sheep to their rest, feed and sustain them at the eschatological banquet, and yet the disciples fail to make the connection.

κοφινων [**ος**] gen. "**[twelve] basket[fuls]**" - [THEY COLLECTED FRAGMENTS, FULLNESS] OF TWELVE BASKETS. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / of quantity, limiting "fullness", "a fullness *amounting to* twelve baskets." A strong wicker basket is intended. Matthew and Luke rework this awkward clause, "they picked up the leftovers of the fragments, twelve baskets full", Matt.21:20b. Although we cannot be sure, this is not an exercise in environmental care where all the scraps are picked up by the disciples, rather, the collected food represents the uneaten portions not yet distributed (the scraps would be left for the birds. A consideration now regarded as littering!). The point is, there was an abundance of food, more than enough, and unlike the collected manna during the wilderness wanderings, this bread may be collected and kept (implied). Again, messianic imagery is intended.

απο + gen "-" - [AND] FROM [THE FISH]. The sense being that some from the fish was included in the collected food that remained - an Aramaic construction, ie., functioning as a partitive genitive; "besides pieces of the fish", Weymouth.

v44

οἱ φαγοντες [εσθew] aor. part. "**who had eaten**" - [AND] THE ONES HAVING EATEN [THE LOAVES]. The participle serves as a substantive; "those who had eaten."

πεντακισχιλιοι ανδρες "**five thousand**" - [WERE] FIVE THOUSAND MEN. Predicate nominative. The word ανδρες is used to identify adult males, other than women and children. Rather sexist, but the point being that there were many more than 5,000 people present.

6:45-56

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

1. Growing division, 6:1-8:21

v] Jesus walks on the water

Synopsis

Following the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus sends his disciples by boat to Bethsaida. Jesus, in the meantime, spends time in prayer. Jesus, aware that the boat is struggling in a high wind, walks out to the boat and is about to "pass them by." The disciples are terrified, but Jesus quiets them, along with the wind. The disciples' response is amazement, rather than faith, for "they did not understand about the loaves."

Teaching

The Lord Jesus will carry God's children safely to their haven of rest.

Issues

i] Context: See 6:30-44.

ii] Structure: *Jesus walks on the water*:

Jesus stills the storm, v45-52:

The scene is set in v45-47;

The central action follows in v48-50;

Concluding action and comment, v51-52.

Jesus heals in Gennesaret, v53-56.

Guelich argues that the story line is somewhat "awkward"!

iii] Interpretation:

The account of Jesus' walking on water follows immediately on from the feeding of the 5,000. The language is tied closely to the feeding and exhibits the heightened emotions of an eye witness. Like the feeding, this story is full of theological imagery. As in Psalm 107:23-32, where the Lord carries his people to their haven of rest, so Jesus miraculously reveals himself as the one who can take his people across the sea to their haven of rest. The story images Israel's crossing of the Reed Sea and the River Jordan. Yet, as with the feeding of the 5,000, the disciples do not understand the significance of the miracle and therefore do not come to faith.

In form-critical terms we have here a mixed rescue story and epiphany story. The epiphany answers the question "who is this", although it is only

the reader who will supply the answer, the disciples are left amazed, and without faith. Mark is at pains to draw out this point, even explaining the reason behind the disciples' lack of faith, namely, their failure to understand the meaning of the feeding miracle, v52.

Marcus thinks that the story is encapsulated in a chiasm with the midpoint being Jesus' walking over the sea. This seems a bit forced. He is also of the view that Mark has substantially reworked his received tradition, but again, the evidence is limited. There is, of course, no doubt that Mark underlines the elements of the account he wishes to emphasise, eg. Jesus' volition. It is not overly clear that Mark is shaping the story as an epiphany, a manifestation of the divine. Mark seems more interested in revealing the messianic overtones evident in the story, of Christ as corporate Israel. As with the feeding of the five thousand, the story reeks of Exodus typology.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.14:22-35 (John 6:15-21). At first glance it seems that Mark has stitched together the stories of Jesus walking on the sea and the feeding of the five thousand, but it is more likely that these two seemingly independent stories were linked in oral tradition long before Mark came across them and, of course, may well be historically sequential. It is, of course, the Exodus typology, so prominent in both stories, which glues them to each other.

Matthew draws out the issue of faith with Peter's attempted walk on the water. Peter's fear overcomes him and prompts Jesus' response, "How little faith you have", cf., Matt.14:28-33. Given that Mark constantly contrasts amazement with faith, it is hard to believe that he would not use this part of the tradition if he had knowledge of it. So, this pericope suggests Markan priority.

It has long been noted that the story bears many similarities with Mark's account of Jesus stilling the storm. John's account of Jesus walking on water, 6:16-21, is a simple *Jesus walks on water* story, minus the stilling of the storm. So, has Mark conflated two separate stories? The answer is probably no. It is more likely that over the period of oral tradition there has been some interchange between the two stories, given that on both occasions the disciples faced rough weather. This may serve again as further evidence that John's account comes from an apostolic eye witness, a view not widely accepted. The author of John's gospel, *the editor*, does not claim for himself apostolic status, but claims that his material is sourced from an eyewitness, namely, John the apostle, cf., Jn.21:24-25.

v] Homiletics: *The Lord of the sea*

The Hawkesbury river north of Sydney, Australia, has its fair share of ghosts. The locals tell the story of the river maiden. On a misty night she walks the river, the ghost of a girl drowned nearly a hundred years ago. It's a great story, and certainly serves to keep children indoors and away from the river on a dark misty night, which was probably the reason why it was told in the first place.

Jesus' disciples knew all about sea spirits. They were as superstitious as any old salt. They probably knew well the story of the ghostly wave, a wave with a white fringe of fire, just waiting to strike the unwary sailor. So, when they saw Jesus coming toward them on the wave-tossed sea, they had every reason to be afraid, and afraid they were, screaming in terror. Yet, when Jesus hopped into the boat and they felt the wind die down, their only response was amazement. It was as if they had no framework with which to rationalise the experience; it was beyond their comprehension.

Mark explains why they were filled with fear and amazement, rather than faith. They couldn't understand the situation because they couldn't think outside the square, or as Mark puts it, their thinking "was callused." It's not at all easy to understand the significance of Jesus walking on water, yet, had the disciples understood the significance of the loaves in the feeding of the 5,000, they may have understood what was going on; they may have recognised Jesus as the messianic leader about to guide his people across the surging waters to their haven of rest. Such a recognition would have dispelled their fear and amazement and prompted rejoicing. Yet, they were blind to it.

The process of coming to faith is an interesting one, and it's quite clear that Mark takes time to explore the process. He obviously wants the reader to move from wonder to faith, and he uses numerous literary devices to prompt this move. He even ends his gospel with a group of women walking from the empty tomb "trembling", "bewildered", and "afraid." There is a sense where the reader is asked to consider their own response.

So, how do we leave the gospel reading today, "bewildered", or with faith?

Text - 6:45

Jesus walks on the sea, v45-56. i] The scene is set, Jesus dismisses the crowd while the disciples struggle in difficult weather, v45-47. Mark gives no hint as to why Jesus hurriedly sends his disciples away by boat. John tells us that the people saw in Jesus a political messiah and so tried to make him their king, Jn.6:14f. Jesus was certainly tempted to become a king "like unto the nations", but Mark

simply says that Jesus sends his disciples away and goes off by himself for a time of prayer.

ἠναγκασεν [ἀναγκαζω] aor. "**made**" - [AND IMMEDIATELY] HE COMPELLED, FORCED [THE DISCIPLE OF HIM]. The weaker "strongly urged" is possible. Jesus hurries the disciples away from the crowd that has gathered for the miraculous feeding of the loaves and fishes. What is Jesus so concerned about that he "compels" his unwilling disciples to depart? Does he want to preserve the messianic secret (hiding his messianic credentials from a people who are looking for a warrior king rather, than a suffering servant)? The disciples could easily drop the secret to the crowd, and so Jesus is possibly removing the temptation. Or, is Jesus trying to protect the disciples from a crowd bent on making him a king? They could easily be caught up in the enthusiasm of the moment. France argues that the word is just another example of Mark's vivid language, and that it is unwise to build a scenario on a turn of phrase (particularly a scenario imported from John's gospel). Mark doesn't describe the crowd as out of control. Jesus simply dismisses them, and heads off for a time of prayer. "He immediately had his disciples get into the boat", Goodspeed.

εμβηναί [εμβαινω] aor. inf. "**get into [the boat]**" - TO EMBARK, GET IN [INTO THE BOAT AND TO GO BEFORE *him*]. The infinitive, as with "to go before", introduces an object clause / dependent statement, indirect speech, expressing what Jesus "ordered / organised" his disciples to do, namely, "get into the boat and go before him."

εἰς τὸ πέραν "-" - INTO THE OTHER SIDE *of the lake*, [TO BETHSAIDA]. The words cause a geographical problem since Jesus and his disciples are on the north-eastern shore close to Bethsaida (according to Luke). Mark simply identifies it as a "solitary place." This leaves some commentators to suggest that there may be another Bethsaida (meaning "fishing village") on the western shore of lake Galilee. The words are missing in some manuscripts, but it is more likely they were dropped to solve the geographical problem, than that they were added. Interestingly, none of the texts drop "to Bethsaida", the most obvious way to solve the problem. Note that in Matthew's gospel, "to Bethsaida" is missing. In the weaving together of gospel tradition, the gospel writers will often retain little descriptives preserved in the oral tradition, but not necessarily relevant to the preceding, or following, episodes in the construction of their gospel. None-the-less, although Luke edits out the story (or didn't know of it), Jesus' walking on water does seem to be integrally linked to the feeding of the 5,000. So, the problem of "to the other side, to Bethsaida" remains, although maybe it's Luke's problem and not Mark's. "Precede him to the other side", NAB.

ἕως "**while**" - UNTIL. Temporal conjunction. With the present tense of "dismissed" the action is ongoing, therefore "while" rather than the usual "until".

απολυει [απολυω] "**dismissed [the crowd]**" - [HE] LETS LOOSE, SETS FREE, RELEASES, SENDS AWAY, DISMISSES [THE CROWD]. Jesus sent the disciples on their way "while he took leave" of the crowd.

v46

αποταξαμενος [αποτασσομαι] aor. mid. part. "**after leaving**" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN LEAVE OF, SAID FAREWELL TO, SAID GOOD-BY TO, GIVEN PARTING INSTRUCTIONS TO. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV; "after he had taken leave of them", ESV.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - THEM. Dative of direct object after the *απο* prefix verb "to say farewell to." Either referring to the crowd, or the disciples; commentators are divided.

εις "**up on**" - [HE DEPARTED] TO, INTO [THE MOUNTAIN]. Spatial; expressing direction of action, and arrival at. He went "to" the hill, not "up" it; "he went off to the hillside to pray", Phillips.

προσευξασθαι [προσευχομαι] aor. inf. "**to pray**" - TO PRAY. The infinitive forms a final clause expressing purpose; "in order to pray."

v47

γενομενης [γινομαι] aor. part. gen. "**when [evening] came**" - [AND EVENING] HAVING COME. The genitive participle with its genitive subject "evening", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. The phrase usually refers to late afternoon, or early evening, but here it is possibly just referring to sometime during the night. As Jesus came to the disciples during the fourth watch, 3am-6am, possibly dawn. It would be difficult to argue that Jesus saw their plight in the early evening, but then let them suffer until it was nearly dawn before he came out to them. So, we will say that they left the shore some time during the night, struck a headwind, were getting nowhere, when at dawn Jesus "passed by."

εν + dat. "**in**" - [THE BOAT WAS] IN. Local, expressing space. "Middle" in exact terms is not indicated; they were on the lake somewhere.

της θαλασσης [α] gen. "**of the lake**" - [THE MIDDLE] OF THE LAKE. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

αυτος μονος "**he was alone**" - [AND] HE HIMSELF *was* ALONE [ON THE LAND]. Emphasising that, except for Jesus, the disciples were stuck. "By himself", TH.

v48

ii] The central action - Jesus' epiphany and the disciples' fearful reaction, v48-50. Jesus was still in prayer when he saw the disciples sailing into a stiff breeze and getting nowhere. About dawn, he came to them walking on the water. The phrase, "he was about to pass by them" is alluding to Exodus 33:19 and 1

Kings 19:11. The disciples are actually witnessing a theophany, a manifestation of the divine. The disciples are filled with fear because they thought Jesus was a water spirit, the one who comes with a *white fringe of fire at its crest*; the one who comes with destroying power. Jesus reassures them with a friendly greeting. Interestingly, the Greek can be translated "I am." We well remember that God addressed himself as "I am" when he spoke with Moses.

ιδων [όραω] aor. part. "**he saw**" - [AND] HAVING LOOKED AT, SEEN [THEM]. The participle is adverbial, probably forming a temporal clause. Obviously Jesus sees the disciples in difficulty from his high vantage point. Mark, of course, may be suggesting that Jesus miraculously sees the disciples' distress in his mind's-eye. "When he saw them buffeted", Moffatt.

βασανιζομενους [βασανιζω] pres. pas/mid. part. "**straining**" - STRAINING, STRESSING, STRUGGLING [IN THE ROWING]. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "them", standing in a double accusative construction and stating a fact about the object. There are two possible meanings to this participle: if passive, it means literally "being tormented", "being buffeted"; if middle, it means "exerting themselves." The disciples were not in danger, but they are just not getting anywhere.

γαρ "because" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the disciples were in trouble.

εναντιος adj. "**[the wind was] against**" - [THE WIND WAS] AGAINST, CONTRARY, OPPOSED. Predicate adjective. "The wind was dead against them", Barclay.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - THEM. Dative of indirect object / interest, disadvantage.

περι + acc. "**shortly [before dawn]**" - ABOUT [FOURTH WATCH OF THE NIGHT]. Temporal use of the preposition.

περιπατων [περιπατεω] pres. part. "**walking**" - [HE COMES TOWARD THEM] WALKING ABOUT. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of Jesus' coming to the disciples, or possibly instrumental, expressing means. Taylor suggests that the boat was close to shore and that Jesus was walking on a sandbar. Whatever turns you on!!!!

επι + gen. "**on**" - ON, UPON [THE SEA, LAKE]. Spatial, "on" rather than "at" or "near" the sea. Mark clearly intends the reader to view this episode as a miracle.

παρελθειν [παρερχομαι] aor. inf. "**to pass by**" - [AND HE WILLED, WISHED, DESIRED, INTENDED] TO GO BY, PASS BY [THEM]. Complementary infinitive completing the sense of the verb "he willed", "Jesus was wanting to pass them by." The NIV takes **μελλω**, "about to" as an equivalent of **θελω**, but "intended" is better. It is possible that this sentence expresses what the disciples thought.

They thought Jesus intended to pass them by. Lightfoot suggests it expresses what Jesus thought. Given the disciples little faith, Jesus would have gladly passed them by. Some suggest Jesus was just testing their faith. Yet, it seems more likely that the language suggests that Jesus' action is a theophany - "the Lord is about to pass by", 1Ki.19:11-13, "and Yahweh passed by before" Moses, Ex.34:6. Jesus does not intend to walk past his disciples and ignore them in their distress, but rather he "went out to them" to further reveal himself to them, ie., the incident serves to reveal exodus typology.

v49

οἱ δε **"but"** - THEY BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, here a change in subject to the disciples.

ιδοντες [όραω] aor. part. **"when they saw"** - SEEING [HIM]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

περιπατουντα [περιπατω] pres. part. **"walking"** - WALKING [UPON THE LAKE]. The participle, with the prepositional phrase "upon the lake", serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "him" so forming a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object; "having seen him walking upon the lake."

ότι "-" - [THEY THOUGHT, SUPPOSED] THAT. Forming a dependent statement of perception expressing what they thought.

φαντασμα [α ατος] **"a ghost"** - [IT IS] AN APPARITION. Predicate nominative. The word is used only here and in Matthew's parallel account. The disciples have not recognised that the apparition is Jesus.

ανεκραξαν [ανακραζω] aor. **"they cried out"** - [AND] THEY CRIED OUT, SCREAMED. "They screamed in terror", TH.

v50

γαρ **"because"** - FOR [ALL, EVERYONE SAW HIM AND THEY WERE DISTURBED, TROUBLED]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the disciples cried out. "All of them saw him and were terrified", CEV.

μετ [μετα] + gen. **"[he spoke] with [them]"** - [AND IMMEDIATELY HE SPOKE] WITH [THEM]. Expressing association.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [AND SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

εγω ειμι **"it is I"** - [BE OF GOOD CHEER, BE BRAVE, BE CONFIDENT,] I AM. Although the Greek would normally just mean "it is I" ("it's me"), there is the possibility that the divine "I am" is intended, Ex.3:14. This is particularly so if we understand "pass by" as reflecting the language of an Old Testament theophany - more exodus imagery?? So, the choice is, "Cheer up, it's your old mate", or "Take courage, I AM."

μη "don't" - [DO] NOT [BE FEARFUL, AFRAID]. Some argue that this negation is used with a command to cease an action in progress. "Stop being afraid."

v51

iii) Jesus calms the elements, v51-52. Once Jesus was in the boat, the wind died down and they were all on their way again. With Jesus beside them, they move toward their "rest", although not quite where they were heading. Sadly, the response of the disciples was one of amazement, for they didn't understand the significance of "the loaves", and so they didn't understand the point of Jesus walking on water. They were still thinking in the square and so failed to recognise Israel's wilderness motifs in the signs, and therefore, failed to recognise Jesus as the promised messiah. Only when the disciples trust Jesus as the messiah can they then share in the journey of God's children to their haven of rest.

και "then" - AND [HE WENT UP TOWARD THEM INTO THE BOAT]. Coordinative.

εκοπασεν [κοπαζω] aor. "[the wind] died down" - [AND THE WIND] CEASED, DROPPED. Although it is not unreasonable for the wind to die down of its own accord, it is likely that Mark is continuing to describe a miraculous situation. Both the sea and the wind is subject to Jesus' mission.

λιαν adv. "**completely [amazed]**" - [AND] VERY MUCH. Intensifying adverb. Their response is not one of faith, but rather of amazement. Mark does not depict the response of amazement positively. Note how the gospel ends - the women leave the tomb "trembling", "bewildered", and "afraid." We may well be amazed by the empty tomb, along with all the miraculous events in Jesus' life, but only faith will save. "The disciples were very exceedingly amazed in themselves / they were awestruck."

εκ περισσου "-" - FROM REMAINING = EXCEEDINGLY, BEYOND MEASURE. Idiomatic variant reading; "exceedingly amazed."

εν + dat. "-" - [THEY WERE AMAZED] IN [THEMSELVES]. Expressing space, metaphorical, inward emotion; "beside themselves with amazement."

v52

γαρ "for" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they are amazed.

ου συνηκαν [συνιμι] aor. "**they had not understood**" - THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND, COMPREHEND. The disciples hadn't understood the messianic significance of the sign of the loaves and the fishes, and so they weren't able to make the quantum leap necessary for them to understand the messianic significance of Jesus' "passing by" - a theophany of significant import. "They had not the sense to see the Old Testament imagery revealed in Jesus' feeding a people

in the wilderness. Even that miracle had not opened their eyes to see who he was", Phillips.

ἐπι + dat. "**about [the loaves]**" - UPON = ABOUT [THE BREAD, LOAVES]. Temporal use of the preposition, "on the occasion of the loaves", or reference / respect, "with respect to the loaves." The disciples had failed to understand the revelatory truth manifest at the time of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand.

ἀλλ "-" - BUT. The adversative serves to introduce the second reason why the disciples have responded with amazement rather than faith, so Decker.

ἡ καρδια [α] "**hearts**" - THE HEART [OF THEM]. Nominative subject of the periphrasis "was hardened." To the Semitic mind, the heart is the seat of rational thought, the stomach the centre of feelings, so "the mind of them didn't comprehend." "Their minds were closed", CEV .

ἦν ... πεπωρωμενη [πωρω] perf. pas. part. "**were closed**" - WAS HAVING BEEN HARDENED, CALLUSED. The participle + the verb to-be forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction translated as a finite verb, "had been hardened". Both signs, the feeding of the 5,000 and Jesus' walking on water, are grounded in the imagery of Israel's wilderness wanderings. The failure of the disciples to recognise the obvious, evidences an inability to think beyond the square. From here on, Mark makes a point of exposing the disciples' failure to move beyond amazement, but at the same time, describes Jesus ongoing patience with them.

v53

The healings at Gennesaret, v53-56. Jesus is confronted with great excitement and a string of miracles follow. Mark is continuing to use exodus images; faithful Israel has passed through the wilderness and has crossed the sea (River Jordan), and so now the walls of Jericho fall down. There is no mention of Jesus teaching the people. The crowds certainly have faith in his power to heal, even to touch his clothing is enough, yet his words are stilled before the frenzied mob. So, it is likely that Mark has stitched this episode to the two main miracles to convey the dynamism now evident in messiah's mission, and the enthusiasm and excitement generated in the crowds. Mark conveys this sense with his use of the imperfect tense.

διαπερασαντες [διαπερω] aor. part. "**when they had crossed over**" - [AND] HAVING PASSED OVER, CROSSED OVER. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

ἐπι + acc. "-" - [THEY CAME] UPON [THE LAND]. Spatial. The prepositional phrase, "onto the land", modifying **ἦλθον**, "they came", takes the sense "came ashore."

Γεννησαρετ "Gennesaret" - [INTO] GENERSARET. Either the village of, or the fertile plain to the south west of Capernaum. Mark is possibly telling us that the disciples' landfall is not as intended, due to the contrary wind.

προσωρμισθησαν [προσαρμιζω] aor. pas. "**anchored there**" - [AND] CAST ANCHOR, ANCHORED, MADE LANDFALL, MOORED *there*. Possibly "ran into the shore", "moored against the shore", although "beached the boat" is to be preferred.

v54

εξελθοντων [εξερχομαι] aor. part. gen. "**As soon as [they] got out**" - [AND THEY] HAVING COME OUT, GOT OUT. The genitive participle and its genitive subject **αυτων**, "they", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal; "when they had disembarked", Moffatt.

εκ + gen. "**of**" - FROM [THE BOAT]. Expressing source / origin.

ευθυς adv. "-" - IMMEDIATELY. Temporal adverb. "The people immediately recognised Jesus", but although it would be an unusual placement of the adverb, it may link with the genitive absolute construction, as reflected in the NIV translation, "As soon"

επιγνοντες [επιγινωσκω] aor. part. "**people recognised**" - *the people* HAVING COME TO KNOW, RECOGNISED, PERCEIVED [HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to run around"; "the people recognised Jesus and ran around the whole region ..."

v55

περιεδραμον [περιτρεχω] aor. "**they ran throughout**" - THEY RUN ABOUT, RUN AROUND [THAT WHOLE REGION]. "They hurried all over the countryside", Barclay.

περιφερειν [περιφερω] pres. inf. "**carried**" - [AND BEGAN] TO CARRY ABOUT. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "they began", "they began to carry ..." The present tense indicating ongoing action. "They ran all over that part of the country to bring their sick people to him", CEV.

τους εχοντας [εχω] pres. part. "**the sick**" - THE ONES HAVING [ILLNESS]. The participle serves as a substantive.

τοις κραβαττοις dat. "**[on] mats**" - [UPON] THE PALLETS, MATTRESSES. "Brought the sick on stretchers", NJB.

οτι "-" - [WHERE THEY HEARD] THAT [HE IS]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they heard, namely, that Jesus was at a certain place.

v56

όπου αν + imperf. "**everywhere**" - WHEREVER [HE ENTERED INTO VILLAGES, OR INTO CITIES, OR INTO COUNTRYSIDE]. This construction forms an indefinite adverbial local clause, although usually with the subj. except were repeated action (iterative) is being expressed, as here. "Whatever village, or town, or hamlet he went to", Moffatt.

ετιθεσαν [τιθημι] imperf. "**they placed**" - [IN THE MARKETPLACES] THEY WERE PUTTING. The imperfect is again iterative, expressing repeated action. The rushing around, visits to numerous villages and the placing of the sick in the marketplace, indicates healings in serial fashion. Mark is emphasising Jesus' healing power.

τους ασθενουντας [ασθενεω] "**the sick**" - THE ONES BEING WEAK. The participle serves as a substantive.

παρεκαλουν [παρακαλεω] imperf. "**they begged**" - [AND] THEY WERE BEGGING, URGING [HIM]. Again, the imperfect is probably iterative; "they kept pleading with him", Barclay. Given the opening clause, it would seem that the subject "they" are those who laid the sick in the marketplace, but as Marcus notes, the final clause "and all who touched it were healed" indicates that the subject is "the sick"; "the sick begged him"

ίνα + subj. "-" - THAT. Here probably introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they "begged" Jesus for, so Cranfield, although Marcus opts for a purpose clause; "pleaded with him in order that they might touch"That they might touch only the tassel on his cloak", NAB.

καν "**even**" - EVEN IF. Here adverbial, modifying the verb "to touch." This melding of **και εαν** takes the sense "if only, even just", Zerwick.

του κρασπεδου [ον] gen. "**the edge**" - [THEY MIGHT TOUCH] THE FRINGE. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to touch."

του ιμαρτιου gen. "**of [his] cloak**" - OF HIS GARMENT. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. The picture is of Jesus hurrying through the crowds and people being healed on mass by just touching the hem of his clothing.

όσοι αν + imperf. "**all who**" - [AND] AS MANY AS = WHOEVER. As with **όπου αν** above, this construction, forming an indefinite relative clause, is usually followed by the subjunctive, except where repeated action is intended, as here. "Everyone who touched", Barclay.

ήψαντο [άπτω] aor. "**touched**" - TOUCHED, GRABBED, HELD [HIM WERE BEING HEALED]. Here the aorist tense of the verb "touched" underlines a single action and is followed by the imperfect "they were being healed" to again express repeated action, "were being healed one after the other", TH.

7:1-23

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

1. Growing division, 6:1-8:21

vij] The religious leaders are also without understanding

Synopsis

Mark now records a confrontation between Jesus and some of the religious authorities from Jerusalem. The authorities note that Jesus and his disciples are less than scrupulous in the washing of their hands before a meal. They use this observation to question the religious purity of Jesus. This then leads to the question as to whether impurity in the sight of God is contracted from the outside, or is an evil residing within.

Teaching

Defilement / sin, is a human condition which the law serves to expose, thus revealing our need for a divine renewal of the heart.

Issues

i] Context: See 6:30-44. This episode falls within the period of growing discontent.

ii] Structure: *The issue of purity*:

Jesus exposes the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, v1-23;

Tradition at the expense of God's law, v1-5;

Text: Isaiah 29:13, v6-7;

Application, v8-13;

"You abandon the commandment of God
and hold to human tradition."

Saying / Parable, v14-16;

"The things that come out are what defiles."

Exposition on the issue of defilement, v17-23.

iii] Interpretation:

In this rather long episode, Jesus engages with Israel's religious elite regarding the issue of holiness. Jesus makes the point that defilement is not a matter of externals, of hand-washing, but of the heart, for it is from a defiled heart that "evil intentions come." This defilement cannot be hidden behind outward performance. Note how Jesus incisively exposes the hypocrisy of *the righteous* whose holiness rests on the externals of the law, v9-13. It's very easy to claim one has honoured their parents, but actually

do the very opposite. It's very easy to be fooled into thinking that the outward performance of the law makes one holy.

In drawing together the extant gospel tradition that makes up his gospel, it well may be that Mark did so with the burning issue of table fellowship between Jewish believers and Gentile believers firmly in mind. Table fellowship is not possible where brothers and sisters are judged on the ground of a contrived holiness.

What this episode does for us, is remind us that "none are righteous, no not one." Those who have some claim to holiness / righteousness before God are exposed as hypocrites, but at the same time, the less refined disciple, "eating with defiled hands", is no less a sinner, possessing, like all humanity, a defiled heart. For believers, table fellowship rests on a holiness that is graced to them by a merciful God, a holiness that covers the defilement of the human heart, a heart washed clean by the blood of Christ. It is on this ground that the *righteous* and sinner may eat together. Of course, we must wait for Paul, the exegete of Christ, to explain how that righteousness is by grace through faith, apart from the law.

v] Synoptics:

Matt.15:1-20. Matthew and Mark's record of Jesus' teaching on the Law aligns. Mark's account provides a more logical arrangement of the material, although his record is somewhat more detailed, none-the-less, Markan priority is presumed.

Text - 7:1

Jesus is confronted by the hypocrisy of those who claim holiness on the ground of law-obedience, v1-23. i] Tradition at the expense of God's law, v1-5. Jesus is approached by local Pharisees, along with some from Jerusalem. They are critical of his laxity toward matters of ritual purity, particularly in allowing his disciples to defile themselves by eating with unwashed hands.

The sentence structure of the first five verses is unclear. What we seem to have is a single Gk. sentence with a parenthetical comment in v3-4. The first two verses are best expressed as a single sentence, both verses joined by a coordinate **και**, cf., Cranfield.

των γραμματεων [εως εως] gen. "**of the teachers of the law**" - [AND COME TOGETHER TOWARD HIM THE PHARISEES AND SOME] OF THE SCRIBES. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. Two groups are identified, local Pharisees and Pharisees from Jerusalem. "The Pharisees came together, having arrived and seen (inspected?)", NRSV.

ελθοντες [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**who had come**" - HAVING COME. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Pharisees and some teachers of the law", as NIV.

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM [JERUSALEM]. Expressing source / origin.

v2

ιδοντες [οραω] aor. part. "**saw**" - [AND] HAVING SEEN. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "comes together", or possibly adverbial, temporal.

τινας pro. "**some**" - SOME. An example of prolepsis where an accusative object serves as the subject of the subordinate clause, BDF #476.1.1.

των μαθητων [ης ου] gen. "**of [his] disciples**" - OF THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they saw.

τους αρτους [ος] pl. "**food**" - [THEY ARE EATING] THE BREAD, LOAVES. Accusative direct object of the verb "to eat." References to eating bread normally refer to eating food in general. The plural "loaves" is therefore probably not a link back to the feeding of the five thousand.

κοιναις [ος] dat. "**unclean**" - IN = WITH COMMON = IMPURE [HANDS]. The dative is instrumental, expressing means. The word means "common" as against "private", but took on the particular ritual sense of "impurity", "defilement", in Jewish circles.

τουτ εστιν "**that is**" - THIS = THAT IS. The construction "this is" serves to introduce an explanation. Rather than ο, "which [is]", Mark has chosen a distant demonstrative pronoun τουτ, "that [is]", to highlight Jewish ritual practice

ανιπτους [ος] dat. "**unwashed**" - UNWASHED. The dative is instrumental, expressing means. Mark here explains the meaning of the word "common" to his Gentile readers.

v3

This, and the following verse, serves as a parenthetical comment on Jewish ritual food regulations and is best bracketed, as in the NIV.

γαρ "-" - FOR, BECAUSE. Here more explanatory than causal. Mark explains the background to the issue of eating food with unwashed hands.

παντες adj. "**All**" - [THE PHARISEES AND] ALL [THE JEWS DO NOT EAT]. The Pharisees certainly practised rigorous purity rituals, but certainly not "all the Jews." "Many other Jewish people", CEV.

εαν μη + subj. "**unless**" - IF NOT = UNLESS. Probably not an exceptive clause, "they do not eat except ...", but rather a negated conditional clause, 3rd. class; "unless they wash their hands properly, *then* they do not eat."

πυγνῆ [ῆ] dat. "**ceremonial**" - IN = WITH THE FIST [THEY WASH THEIR HANDS]. The dative is adverbial, probably modal, expressing manner. This word obviously has another meaning other than "fist", but it is not known. Yet, the point of the sentence is clear; religious Jews practised ritual purification. Gundry suggests "raising hands that are cupped in a fist-like fashion, but with fingers held slightly apart to allow full coverage with the least possible amount of water."

κρατουντες [κρατεω] nom. pl. pres. part. "**holding to**" - GRASPING, HOLDING TO. The participle is possibly adverbial, causal, "they do not eat because they strictly observe the traditions of the elders", Barclay, although, even as anarthrous, it may be treated as adjectival; "the Pharisees and all the Jews who observe the traditions of the elders, do not eat without", Berkeley.

των πρεσβυτερων adj. "**of the elders**" - [THE TRADITION] OF THE ELDER. The genitive is subjective, or possessive, or idiomatic / source; "*created by*."

v4

απ [απο] + gen. "**[and when they come] from**" - [AND] FROM [THE MARKET]. Expressing source / origin. There is no verb and the word "market" needs something to relate to. Some suggest "things brought from the market" are subsequently ritually washed, while others suggest "those (persons) coming from the market" are ritually washed. Turner suggests that the preposition is temporal here, "on return from market. "They decline to eat what comes from the market", Moffatt.

εαν μη + subj. "**unless**" - [THEY DO NOT EAT] UNLESS [THEY WASH THEMSELVES]. Again, this construction may be classified as introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception, "they do not eat except", but as in v3, it is probably introducing a negated conditional clause, "unless they wash themselves *then* they don't eat."

κρατειν [κρατεω] pres. inf. "**they observe**" - [AND THERE IS MANY OTHER THINGS THERE IS WHICH THEY *traditionally* RECEIVED] TO HOLD TO, CLING TO = KEEP, OBSERVE. The infinitive introduces an appositional / expegetic construction which explains, in summary form, the type of traditions received, "namely, to hold to washing of cups", so Taylor; "there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups,", ESV. A catch-all for the many traditions of ritual purification.

ποτηριων [ον] gen. "**of cups**" - [WASHING] OF CUPS [AND PITCHERS, AND KETTLES AND BEDS]. The genitive is adjectival verbal, objective, although

a descriptive sense may be in mind, so attributed, "cup washing." Note the textual variant which includes even the washing of "beds" used for a meal.

v5

The Pharisees assume that their traditions have authority and so question Jesus' failure to observe them. Jesus happily rises to the occasion.

επερωτωσιν [επερωταω] pres. "**asked**" - [AND THE PHARISEES AND THE SCRIBES] QUESTION, ASK [HIM]. Historic / narrative present tense indicating narrative transition. "So, the Pharisees and Scribes put this question to Jesus", Phillips.

δια + acc. "**why**" - BECAUSE OF [WHAT]. Causal. The phrase **δια τι** = "because why?" = "why?", as NIV. Here introducing direct speech.

ου περιπατουσιν [περιπατεω] pres. "**live**" - [THE DISCIPLES OF YOU] DO NOT WALK ABOUT. Used in a metaphorical sense; "conduct oneself."

κατα + acc. "**according to**" - IN ACCORDANCE WITH. Expressing a standard. The only time this preposition takes this meaning in Mark.

των πρεσβυτερων gen. adj. "**of the elders**" - [THE TRADITION] OF THE ELDERS. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, or subjective, or idiomatic / source. The Pharisees assume that there is an inherent authority in this tradition, which assumption Jesus challenges. As far as Jesus is concerned, their received wisdom is man-made. "What our ancestors taught us to do", CEV.

αλλα "**instead**" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction.

χερσιν [ρ ρος] dat. "**with [defiled] hands**" - WITH HANDS [IMPURE EAT THE BREAD]. The dative is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their eating, or instrumental, expressing means; "with hands which are defiled."

v6

ii] The Scripture, Isaiah.29:13, LXX, v6-7. Jesus confronts the law-bound religious leaders with a text from Isaiah. Jesus will use this text to explain that the religion of Israel is now shaped by externals based on human traditions, and that defilement is a product of a corrupt heart, quite apart from externals.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [AND HE SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

καλωσ adv. "**[Isaiah was] right**" - RIGHTLY, CORRECTLY [PROPHESIED ISAIAH]. Modal adverb, expressing manner; "admirably adapted to your case", Swete.

περι + gen. "**about**" - CONCERNING, ABOUT [YOU]. Reference; "concerning you."

των υποκριτων gen. "**hypocrites**" - HYPOCRITES, Genitive in apposition to **υμων**, "you". This popular Matthean term is only used once in Mark. Note how

Mark says that Isaiah's words are for "you". The prophets' words are for their own generation, but also for subsequent members of the kingdom.

ως γεγραπται "as it is written" - AS IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN. Idiomatic formula used to introduce a quotation from scripture.

οτι "-" - THAT. Variant; introducing a dependent statement, direct quote.

τοις χειλεσιν [ος] dat. "**with their lips**" - [THIS PEOPLE HONOUR ME] IN = WITH THE = THEIR LIPS. The dative is instrumental, expressing means.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, to a counterpoint, "but".

η ... καρδια "**hearts**" - THE HEART [OF THEM]. Nominative subject of the verb "to be far off." The issue of scribal religion being external rather than internal (a problem of belief necessitating inner renewal) is developed in v14-23.

απ [απο] + gen. "**from**" - [IS REMOVED FAR AWAY] FROM [ME]. Here expressing separation, "away from".

v7

ματην adv. "**vain**" - [BUT/AND] VAINLY, IN FUTILITY [THEY WORSHIP ME]. Modal adverb, expressing manner. The word is not in the Hebrew text, but is implied.

διδασκοντες [διδασκω] pres. part. "**teachings**" - TEACHING [*the* TEACHINGS]. The participle is adverbial, causal, "because they teach", or instrumental, "by teaching", or even temporal, "when teaching human regulations as doctrines", Berkeley. Also not in the Hebrew, but in the LXX, and applicable here in reference to the Pharisees. "Rules and regulations based on merely human authority do not provide the sort of response which God requires", France. This idea, conveyed in the second half of the quote, is expounded in v8-13.

ενταματα [α ατος] "**[human] rules**" - COMMANDMENTS [OF MEN]. The noun possibly serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "teachings", specifying a fact about the object, "they teach as divine commandments, man-made rules and regulations", Barclay, although Decker classifies it as standing in apposition to **διδασκαλιας**, "teachings"; "teaching teachings *that are* commandments of men." The genitive "of men" is probably descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*which come from* men; "the precepts found in the doctrines they teach *have their source in mere men*", Cassirer.

v8

iii) The application of Isaiah 29:13b: Holiness cannot be claimed on the basis of a law-obedience shaped by the traditions of men, v8-13. In grasping onto subjective traditions, the Pharisees have neglected God's authoritative word; they have actually set aside the commandments for the sake of their traditions. To demonstrate this fact, Jesus refers to the fifth commandment, noting that the

penalty for dishonouring parents is death. The Pharisees had found a way around honouring parents, with regard financial assistance, through a device whereby the son's funds were declared "divine property." Jesus points out that the Pharisees have dared to nullify the commandments in favour of their traditions.

αφηντες [αφιημι] aor. part. "**you have let go**" - HAVING ABANDONED, FORSAKEN, LEFT. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to grasp." "You hold to human traditions and drop what God commands", or adverbial, temporal, "when you" Here the sense is possibly "neglect" (let go by default), rather than wilfully abandon, although a shift from what God commands to a watered-down version of the law is surely worse than neglect. Neglecting the good is one thing, defining the good as something other than what God calls good, is another. The Christian church presently faces this issue in the social democracies of the West where the church is being asked to affirm politically correct positions adopted by the wider society, eg. gay marriage. We must always welcome the sinner, for we are all sinners, but beware whitewashing the sin! God's word is authoritative, while human traditions are subjective. Such traditions may be useful, but cannot be mandatory. "You have put aside the commandment of God", NJB.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [THE COMMANDS] OF GOD. This genitive, as with **των ανθρωπων**, "[traditions] of men", may be treated as adjectival, possessive, "God's own commands" / "your own traditions", or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*that is from men.*"

κρατειτε [κρατεω] pres. "**holding on to**" - YOU ARE HOLDING TO, GRASPING [THE TRADITIONS OF MEN]. This verb with the accusative usually means "to hold firmly and completely", "cling to", NAB, but here probably with the sense "keep / observe", NJB; "maintain", REB.

v9

ελεγεν [λεγω] imperf. "**he said**" - [AND] HE WAS SAYING. The imperfect is either durative, indicating not just a once said word, but a word with ongoing implications, or inceptive, emphasising the beginning of the action, "he began to say to them." As France notes, introductions like "he said to them" often introduce a separate independent element of tradition, here probably covering v9-13. If this is the case here, then Mark has placed a parallel saying to v8 to escalate the argument. "He went on to say to them", Barclay.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

αφετειτε [αφετω] pres. "**you have [a fine way] of setting aside**" - YOU HAVE SET ASIDE. The word is much stronger than the "let go" of v 8, pushing toward "reject", even "despise". "You are good at rejecting God's commands", CEV.

καλως adv. "**a fine way**" - WELL [THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD]. Modal adverb. Jesus is using irony; "how skilful you are in setting aside God's commandments", Cassirer.

ινα + subj. "**in order**" - THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that." They set aside God's commands in order that they might establish their own.

στησητε [ιστημι] aor. subj. "**to observe**" - [THE TRADITIONS OF YOU] MIGHT STAND. "In order to establish / authorise / put into force your own tradition", although "observe / uphold / maintain" is also a possible meaning of this verb, so NIV.

v10

γαρ "**for**" - FOR. More reason than cause; Jesus provides support for his critique in v8-9.

Μωυσης "**Moses**" - MOSES [SAID, HONOUR THE FATHER OF YOU AND THE MOTHER OF YOU]. Moses is identified as the author of the words to show that the quote comes from the weightier Torah, rather than the Prophets or the Writings.

ο κακολογων [κακολογω] pres. part. "**anyone who curses**" - [AND] THE ONE REVILING [FATHER OR MOTHER]. The participle serves as a substantive. Possibly "curses", following the AV, although better, "speaks evil of", NRSV.

θανατω [ος] dat. "**[must be put / is to be put] to death**" - BY DEATH [LET HIM COME TO AN END = DIE]. The dative is adverbial, expressing manner, or means. The construction of an imperative verb with an modal / instrumental dative serves to represent the Hebrew infinitive absolute; "let him surely die", Taylor.

v11

δε "**but [you say]**" - BUT/AND [YOU SAY]. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument, as NIV. The "you" is emphatic by use.

εαν + subj. "**if**" - IF. Introducing a conditional clause, 3rd class, where the condition has a possibility of coming true, "if, *as may be the case*, a person (man) says to his father or to his mother, Corban (that is gift) (v12) *then* you no longer permit (him) to do anything for his father or his mother."

τω πατρι [ηρ ρος] dat. "**to his father**" - [A MAN SAYS] TO THE FATHER [OR TO THE MOTHER, CORBAN, WHICH MEANS GIFT]. Dative of indirect object. "Corban" = given to *God*, refers to something dedicated to God. Clearly the funds, now denied to the parent, can be accessed by the son, but how this is possible if they are "divine property" is unclear. The best we can say is that the gift remains at the son's disposal, even though not possessed by him, ie., it is "considered" as

given to God. The illustration serves to demonstrate how the Pharisees have given greater weight to their traditions than to God's law.

ὅ εαν "whatever / what" - WHATEVER [OUT OF, FROM, ME YOU SHALL BE PROFITED]. At this point, Jesus, by way of an explanation of Corban, expresses the words a person might actually say to their father or mother. The Greek is difficult because the words sit within the conditional clause "if a man says", and are themselves conditional, and to make matters worse, the substance of the protasis is missing (note that Matthew corrects the Gk.). Moule suggests "if *it had not been given (to God) then* by me you might have benefited." The verb is either indicative or subjunctive and is passive, "be benefited / helped." The NIV, as with most translations, skirt the complexity of the Greek text and express the sense of the words; "Anything of mine that might have been of use to you is Corban", Goodspeed.

ὅ εστιν "that is" - WHICH IS = WHICH MEANS [GIFT]. Serving to introduce an explanation; "that is."

v12

ουκετι ουδεν "no longer anything" - *then* NO LONGER [DO YOU PERMIT HIM TO DO] NOTHING. The double negative is emphatic.

ποιησαι [ποιεω] aor. inf. "do" - TO DO. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of cause expressing what is not allowed / permitted, namely, to do anything for their parents.

τω πατρι [ηρ ρος] dat. "for their father" - TO THE = HIS FATHER [OR THE = HIS MOTHER]. Dative of interest, advantage.

v13

ακυρουντες [ακυρω] pres. part. "Thus you nullify" - CANCELLING, NULLIFYING, REPEALING. The participle is adverbial expressing either purpose, "in order to", or result, "with the result that", "thus", NIV, or manner (modal), "in this way", REB. The Pharisees have dared to nullify the Word of God.

του θεου [ος] gen. "of God" - [THE WORD] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "that is from". Here specifically the fifth commandment, not the scriptures as a whole. In Acts, the phrase refers to the gospel, again not to the scriptures as a whole.

τη παραδοσει [ις εως] dat. "by your tradition" - IN = BY THE TRADITION [OF YOU]. The dative is instrumental, expressing means.

η̄ dat. "that" - WHICH [YOU RECEIVED. AND YOU DO MANY SUCH SIMILAR THINGS]. The dative antecedent "by your tradition" has attracted the relative pronoun "that", even though in normal circumstances the case of a relative pronoun is determined by its function in the clause within which it resides.

v14

iv) Saying / Parable; the heart / the centre of our being, is the source of human defilement and undermines any claim to holiness, v14-16: Defilement is from within, not from without. Jesus does not set out to demolish Leviticus 15, nor the image of purity required of God's people as illustrated in the food laws etc., but rather the foolish notion that a person can, by the careful observance of external purity laws, be declared holy. The law serves to expose sin, and so to "complete" this function of the law, Jesus moves from externals, which can be kept, to internals, which cannot be kept. It's what comes from within that defiles us, not words as such, but the heart that shapes the thoughts that shape the words and actions. It is this that defiles us, and so we are all defiled. If holiness is required of a child of God, and externals of themselves can, at best, only image holiness, then holiness is going to have to come by other means. The only means possible is a gift of God, grace, the key to which is a faith like that of Abraham.

προσκαλεσαμενος [προσκαλεομαι] aor. part. "**called**" - [AND] HAVING SUMMONED, CALLED [AGAIN THE CROWD]. The participle is adverbial, possibly temporal; "then he recalled the crowd to him", Moffatt. Jesus now moves his attention from the Pharisees to the crowd, from specific argumentation to parables.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**[and said]**" - [HE WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

μου gen. pro. "**[listen to] me**" - [HEAR, LISTEN TO] ME [AND UNDERSTAND]. Genitive of direct object after verb "to hear, listen to, heed, obey." A call to give careful thought to the words that follow, cf. 4:3. "Pay attention and try to understand what I mean", CEV.

v15

ουδεν "**nothing**" - [THERE IS] NOTHING. Predicate nominative; "there is nothing." Emphasising that defilement is not caused by contamination from unwashed hands, v5, or anything, eg., contact with a dead body, or bodily fluids, foods.... "The food that you put into your mouth doesn't make you unclean and unfit to worship God", CEV.

εξωθεν + gen. "**outside of**" - FROM WITHOUT, OUTSIDE OF [THE MAN]. Adverb used as a preposition + gen.; spatial.

κοινωσαι [κοινωω] aor. inf. "**unclean / defile**" - [WHICH IS ABLE] TO MAKE COMMON, DEFILE [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "is able." Here "defile".

εισπορευομενον [εισπορευομαι] pres. part. "**by going into**" - ENTERING INTO. The participle is adverbial, probably instrumental, expressing means, as

NIV, or conditional, "there is nothing outside a person which, if it enters into him, is able to make him unclean", Decker. It can be treated as adjectival, limiting "nothing"; "nothing which enters a man", Barclay.

εις + acc. **"into"** - INTO [HIM]. Spatial. The repetition of the prefix of the verb "to enter into" is stylistic.

αλλα **"rather"** - BUT. Adversative in a counterpoint construction. "On the contrary", Barclay.

εκ + gen. "-" - [THE THINGS] FROM [THE MAN]. Expressing source / origin.

εκπορευομενα [εκπορευομαι] pres. part. **"comes out"** - COMING OUT [ARE THE THINGS DEFILING THE MAN]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting τα, "things"; "the things which come out." "What defiles a man is what comes out of him", Cassirer.

v16

"If any man has ears to hear, let him hear." Taylor argues that this verse should be retained, but most commentators feel that its appropriateness is responsible for its addition to the original text, cf., 4:9.

v17

v] The exposition of the parable / saying on defilement, v17-23. As is typical, Jesus now explains the saying to the disciples. An external, such as food, does not defile a person's being ("heart"), it simply passes through them. Jesus goes on to explain that it is what is within that defiles us, for from within comes "evil devisings which issue in degraded acts and vices", Taylor. By means of these words, Jesus has demolished any idea that pious regulations can purify. In the end, we are all left with a "desperate need for the renewal and cleansing of the human heart", Lane.

οτε **"After"** - [AND] WHEN. Temporal conjunction introducing a temporal clause.

απο + gen. **"he had left"** - [HE ENTERED INTO THE HOUSE] FROM [THE CROWD]. Expressing separation "away from."

επηρωτων [επερωτω] imperf. **"asked"** - [THE DISCIPLES OF HIM] WERE ASKING [HIM]. Probably an inceptive imperfect, "his disciples began to ask him", Weymouth.

την παραβολην [η] **"about this parable"** - *about* THE PARABLE. Here taking the accusative, adverbial, of respect, as NIV. It is interesting that Mark calls the saying a "parable", a "parabolic saying." So, there is something of a riddle about it, a "dark saying" which aligns with the intention of Jesus' kingdom parables, namely, to draw out those with eyes to see. Taken literally, Jesus could be saying that food doesn't defile, only bodily fluids, or a foul mouth, defile. Yet, the intent

of the parable is far deeper. The hidden intent is to expose the human condition of sin and so drive the seeker to God for mercy in the face of the coming kingdom. Note how the disciples come to Jesus privately for an explanation of the saying, cf., Matt.13:10ff. "Riddle", Gould.

v18

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [AND HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

και "-" - AND. Here adverbial, adjunctive, "also"; "are you also (along with the crowd) so without understanding?"

οτως adv. "-" - THEN, THUS, SO. The point made in v15 is repeated. Modal adverb, if taken as a question, "so", but it is possible that this adverb introduces an inferential statement; "He said to them, then you are also without understanding?"

ου νοειτε [**νοεω**] pres. "**don't you see**" - [ARE YOU WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING?] DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND. "Don't you realise."

οτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they should realise.

εισπορευομενον [**εισπορευομαι**] pres. part. "**that enters**" - [EVERYTHING] ENTERING, GOING IN [FROM OUTSIDE INTO THE MAN]. Although anarthrous, the participle may be adjectival, attributive, limiting the substantive adjective **παν**, "everything"; "anything which goes into a man from outside cannot defile him", Barclay, although Decker suggests it is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means.

κοινωνσαι [**κοινωνω**] aor. inf. "**[can] defile [him]**" - [IS NOT ABLE] TO DEFILE [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "is not able."

v19

In this verse, Mark makes his own comment regarding Levitical regulations, particularly food regulations, v19b. The issue was one that caused divisions in the early church between Gentiles and Jews, and so Mark's comment is quite provocative. Mark's comment is probably not intended to dispense with the regulations as such, but rather, to reinforce the point that purity, in the end, has nothing to do with what we eat.

As already noted, Jesus is not demolishing Levitical food laws, but rather he moves to the substance of the law, cf., Matt.5:17-20. Food laws only illustrate the idea of purity, they do not create purity, nor can a ritually impure food actually erode purity. Purity / holiness is a matter of the heart / mind, and the purity regulations serve, first and foremost, to remind us that we are impure. With all the care in the world, no one can even keep these limited regulations perfectly. When the regulations themselves become the focus, rather than the state of the

heart, then radical incisive teaching is the order of the day. Once the substance of the issue is understood, it is then quite proper for the Jewish believers to continue to practice ritual law, just as it is quite proper for Paul to seek exemption from cultic law for Gentile believers (possibly all law as such - see Moo on Romans for an antinomian view of the place of the law in the believer's life. eg., *Encountering the Book of Romans*, Baker, 2002, or NICNT on Romans). A problem only develops when it is necessary to amalgamate both positions in a single congregation. Both Galatians and Romans address the issue of the weak and the strong serving together under the grace of God, and it is this issue which was the focus of the Jerusalem conference recorded in Acts 15.

ὅτι "for" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the claim made in v18 is true.

αυτου "their [heart]" - [IT DOES NOT ENTER INTO THE HEART] OF HIM. The placement of this possessive pronoun indicates that it modifies both "heart" and "stomach". The heart is the source of spiritual and intellectual processing; it is the part of our being which relates to God, but is not the seat of emotions as in Western thought. The point made by Jesus is that in the digestive process, food does not come into contact with the source of our being, the psychological centre of our existence, and therefore does not pollute it.

αλλ [αλλα] "but" - BUT. Adversative standing in a counterpoint construction.

τον αφεδρωνα [ων ωντος] "out of his body" - [*goes* INTO THE INTESTINES AND GOES OUT INTO] THE LATRINE, TOILET. "Evacuated into the drain by natural process", Barclay.

καθαριζων [καθαριζω] pres. part. "(in saying this, Jesus declared ...)" - CLEANSING [ALL FOODS]. The participle refers back to *λεγει*, "he says", v18, and therefore is adverbial, probably consecutive, expressing result; "he says, with the result that he declares all food clean." Serving as a parenthetical comment by the editor referring to Jesus' teaching in v18-19b. "Thus, he declared all foods clean", ESV.

v20

Jesus' exposition of the parable resumes after the parenthetical statement, and it now deals with what does actually defile; "he said further", Berkeley. The narrative transition is indicated by *δε*.

ὅτι "-" - [BUT/AND HE WAS SAYING] THAT. Here introducing a dependent statement serving to identify what Jesus went on to say; "what comes from your heart is what makes you unclean", CEV.

το εκπορευομενον [εκπορευομαι] pres. mid. part. "**what comes out**" - THE THING GOING OUT. The participle serves as a substantive. Technically a hanging nominative.

εκ + gen. "**of**" - FROM [THE MAN, THAT DEFILES THE MAN]. Expressing separation, already expressed in the prefix of the participle - stylistic.

v21

In the list of evils, v21-22, the first six are plural, referring to the act itself, while the last six are singular, referring to the sin.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why it is that the product of the heart makes a person unclean, namely, because the heart / the inner being, stained by sin, prompts sinful behaviour.

εσωθεν "**from within**" - INSIDE = FROM WITHIN. Spatial. It's what comes out that defiles, or better, sin that inevitably comes out of a corrupt heart is what defiles.

εκ + gen. "**out of**" - FROM, OUT OF. Expressing source / origin.

των ανθρωπων [ος] gen. "**of a man's / person's [heart]**" - THE HEART [OF THE MAN]. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a dependent status.

διαλογισμοι [ος] "**[evil] thoughts**" - [EVIL] REASONINGS, DELIBERATIONS, DESIGNS [COME FORTH, FORNICATIONS, THEFTS, MURDERS]. "Thoughts" is somewhat misleading as the reasoning is active, rather than a passive. This noun, with its attributive adjective, "evil", probably serves to cover all the evils that follow, in which case the evils are nominative standing in apposition to "reasonings". "Evil devisings which issue in degraded acts and vices, namely, sexual immorality, theft, murder", so Taylor.

v22

πλεονεξιαi [α] "**greed**" - [ADULTERY]. covetousness with a sexual connotation. "Lust", Moffatt.

ασελγεια [ασ] "**lewdness**" - [WICKEDNESS, DECEIT] WANTONNESS. "Indecency", Goodspeed.

οφθαλμος πονηρος "**envy**" - EVIL EYE [BLASPHEMY, PRIDE]. "Jealousy", Barclay.

αφοροσυνη "**folly**" - FOOLISHNESS, STUPIDITY. Yet not so much intellectual foolishness, but rather the "wrongheadedness of unbelief and sin", Swete.

v23

"Jesus' pronouncement did not absolve his followers from guilt, but universalised it: all are defiled", Boring. Boring qualifies this statement by arguing that the passage is not strictly Pauline because it functions to urge "the

reader to avoid those things that truly defile." It is certainly true that Jesus does not explicate the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, but Jesus does provide all the building blocks for the apostle Paul to craft the doctrine, such that Paul ultimately serves as the exegete of Jesus. For a Jew like Paul, well versed in the sovereign grace of God (Israel is a chosen people devoid of worth) and founded on the faith of Abraham, it is Jesus' teachings on the function of the Law that becomes the foundation for the doctrine of justification. Jesus clearly reveals the function of the Law in this passage: a) to expose sin and thus the need for divine mercy, and b) to guide the Christian life. Cleanliness may be next to godliness, but it doesn't create godliness, particularly in a godless heart. If godliness is a requisite for a child of God, how then can we secure for ourselves that godly heart?

εσωθεν adv. "**from inside**" - [ALL THESE EVIL THINGS COME FORTH] FROM WITHIN [AND DEFILES THE MAN]. Adverb of place. "A person is corrupted by what is within."

7:24-37

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

1. Growing division, 6:1-8:21

vii] Israel's blindness forces Jesus amongst the Gentiles

Synopsis

Jesus' Galilean ministry has come to an end and so he now retires into the territory of Tyre to further train the twelve. In the passage before us Mark relates two stories: First, The healing of a foreign woman's daughter, 7:24-30. Having withdrawn to Tyre in Gentile territory, Jesus meets a Gentile woman who begs him to heal her demon-possessed daughter. Her understanding of divine grace sees her request granted. In the second episode, Mark records the healing of a deaf stammerer, 7:31-37: On his journey back from Tyre, people bring a man to Jesus who is not only deaf, but has an impediment of speech. The man's healing is performed in a number of steps.

Teaching

The faith of a Gentile reveals that the *children's bread* is for others, and this by the hand of one who "has done everything well".

Issues

i] Context: See 6:30-44.

ii] Structure: *Jesus does everything well*:

The faith of a Gentile woman, v24-30;

Jesus heals a deaf and mute man in Decapolis, v31-37.

Both episodes present as simple discourse narratives with no inherent structure. They are both healing stories / teaching narratives, leaning toward pronouncement stories. There is something in the suggestion that the healing of the deaf-mute exhibits poetic form. Lohmeyer notes the episode consists of five short sentences each with three predicates. Oral transmission is the likely cause.

iii] Interpretation:

The healing of the Gentile woman's daughter may be classified as an exorcism, although in reality, the healing of the daughter is little more than a side issue. What we are presented with is a Gentile seeking the "bread" (the blessings of the kingdom) which is properly assigned to God's children, Israel. Mark has repeatedly shown us that the children have little interest in this "bread"; even the disciples are struggling to understand its

significance, 6:52, 8:14-21. Yet, here we have a Gentile seeking the "bread" and receiving it, so proclaiming that the Abrahamic promise of a blessing to all nations is even now being realised in Jesus.

The messianic significance of the healing of the deaf mute, v31-37, can be drawn from Isaiah 35:5-6, "the ears of the deaf shall be opened ... and the tongue of the mute shall sing for joy." Jesus fulfils these prophetic words in his ministry. Although Jesus plays down the miracle (the messianic secret at work??), the crowd proclaims "he has done everything well: he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak." There are, as well, some interesting aspects to this episode which may, or may not, add to its message:

First, Decapolis, to the east of lake Galilee, is primarily a Gentile region. It was in Decapolis, "the country of the Gerasenes", where Jesus excised the Legion from a man, 5:1-20. Jesus told him to go home and tell his neighbours what had happened to him, and so "he began to proclaim in Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed", v20. Is the response of the crowd a product of this man's witness? Is Mark suggesting that they are Gentiles?

Second, the miracle is similar to 8:22-26 where Jesus also heals using the touch of his hand and saliva. Both episodes are unique to Mark. All we need is an incantation and we would be into magic. What is Jesus up to? Why does Mark record the stories when Matthew and Luke leave them well alone? Going beyond what the text tells us, we might say of these two issues that, for the sake of his Gentile audience, Jesus has adopted the form of a typical *divine man* of the Greco-Roman world, and that in this garb he is revealed as the one who heals spiritual blindness. Jesus is the bread of heaven, yes, even for Gentiles, 8:1-10.

iv] Synoptics:

The healing of the Gentile woman's daughter, Matt.15:21-28. Both accounts align, but are very different when it comes to the details. The accounts evidence reliance on an extant oral source separately available to both evangelists, rather than Matthew relying on Mark's account, or vice versa. As already indicated, that doesn't mean that Matthew didn't have before him a copy of Mark, or a proto-Mark (assuming Markan priority).

The healing of the deaf mute, Matt.15:29-31. Unlike Matthew, Mark specifies that these events occur in Gentile territory, Tyre and the Ten Towns. Matthew's record is generalised, while Mark concentrates on one particular healing. As indicated above, the style of the healing bears the marks of magic, suitable for a Gentile audience, but possibly not for a Jewish audience. Is this why Matthew avoids this element of the tradition?

Text - 7:24

Israel's blindness forces Jesus amongst the Gentiles, v24-37: i] The faith of a Gentile woman, v24-30. Jesus moves north of Capernaum into Gentile territory for a time of rest. The locals know about Jesus the healer and so they visit the cottage he is staying at. A Gentile woman, a Hellenised citizen of the republic of Tyre, prostrates herself before Jesus (a mark of respect), and seeks his aid in casting a demon out of her daughter.

Jesus refuses the woman's request, using a rather colourful image. He may be saying that his ministry is limited to Israel and that it would not be proper to extend it to Gentiles at this point in time. Yet, would a Gentile understand such subtle theology? Jesus is quite possibly making the point that he is here for a time of rest before again resuming his work, ie., children finish their meal before feeding the scraps to the household pets. Of course, Jesus' words may well be framed as an insult, offered with the purpose of drawing out the woman's faith.

Whatever the sense of Jesus' words, the woman takes no offence, as no offence is meant, but points out that her request is but a mere crumb. Jesus is warmed by the woman's confidence, a faith that outshines the unbelief of the Pharisees and the dull confusion of his disciples. Like the healing of the blind man in 8:22-26, she sees "everything clearly." In later tradition, the woman is called Justa, and her daughter, Bernice.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating the next episode in the narrative discourse - untranslated.

αναστας [ανιστημι] aor. part. "**Jesus left**" - [FROM THERE] HAVING ARISEN [HE DEPARTED TO THE DISTRICT OF TYRE]. The participle is possibly attendant circumstance, as NIV, or forms a temporal clause, so "when Jesus had finished teaching his disciples he departed ..."; "then he rose", Weymouth. A teacher gets up, since he teaches sitting down, so "getting up (after the teaching session) he departed to the region of Tyre."

εισελθων [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "**he entered**" - [AND] HAVING ENTERED [INTO A HOUSE]. The participle is adverbial, possibly temporal; "he then entered."

γνωναι [γινωσκω] aor. inf. "**to know it**" - [HE WANTED NO ONE] TO KNOW. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what he did not want people to know; "He didn't want people to know [that] he was there", CEV.

και "yet" - AND. Here adversative; "but his presence could not remain concealed."

λαθειν [λανθανω] aor. inf. "**keep his presence secret**" - [HE WAS NOT ABLE] TO HIDE, ESCAPE NOTICE. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the negated verb "was not able."

v25

αλλ [αλλα] "in fact" - BUT. Adversative; "but immediately a woman ...", ESV.

ευθυς adv. "as soon" - IMMEDIATELY [A WOMAN]. Temporal adverb. Possibly a general sense, "so then", although with the participle, "having heard", some sense of time may be indicated; "almost at once", REB.

ακουσασα [ακουω] aor. part. "she heard" - HAVING HEARD [ABOUT HIM]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "a woman, whose little daughter had an unclear spirit, when she heard about him."

ης gen. pro. "whose [little daughter]" - OF WHOM. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

ειχεν [εχω] imperf. "was possessed" - WAS HAVING [THE DAUGHTER OF HER AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT]. The imperfect tense indicating the ongoing state of the possession.

ελθουσα [ερχομαι] aor. part. "came" - HAVING COME. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "she fell down"; she came and fell down at his feet."

προσεπεσεν [προσπιπτω] aor. "fell" - FELL DOWN BEFORE [TOWARD THE FEET OF HIM]. An action expressing deep respect, "prostrated herself before him", Phillips.

v26

τω γενει [γενος] dat. "born in" - [AND THE WOMAN WAS A GREEK] BY BIRTH, RACE, PEOPLE, KIND [A SYROPHONICIAN (ie. "Gentile / pagan")]. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect, or instrumental, expressing means.

ηρωτα [ερωταω] imperf. "she begged [Jesus]" - [AND] SHE WAS ASKING [HIM]. The durative imperfect indicating ongoing action, possibly iterative, repeated action.

ινα + subj. "to [drive out]" - THAT [HE MIGHT CAST OUT THE DEMON]. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of what she asked. "She begged Jesus to force the demon out of her daughter", CEV.

εκ + gen. "" - FROM [THE DAUGHTER OF HER]. Expressing source, "out of", or separation, "away from."

v27

This verse bears all the marks of a racist slur (even more noticeable in Matthew's account). As already indicated, it maybe that Jesus is saying little more than he is here for a rest and needs to recuperate - a kind of "first, let us have a break, we are worn out." Yet, it seems more likely that the adverb *πρωτον*, "first",

expresses the precedence the children of Israel have over Gentiles. It is also possible to soften the imagery of the dogs eating the children's bread, but it is more than likely that Jesus is indeed using highly insulting language. To Israel's religious elite, Gentiles are dogs - and the Gentiles know very well what *righteous* Jews think of them. Yet, in using this language, it is likely that Jesus is not insulting the woman; he is doing what we in Australia call, *poking the cocky*. Is Jesus really unwilling to heal the woman's child? Does he actually believe that an accident of birth is the means by which the blessings of the kingdom are appropriated? Of course not! Faith is what matters in the new age of the kingdom. Jesus "appears like the wise teacher who allows, and indeed incites, his pupil to mount a victorious argument against the foil of his own reluctance", France.

πρωτον adv. "**first**" - [AND HE WAS SAYING TO HER] FIRST. As an adverb "let the children be fed **first**", but possibly as an adjective, "the first *principle*. As noted above, "the first" may serve to make the point that the children, the children of Israel, have precedence over Gentiles. The problem with this interpretation is that it does require a high degree of theological understanding on the part of the woman. "Let the children first be fed", Taylor.

χορτασθηναι [**χορταζω**] aor. pas. inf. "**eat**" - [ALLOW THE CHILDREN] TO BE SATISFIED. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of cause, expressing what should be allowed, namely, that the children should be satisfied [first]. "The children" serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the children should eat first.

λαβειν [**λαμβανω**] aor. inf. "**to take**" - TO TAKE [THE BREAD OF THE CHILDREN AND THROW *it* TO THE DOGS IS NOT GOOD, RIGHT]. Along with **βαλειν**, "to throw", this infinitive serves as the subject of the verb to-be **εστιν**. The dative "to the dogs" serves as a dative of indirect object, with the direct object "it" is assumed. "Puppy", Taylor, tries to dodge the insult, but see above.

v28

ἡ δε "-" - BUT/AND HER. Transitional construction, indicating a change in subject from Jesus to the woman.

ναι "**Yes**" - [SHE ANSWERED AND SAYS TO HIM] YES, EVEN SO. This variant reading is not adopted by all translations, so TNIV, NRSV...

κυριε [**ος**] voc. "**Lord**" - Vocative. "Sir".

και "**but even / even**" - AND = EVEN [THE DOGS UNDER THE TABLE]. Ascensive, possibly contrastive, even adversative. The woman is simply progressing Jesus' argument, so "even", REB. The intent of Jesus' words, and of the woman's reply, is hard to gauge. As noted above, it is possible that this is a very natural exchange. Jesus has said he is here for a rest and she adds that her

request will not trouble him much. However we read Jesus' words, this woman's faith is mighty indeed. Casting out demons is no ordinary task, but she obviously believes that Jesus is up to it, i.e., for Jesus it is but a crumb. "True sir, and still the dogs under the table eat what the children leave", Goodspeed.

απο + gen. "[eat]" - [EAT] FROM. Functioning as a partitive genitive, or simply expressing source / origin. Not in the sense of eating "from" some of the crumbs, but rather eating "from" this particular food source, namely, crumbs.

των παιδιων [ον] "[the] children's [crumbs]" - [THE CRUMBS] OF THE CHILDREN. The genitive is possibly adjectival, possessive, such that the crumbs belong to the children, or idiomatic / of production, "the crumbs *which are dropped by* the children", or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "the crumbs *from* the children's meal while they eat."

v29

αυτη dat. "[then he told] her" - [AND HE SAID] TO HER. Dative of indirect object.

δια + acc. "for [such a reply]" - BECAUSE OF [THIS WORD]. Causal; "in view of what you have just said."

υπαγε [υπαγω] pres. imp. "**you may go**" - GO. A command; "go", Barclay.

εκ + gen. ""- [THE DEMON HAS GONE OUT] FROM [THE DAUGHTER OF YOU]. Expressing source / origin. This repetition of the prefix of the verb **εξεληλυθεν**, "to come out from", is stylistic.

v30

απελθουσα [απερχομαι] aor. part. "**she went**" - HAVING DEPARTED [TO THE HOUSE OF HER]. The participle is adverbial, probably best treated as temporal; "and when she returned home", REB. A consecutive (consequence) clause is also possible, "as a result"; "so she returned home", Moffatt.

βεβλημενον [βαλλω] perf. pas. part. "**lying**" - [SHE FOUND THE CHILD] HAVING BEEN PLACED, THROWN [UPON THE BED]. The accusative participle, as with **εξεληλυθος**, "having gone out", serves as an object complement, stating a fact about the direct object, the "child"; "as she reached home she found the child laid on the bed and the demon expelled", Berkeley. The sense is a little unclear. Is the girl lying exhausted, as if thrown upon her bed, but now resting at peace? So possibly, "She found her child exhausted on the bed."

εξεληλυθος [εξερχομαι] perf. part. "**gone**" - [AND THE DEMON] HAVING GONE OUT. The participle, as above. The perfect tense indicating a past action with ongoing consequences. The little "crumb" for Jesus involved overcoming dark powers with a word, and this from a distance. "The demon had gone", CEV.

ii] Jesus heals a deaf and mute man in Decapolis, v31-37. Jesus moves across to Decapolis, a predominately Gentile area. It is there that a person, who has lost his hearing and can hardly speak, is brought to Jesus "to lay his hand on him", (presumably for healing, but possibly just blessing). The man's condition images Isaiah 35:5-6. When the messiah comes he will unstop the ears of the deaf and give a clear song to the man with inarticulate speech.

Jesus uses interesting sensory symbols with the man, although they are obviously not necessary elements for effective healing. Both the actions of Jesus and his command, "Ephphatha!", serve to heighten the symbolic nature of the miracle. Like this man, seekers are beginning to hear and confess "plainly" that "he has done everything well", cf., 8:27-30.

Although the healing is in private, there are some who witness it. Jesus commands **αυτοις**, "them", v36, not to speak of the miracle, but the more Jesus tries to put a lid on it, the more people talk about it. Given that Jesus took the deaf and mute man aside privately, it would not be unreasonable to assume that the **αυτοις**, "them", are his disciples, but Mark seems intent on aligning them with the crowd, a crowd, who against Jesus wishes, proclaims the news and confesses that "he does everything well", cf., Isa.35:5-6. It seems likely that Mark would have us understand that this is a Gentile crowd, even though unstated in his received tradition.

εξελθων [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "**then Jesus left**" - [AND AGAIN] HAVING COME OUT. The participle is probably adverbial, introducing a temporal clause, as NIV, "when / then / after Jesus left."

εκ "-" - FROM [THE REGION OF TYRE]. Expressing separation. Stylistic repetition of the prefix of the preceding verb.

δια + gen. "**through [Sidon]**" - [HE CAME] THROUGH [SIDON]. Spatial. Seeing Sidon is North of Tyre, it is unlikely that Jesus went "through" Sidon to get to the Sea of Galilee. Possibly Mark has not expressed himself well and intended to say: Jesus left "the region of Tyre and Sidon", Schmidt.

της Γαλιλαιας [α] gen. "**[the sea] of Galilee**" - [INTO THE LAKE, SEA] OF GALILEE. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "sea"; "the Galilean sea."

ανα μεσον + gen. "**into**" - UP IN THE MIDDLE [OF THE REGION OF DECAPOLIS]. This preposition **ανα** takes an accusative subject followed by a genitive. The genitive "of Decapolis", is adjectival, idiomatic / identification, "which is called / known as Decapolis." "Right through the region of Decapolis", Moule.

v32

φέρουσιν [φέρω] pres. "brought" - [AND] THEY BRING, CARRY. Historic present to indicate narrative transition, so rendered in the past tense, as NIV.

αυτω dat. pro. "to him" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

μογιλαλον adj. "could hardly talk" - [A DEAF AND] MUTE *person*. The adjective serves as a substantive. A very rare word, the meaning of which is unclear; "speaking with difficulty / having an impediment in speech", Cranfield; "stammered", Moffatt.

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT [HE MIGHT PUT UPON HIM THE = HIS HAND]. Here introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they begged. "They begged Jesus just to touch him", CEV.

v33

απολαβομενος [απολαμβανω] aor. part. "after he took [him] aside" - [AND] HAVING LED OFF, TAKEN AWAY, TAKEN ASIDE [HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "he put", or adverbial, temporal, as NIV. Here we have another example of the messianic secret where Jesus either restricts his signs for those with eyes to see, or maintains a low profile so as to reduce popular messianic expectations which could prompt a reaction from the authorities.

απο "away from" - FROM [THE CROWD]. Here expressing separation, "away from."

κατ ιδιαν "-" - ACCORDING TO ONE'S OWN. Idiomatic phrase = "privately".

πτυσας [πτυω] aor. part. "then he spit" - [HE PUT THE FINGERS OF HIM INTO THE EARS AND] HAVING SPIT [HE TOUCHED]. The participle is adverbial, probably introducing a temporal clause; "and then he spat ...". The action here is unclear. What does Jesus do with the spittle and what is the point of such an action? Taylor notes that "such actions are common to the technique of Greek and Jewish healers", but obviously Jesus is in no way dependent on such actions. It is often argued that these actions are performed for the sake of the deaf and mute man, in that they serve to encourage his weak faith, but is Jesus restricted by the weakness, or strength, of a person's faith? France suggests that the actions are symbolic, reinforcing the sign-nature of the miracle, a miracle which serves to illustrate the opening of the spiritual ears of the disciples. This symbolism is similarly reflected in the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, 8:22-26, a miracle which served to illustrate the opening of the spiritual eyes of the disciples. Similar actions are used in both miracles, and both miracles are followed with a command not to speak of what has happened. "And after spitting touched his tongue", ESV.

της γλωσσης [α] gen. "[**touched the man's**] **tongue**" - THE TONGUE [OF HIM]. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to touch".

v34

αναβλεψας [αναβλεπω] aor. part. "**he looked up**" - [AND] HAVING LOOKED UP [INTO HEAVEN]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "he sighed", or adverbial, temporal, "then he looked up to heaven and sighed" Probably as in an act of prayer. "Looking up to heaven", Moffatt.

εστεναξεν [στεναζω] aor. "**and with a deep sigh**" - HE SIGHED, GROANED. Probably an emotional outburst, but what emotion? Possibly the actual prayer recited quietly and quickly, so Lagrange.

αυτω dat. pro. "[**said**] **to him**" - [AND SAYS] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

διανοιχθητι [διανοιγω] aor. pas. imp. "**be opened**" - [EPHPHATHA, WHICH IS = MEANS] BE OPENED. The use of the original Aramaic indicates that the word of command made an impact on the original hearers. The command is directed to the offending parts, ear and tongue. The construction ὃ ἐστιν, "with is" = "that is." "Open up thoroughly", "open completely", Cranfield.

v35

ευθεως adv. "**at this**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. Temporal. The weight seems to be on this being a later addition to the text, although emphasising the immediacy of the healing suits the symbolic nature of this miracle. "At once the man could hear", CEV.

αυτου gen. pro. "[**the man**]'s [**ears were opened**]" - [WAS OPENED] OF HIM [THE EARS]. a rather unusual placement of this pronoun as it usually follows the word it modifies, ie., we would expect **αι ακοαι αυτου**, "the ears of him."

ελαλει [λαλεω] imperf. "**he began to speak**" - [AND WAS LOOSENED THE BOND OF THE TONGUE OF HIM AND] HE WAS SPEAKING. Probably an inceptive imperfect, as NIV.

ορθως adv. "**plainly**" - RIGHTLY, CLEARLY, NORMALLY, CORRECTLY. Adverb of manner. Supporting the argument that he only had a defect in his speech.

v36

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - [AND HE WAS ORDERING] THEM. Dative of direct object after the **δια** prefix verb "to command." As indicated, the subject is unidentified, but it may refer to the disciples rather than the crowd, given that Jesus had withdrawn from the crowd to perform the healing.

ἵνα + subj. "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of what Jesus commanded. Further underlining the symbolic significance of the miracle. It seems unlikely that Jesus' disciples would ignore a command of their Master.

μηδενι dat. adj. "**not [to tell] anyone**" - [THEY SHOULD TELL] NO ONE. Dative of indirect object.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point.

ὅσον pro. "**the more [he did so]**" - AS MUCH AS [HE COMMANDED]. Introducing a correlative construction; "as much as all the more"

αυτοι dat. pro. "-" - THEM. Dative of direct object, as above.

εκηρυσσον [κηρυσσω] imperf. "**they kept talking**" - [THEY ALL THE MORE] WERE PROCLAIMING. Probably an iterative imperfect expressing repeated action. The more Jesus told them to be quiet, "the more they broadcast the news", Phillips.

v37

ὑπερπερισσως adv. "**overwhelmed**" - [AND THEY WERE AMAZED] COMPLETELY, BEYOND ALL MEASURE, EXCEEDINGLY. Adverb of manner. "They were astonished in the extreme", Moffatt. The subject, "they", is still not identified.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "**they said**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, "they were amazed and said", or adverbial, consecutive, expressing result, "they were amazed and as a result said ..."

και "[he] **even**" - [HE HAS DONE ALL THINGS WELL] AND. Here ascensive; "even", although a somewhat causative sense is implied; "he has done all things well because he even makes the deaf to hear"

ακουειν [ακουω] pres. inf. "**hear**" - [HE MAKES THE DEAF] TO HEAR. As for "to speak", the infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of cause, expressing what Jesus makes happen, namely, the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak. The accusative subject of the infinitive is "the deaf."

αλαλους adj. "**mute**" - [AND THE] SPEECHLESS, MUTE [TO SPEAK]. Serving as a popular confession. Although a variant article exists with this word - likely an addition. The sense may be "the deaf and the dumb to hear and speak", Turner.

8:1-21

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

The feeding of the 4,000

Synopsis

Jesus and his disciples are still presumably on the eastern side of lake Galilee, in Gentile territory. A large crowd of 4,000 people have gathered, and very much in line with the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus feeds the crowd from seven loaves and a few small fish supplied by the disciples. After the miraculous meal, Jesus and his disciples travel by boat to the western shore of the lake - Jewish territory. There Jesus confronts some Pharisees who demand a "sign from heaven." Leaving his opponents, Jesus then travels by boat to Bethsaida on the northern end of the eastern shore. Here the disciples argue over the lack of supplies. Jesus reminds them of the feeding of both the 5,000 and the 4,000 and the abundance of food that remained. "Do you still not understand", Jesus asks them.

Teaching

Christ is "the fulfiller of the old dispensation, the one who brings the full and final satisfaction of the needs of all", Nineham.

Issues

i] Context: See 6:30-44. In the episode dealing with the yeast of the Pharisees, 8:14-21, we come to a significant point in the contextual structure of the gospel. "In this scene the reader is challenged to realise that human perception and achievement have failed across the board; the only deliverance from theological blindness and deafness is if Jesus himself can open blind eyes and unstop deaf ears", Boring. The perilous state of the disciples' faith will now shift to their growing insight. Mark artfully images this in the staged healing of the blind man, 8:22-30, culminating in the complete healing of blind Bartimaeus whose "faith" **σέσωκεν**, "saved / restored", him, 10:46-52.

ii] Structure: *Powerful signs, but little faith:*

The feeding of the 4,000, v1-9;

The Pharisees demand a sign from heaven, v10-13;

Jesus' discussion with the disciples over leaven and bread, v14-21.

iii] Interpretation.

Mark's purpose in repeating the story seems to lie in the movement of the gospel from Jew to Gentile. Growing division between Jesus and the

religious authorities, in union with a faithless populous, reaches a climax in the feeding of the 5,000 - a significant sign which displays the coming kingdom in overt Exodus symbols. Israel's failure to respond in faith prompts a move by Jesus toward the "stranger", illustrated by Mark in an exorcism, healing and nature miracle, all performed in Gentile territory - a sign that was for Israel becomes a sign for Gentiles. This is not overtly stated because Mark respects his sources, but his arrangement of the tradition, and his geographical identifiers (not present in Matthew's account), serve to make the point.

Boring also suggests that Mark wants to emphasise "the disciples' lack of insight and uses the sequence of feeding stories to drive home this point." This theme is certainly evident and fits with the next section in Mark's gospel, a section which exposes the disciples' growth in faith, 8:22-10:52. None-the-less, Boring also argues that the feeding of the 4,000 serves "the developing theme of the transition of the gospel from its Jewish origins to the Gentile context of his (Mark's) own time and place"; so also France - to "extend the mission of the Messiah of Israel for the benefit also of neighbouring people."

Exodus typology is dominant in both feeding stories; see 6:30-44. The Moses story is also evident in the Pharisees demanding a sign, *more please!* cf., Ex.17:1-7, Num.11, 14:21-23. Note the thematic links with Ps.78:17-20, 95:7-11. Note also how this unit in Mark is similar to John 6, i.e., the demand for a sign, etc.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.15:32-39. Some commentators suggest that Mark has, for his own purpose, reworked the feeding of the 5,000. Given Mark's care with the received tradition it is very unlikely he would create his own miracle story. It is far more likely that he knows of two similar feeding stories. These stories may represent two separate feeding miracles which, over time, merged somewhat in their telling, or one feeding with two separate stories emerging in the oral tradition.

v] Homiletics: *The blind shall see*

Like most people I have always opened a tin of paint by putting a screw driver under the lid and twisting. After three or four times of opening the lid this way, the rim is damaged and it gets harder and harder to open. Some time ago a professional painter witnessed my destructive efforts and pointed out that the screw driver is best put in sideways to the lid and used as a lever by pushing down. How simple is that? Here I am, seventy years old, having opened hundreds of tins of paint at home and at work, watched

dozens of people open tins, and never worked out the right way to open a tin of paint; never twigged to the obvious.

In our reading today we see Jesus in full revelation mode, doing the Moses thing in the wilderness, and yet, the disciples didn't get it, didn't see Jesus as God's anointed messiah founding a new eternal people of God. The chances are that, just like my flawed methodology for opening paint cans, the disciples would never have twigged to who Jesus is unless Jesus opened their eyes.

It's really interesting how Mark arranges this gospel story. We have the feeding of the four thousand, followed by the disciples making fools of themselves, and then we have the story of Jesus' staged healing of a blind man. At the first healing attempt the blind man can just see - people are "like trees walking." So, Jesus has another go, and the man sees "everything clearly." The disciples may be short on perception, but they will see, albeit slowly. The key, of course, is faith, a seeking relying faith.

And what of us; are our eyes opened? "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you", Matt.7:7.

Text - 8:1

Feeding, testing and a lack of faith, v1-21: i] The feeding of the 4,000, v1-9. The story of the feeding of the four thousand is very similar to the feeding of the five thousand; only some of the details are different - the size of the crowd, the number of flat-bread loaves and pickled fish, the number of baskets of food remaining. Interestingly, the baskets are different. In this account the baskets are a large flat-pack type, but probably nothing is implied by this difference. It's not overly clear, but it seems likely that, unlike the feeding of the five thousand, this feeding takes place in Gentile territory; it is a mixed crowd of some four thousand people. The count of the five thousand is of men only, but for the four thousand, **ανδρες**, "men", is missing. Like the feeding of the five thousand, the miracle alludes to the wilderness journey of the people of Israel. As God fed them in the wilderness, so God now feeds a new Israel in the wilderness, even including Gentiles, and this at the hand of Jesus the messiah. The long-awaited reign of God's messiah has begun.

εν + dat. "**during [those days]**" - IN [THOSE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition.

ὄντος gen. pres. part. "-" - [AGAIN A LARGE CROWD] BEING. The genitive participle with its genitive subject "large crowd" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal; "when again a great crowd had gathered", ESV.

εχοντων [**εχω**] gen. pres. part. "**since they had [nothing]**" - [AND NOT] HAVING. If it wasn't for the presence of the coordinate **και**, this genitive participle

would by adjectival, attributive, limiting the genitive "crowd", but with **και** it obviously stands by itself. Decker / Taylor suggest it carries an assumed genitive subject **αυτων** and again forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, "and when they had nothing to eat", Moffatt.

τί φαγωσιν [εσθιω] subj. "**nothing to eat**" - WHAT = ANYTHING THEY MIGHT EAT. The interrogative pronoun **τί** stands in for the relative pronoun **ὅ**, which, with the subjunctive, introduces a purpose clause.

προσκαλεσαμενοι [προσκαλεω] aor. part. "**Jesus called**" - HAVING CALLED [THE DISCIPLES]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verbal aspect of the leading participles, "being" and "not having."

αυτοις dat. "-" - [HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

v2

επι + acc. "**for**" - [I HAVE COMPASSION] UPON [THE CROWD]. Adverbial use of the preposition, possibly reference / respect; "with regard to these people", "concerning / for"

ὅτι "-" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Jesus has "compassion" on "the crowd."

μοι dat. "**me**" - [ALREADY THEY HAVE REMAINED WITH] ME [THREE DAYS]. Dative of direct object after the **προσ** prefix verb "to abide with" sitting within a nominative parenthesis. This construction may be bracketed or marked with dashes before and after.

τί φαγωσιν [εσθιω] aor. subj. "**nothing to eat**" - [AND THEY DO NOT HAVE] WHAT TO EAT. The construction as in v1.

v3

εαν + subj. "**if**" - [AND] IF. Introducing a conditional clause 3rd. class where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true; "if, *as may be the case*, ..., *then*"

εν + dat. "**on [the way]**" - [I SEND THEM] ON [THE WAY]. Temporal use of the preposition; "while they are on their way home."

νηστεις "**hungry**" - HUNGRY [INTO HOUSE OF THEM, THEY WILL WEAKEN]. Accusative complement of the direct object "them", standing in a double accusative construction.

και "**because**" - AND. Sometimes with a causal sense, as here.

αυτων gen. "**of them**" - [SOME] OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

απο "**a long distance**" - [HAVE COME] FROM [FAR OFF]. Expressing source / origin.

v4

Note the similarity between the Israelites question in Exodus 16:3 and that of the disciples here. The disciples play the role of the murmuring Israelites; in the next passage the Pharisees will play this role. The disciples' lack of faith is significant given the feeding of the 5,000. This theme is developed in the next section of the gospel.

αυτω dat. "- " - [AND THE DISCIPLES OF HIM ANSWERED] HIM. Dative of direct object after the **προς** prefix verb "to answer, reply to. Often "answered *and said* to him", in which cast it would be a dative of indirect object. In Luke often with **προς**, "answered to him."

οτι "- " - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech.

ποθεν "**where**" - FROM WHERE. Sometimes with the sense "how can we feed these people", as NRSV.

επ [επι] + gen. "**in [this remote place]**" - IN [A DESERT, WILDERNESS]. Spatial, as NIV; "in this remote / isolated spot."

χορτασαι aor. "**to feed**" - [WILL ONE BE ABLE] TO FEED, FILL [THESE PEOPLE]. The infinitive here is adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "in order to feed."

αρτων gen. "**enough bread**" - OF = WITH BREAD [HERE]. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to fill, feed"; "with bread", ESV.

v5

ειπαν [λεγω] aor. "**they replied**" - [AND HE WAS ASKING THEM, HOW MANY LOAVES DO YOU HAVE? AND] THEY SAID [SEVEN]. France suggests that the disciples' reply evidences humorous resignation; "here we go again!"

v6

τω οχλω dat. "**the crowd**" - [AND HE GIVES ORDERS] TO THE CROWD. Dative of indirect object.

αναπεσειν [αναπιπτω] aor. inf. "**to sit down**" - TO RECLINE, SIT DOWN. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus told the crowd to do, namely, "sit down on the ground."

επι + gen. "**on**" - UPON [THE GROUND]. Spatial.

λαβων [λαμβανω] aor. part. "**when he had taken**" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN [THE SEVEN LOAVES]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

ευχαριστησας [ευχαριστηω] aor. part. "**given thanks**" - HAVING GIVEN THANKS" - The participle is adverbial, temporal, coordinate with "having taken." "Given thanks *to God*." It is possible that this particular verb is used to imply a eucharistic significance. Note the change in verb when giving thanks for the fish.

τοῖς μαθηταῖς [ἡς οὐ] dat. "to [his] disciples" - [HE BROKE AND WAS GIVING] TO THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object. In John's gospel the disciples play no part in the distribution. Mark may want to emphasise "apostolic mediation", Marcus, but it may just be the record of a practical fact. Jesus would be a little pressed trying to distribute bread to 4,000 people.

ἵνα + subj. "to [distribute]" - THAT [THEY MIGHT SERVE]. Here serving to introduce a purpose clause; "in order that"

τῷ ὄχλῳ dat. "-" - [AND THEY SET BEFORE] THE CROWD. The *παρα* prefix verb "to set before" will often take a dative of direct object, but here, the sense "they served *the bread* to the people" indicates a dative of indirect object.

v7

καὶ "-" - AND [THEY WERE HAVING]. Possibly with a slight causal sense; "and as they also had a few small fish", Moffatt.

ἰχθυδία [ον] "fish" - [LITTLE = A FEW] FISH. Accusative direct object of the verb "to have." The diminutive form of ἰχθύς. Most likely salted / preserved fish.

εὐλογησας [εὐλογεω] aor. part. "he gave thanks for" - [AND] HAVING BLESSED, GIVEN THANKS FOR The participle is possibly adverbial, temporal, "and when they had blessed them", but it could also be taken as adjectival, attributive, limiting "fish"; "a few small fishes which he blessed", Berkeley.

αὐτὰ acc. pro. "them" - THEM. An accusative direct object, as NIV; "thanking God for them", TH.

καὶ "also" - [HE SAID] AND = ALSO. Here adjunctive, as NIV.

παρατιθεναὶ [παρατιθημι] "to distribute [them]" - [THESE *are*] TO BE SET BEFORE, SERVED TO *them*. The infinitive introduces a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus told the disciples to do.

v8

ἦραν [αἰρω] aor. "the disciples picked up" - [AND THEY ATE AND THEY WERE SATISFIED, AND] THEY TOOK UP. The indefinite plural probably implies the disciples, but it could be the crowd who did the picking up and who then took the surplus home with them.

ἑπτὰ σπιυριδας "seven basketfuls" - [AN ABUNDANCE OF FRAGMENTS] SEVEN BASKETS. Standing in apposition to "fragments", limiting by defining; "namely, seven baskets full of fragments." Some commentators suggest the number seven is a reference to the Gentiles, eg., seven Gentile nations etc. The trouble is, seven is often used of fullness, completeness. The basket referred to is a large soft mat basket, of *flat-pack* type. A different word for "basket" is used in the feeding of the 5,000, although it is unlikely that any significance is implied.

It is possible that the basket used for the 4,000 is larger, a basket able to fit a small person.

κλασμάτων [α ατος] gen. "of broken pieces" - OF FRAGMENTS. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic specifying "that which was left over", namely, "fragments"; "left overs", Berkeley. This is usually understood to be uneaten food rather than scraps / rubbish to be fed to pigs. In line with Exodus typology, there was an abundance of the divinely provided food.

περισσεύματα [α ατος] "that were left over" - AN ABUNDANCE. Accusative direct object of the verb "to take up." In the sense of a surplus, "that which was left over", pl. "remains", Zerwick.

v9

ὥς "about" - [AND THERE WERE] AS [FOUR THOUSAND *people*]. When this particle is used before numbers, the sense is "about". Unlike the 5,000 who were men, the count here is 4,000, undefined. Again, a possible cue that Gentiles are intended since Jews would be numbered by the men in attendance. The number has precedence in tradition and in the OT, but none convincingly refer to a particular number of Gentiles. The best suggestion is that the crowd represents people from the four corners of the earth, but this is somewhat of a stab in the dark; "the people present numbered about four thousand", Cassirer.

ἀπελυσεν [απολυω] "after he had sent [them] away" - [AND] HE RELEASED, SENT AWAY [THEM]. "Then he sent them home", Peterson.

v10

ii] Jesus' confrontation with the Pharisees, v10-13. Leaving the site of the miraculous feeding, Jesus and his disciples travel overland to lake Galilee, cross the lake by boat, reaching the western shore of the lake at the village of Dalmanutha. The actual site of this village is not known today. At the village, Jesus is confronted by a party of Pharisees who demand that he perform a messianic sign. They have concluded that Jesus is not the messiah and are seeking to confirm their opinion. Jesus willingly complies and doesn't do a *trick* for them. A faithless people see nothing of God's grace.

Neither the details of Jesus' movements, nor the geography, is of much concern to Mark. In fact, to accurately explain Jesus' movements, it would be necessary to start out "After a long inland journey of many days" Mark is more interested in spelling out the unbelieving demand of the Pharisees for a sign, cf., Ex.17. For the Galilean mission, this serves as the final rejection of Jesus the messiah by religious Israel. This incident "shows the incomprehension and growing hostility to Jesus on the part of his now traditional opponents, the Pharisees, and signals an end to significant dialogue with them on his part", France.

εμβας [εμβαινω] aor. part. "**he got in**" - [AND IMMEDIATELY] HAVING ENTERED, EMBARKED [INTO THE BOAT]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "went"; "he got into the boat and went" Taking the sense "embarked."

μετα + acc. "**with**" - WITH [THE DISCIPLES OF HIM]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

τα μερη [ος] "**the district of [Dalmanutha]**" - [HE CAME INTO] THE PARTS, REGION [OF DALMANUTHA]. The sense being "the region", of a district in and around a town, BAGD. The genitive proper, "of Dalmanutha", is adjectival, idiomatic / of identification; "the region *known as* Damanutha." The actual town / village of Dalmanuth is unknown, but was presumably on the West side of the lake.

v11

συζητειν [συζητω] pres. inf. "**to question**" - [AND CAME OUT THE PHARISEES AND THEY BEGAN] TO ARGUE WITH, QUESTION. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin."

αυτω "**Jesus**" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb, "to argue with."

περαζοντες [πειραζω] pres. part. "**to test [him]**" - TESTING, TEMPTING, TRYING [HIM]. The participle is adverbial, probably final, expressing purpose, "in order to test him", but possibly modal, expressing the manner of the Pharisees' questioning both in seeking a sign and in trying Jesus. This was no mere asking for a sign to confirm their faith, but to confirm their disbelief, which Jesus confirmed by not providing a sign. The sense can either be "test" or "tempt"; "test" seems likely here, but a testing with bad intent. "They were trying to subject him to a test by demanding that he should produce some visible divine action from heaven", Barclay.

ζητουντες [ζητω] pres. part. "**they asked**" - SEEKING. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the Pharisees questioning, but possibly instrumental, expressing means; "by seeking."

παρ [παρα] + gen. "-" - FROM [HIM]. Expressing agency, or spatial, expressing source / origin.

σημειον [ον] "**a sign**" - A SIGN. The word is used of a messianic portent which visibly expresses the gospel / the message of the coming kingdom, so for example, acts foretold by the prophets - the blind seeing, the lame walking, etc. This is probably how the Pharisees are using it, but for divine authentication purposes, ie., "from heaven." Given that Jesus has just bettered Moses, what greater sign could there be? A new Exodus is underway; God's people are being fed anew in the wilderness. Better get onboard!

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM [HEAVEN]. Spatial, expressing source / origin. Probably with the sense "from God", i.e., a sign with divine authentication.

12

αναστεναξας [αναστεναζω] aor. part. "**he sighed**" - [AND] HAVING GROANED, SIGHED. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; "he sighed ... and said", or adverbial, temporal, "and when he sighed deeply" Possibly suggesting "a struggle with a demonic obstacle", Marcus.

τω πνευματι [α ατος] dat. "**deeply**" - IN THE SPIRIT [OF HIM]. The dative is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his sighing, namely "inwardly", although Decker suggests that the dative is locative. "Unbelief leaves God with nothing to do but sigh in deep grief", Boring.

τι "**why**" - [HE SAYS] WHY. Interrogative pronoun, adverbial in form; possibly "how", but more likely "why".

η γενεα [α] "**generation**" - [SEEKS THIS] GENERATION [A SIGN]? Nominative subject of the verb "to seek." Possibly just in the sense "of the contemporaries of Jesus", TH, but more likely the reference is to "this *evil* generation." Like Noah before him, Jesus is not a member of this present *evil* generation. "Why does a faithless people ask for a sign?"

αμην λεγω υμιν "**truly I tell you**" - TRULY I SAY TO YOU. A phrase used to underline the following statement. The dative pronoun **υμιν** serves as a dative of indirect object.

ει + fut. "-" - IF = IN NO WAY [WILL BE GIVEN A SIGN]. Introducing a rare Semitic construction expressing a wish or oath; "if a sign be given this generation *may I be cursed*." Inevitably this idiomatic construction came to express strong denial; "no sign shall be given." Boring generalises this statement, implying that the Jesus of oral tradition was not into signs, the only sign being the preached word and the cross and empty tomb. It is certainly true that "the power of God in the Christ-event" is realised in the preached word / the gospel of the coming kingdom, but it is also realised in signs, significant happenings which similarly proclaim the coming kingdom, although only for those with eyes to see. Such signs are for those who look forward to the coming reign of God, not for those who reject its realisation in Christ.

τη γενεα ταυτη dat. "**to it**" - TO THIS GENERATION. Dative of indirect object.

v13

Leaving Dalmanutha, Jesus and his disciples embark and head north toward Bethsaida.

αφεις [αφρημι] aor. part. "**then he left [them]**" - [AND] HAVING LEFT [THEM AGAIN]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to depart", and coordinate with "entering", or it may be taken as adverbial, temporal.

εμβας [εμβαινω] aor. part. "**got back into the boat**" - HAVING ENTERED, EMBARKED [HE DEPARTED INTO THE OTHER SIDE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to depart." Here with the sense "embark". Is Mark suggesting that Jesus is moving back to Gentile territory? He is certainly indicating an abandoning of faithless Israel, although by ending up in Bethsaida Jesus is not really in Gentile territory, ie., north-east, rather than east. The focus is not back into a Gentile mission, but on to the intensive instruction of Jesus' disciples.

v14

iii] The yeast of the Pharisees, v14-21. The disciples have failed to organise provisions for the journey and are arguing over their lack of foresight. In this context Jesus warns them to beware of the evil influence of the Pharisees and of Herod, most likely with respect to the Pharisees' lack of faith. Jesus then reminds his disciples of the miraculous feedings they have recently witnessed.

There is some incongruity in this passage such that Turner, for instance, suggests that v15 is parenthetical, virtually a sub note. Yet, this seems unlikely. "Yeast" often serves as a metaphor for influence, usually an evil influence. We know that the Pharisees and Herodians plotted Jesus' destruction (3:6) and so the saying may have originally referred to their murderous intent, but surely not here. Given the context, faith is the issue, the lack of which the Pharisees have just demonstrated. The disciples' argument over their lack of supplies exposes their own lack of faith. The Pharisees' leaven, their faithlessness, is easily emulated, and the disciples seem to have caught the disease. Unlike the Pharisees, the disciples have witnessed a messianic sign of significant proportions. As Israel was miraculously fed in the wilderness so were 5,000 and again 4,000, all miraculously fed, and yet the disciples, having witnessed these signs, are found without faith. Jesus promptly denounces them - "Do you have eyes and fail to see?" The age of the coming kingdom has dawned in and through the person of Jesus Christ. The day of salvation / Exodus is now and God is provisioning the escape, and yet the disciples seem blind to this reality; will not God provide?

λαβειν [λαμβανω] aor. inf. "**to bring [bread]**" - [AND THEY FORGOT] TO TAKE [LOAVES, BREAD]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they forgot.

ει μη "except" - [AND] IF NOT = EXCEPT [ONE LOAF]. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception; "they did not

have *food* with themselves in the boat except one loaf" = "they had only one loaf with them in the boat", CEV.

μεθ [μετα] + gen. "**with [them]**" - [THEY DID NOT HAVE *anything*] WITH THEM. Expressing association / accompaniment.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE BOAT]. Local, expressing space.

v15

As already noted, this verse and its relationship with its immediate context, is not at all clear. For some commentators we are dealing with a fairly inappropriate insertion of an independent saying of Jesus which is used elsewhere in the synoptic tradition: Matt.16:5ff, referring to the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees; and Lk.12:1, referring to the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. The incongruous mention of Herod (the variant "Herodians" indicating the incongruity of the reference) simply indicates Mark's respect for his received tradition. As noted above, the saying in its original setting is likely to refer to the murderous intent of the Pharisees and Herod. Yet, it is unlikely that Mark has placed the saying here because he couldn't think of anywhere else to put it. Although the saying is directed toward the disciples, it primarily serves as a warning to the reader not to be infected by the faithfulness exhibited both by the Pharisees and Jesus' disciples. The following exchange between Jesus and his disciples is unrelated to the saying, but it does reveal the point made by the saying, namely that the disciples are infected with faithlessness. None-the-less, things are on the change; the disciples will soon come to see clearly.

δισταλλετο [δισταλλω] imperf. "**Jesus warned**" - [AND] HE WAS ORDERING, COMMANDING. More correctly "and he cautioned them", NRSV, ESV, France suggests that the imperfect here, being durative, "is not an isolated and unprovoked exclamation", although the imperfect is often used with speech as a matter of form.

αυτοις dat. "**them**" - THEM. The **δια** prefix verb "to give orders to" takes a dative of persons, dative of direct object.

λεγων pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to give orders", and serving to introduce direct discourse; "he ordered them and said" = "Jesus proceeded to give them a strict warning", Barclay.

βλεπετε [βλεπω] pres. imp. "**watch out**" - WATCH, LOOK, BEWARE. The imperative takes the sense, "watch out, look out, pay attention." Mark stylistically follows this command with **απο** + gen., as here, to express "watch out for", as in 12:38. This form is not used by the other gospel writers. Decker notes that he has found only one such usage in the extant papyri.

ζης ζυμης [η] gen. "**the yeast**" - THE YEAST, LEAVEN. Used metaphorically, "a principle of moral corruption that contaminates all it touches", Lagrange.

των Φαρισαίων [ος] gen. "**of the Pharisees**" - OF THE PHARISEES [AND THE YEAST OF HEROD]. The genitive is probably descriptive, idiomatic / source, "the corruption *that flows from* the Pharisees."

v16

A variant reading which includes **λεγοντας**, and which also replaces **εχουσιν** with **εχομεν**, seeks to link v16 with v15; "'Leaven?' they argued to themselves, 'we have no bread at all'", Moffatt; so the NIV's "they discussed *this* we have no bread." A straight reading of the text makes no link; "They (The disciples) were arguing with one another **οτι** ("that" = "about the fact that") they had no bread." So, the discussion / argument is not prompted by the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus' saying, but rather their failure to secure provisions for the journey. Given the two feedings they have recently witnessed, such a discussion evidences their little faith in Jesus the messiah.

διελογιζοντο [διαλογιζομαι] imperf. "**they discussed this**" - [AND] THEY WERE ARGUING. The imperfect may be indicating an ongoing argument, the kind that seeks to identify culpability!!! Of course, the imperfect is often used for backgrounding in a discourse narrative, and in any case, speech by its very nature is durative.

προς + acc. "**with**" - TOWARD = AMONG [THEMSELVES]. Here expressing association.

οτι "it is because" - THAT. The NIV opts for cause /reason, but it is likely to be exegetical specifying what the argument was about, or if **εχομεν** "we have", serving to introduce a dependent statement, indirect speech, expressing the content of the argument, "we have no bread."

ουκ εχουσιν [εχω] pres. "**we have [no bread]**" - THEY DO NOT HAVE [LOAVES]. Third person plural = "they have."

v17

γνους [γινωσκω] aor. part. "**aware of their discussion**" - [AND] HAVING KNOWN. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say", or adverbial, causal; "he noted this and said to them", Moffatt. It could also be taken as adverbial, temporal; "when he knew it", Marcus.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**[asked] them**" - [HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "about" - [WHY ARE YOU DISCUSSING] THAT [YOU DO NOT HAVE LOAVES]? Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech

expressing what the disciples were discussing, namely, the subject of not having bread.

ΟΕΙΛΤΕ [ΝΟΕΩ] pres. "**not see**" - [DO YOU NOT YET] PERCEIVE [NOR COMPREHEND, UNDERSTAND]? In the sense of "see with the mind." Note Isaiah 40:21, "do you not know, have you not heard?" "Remembering, together with perceiving, understanding, seeing and hearing, is an essential part of the process of enlightenment in which they (the disciples) have been so conspicuously unsuccessful", France.

ΠΕΠΩΡΩΜΕΝΗΝ [ΠΩΡΟΕΩ] perf. pas. part. "**are your hearts hardened**" - [HAS THE HEART OF YOU] HAVING BEEN HARDENED? The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "heart"; a calloused heart. The heart here refers to cognitive sensitivity, rather than emotional sensitivity, so not in the sense of uncaring, but dull; "Are your minds still closed?", CEV / "completely impervious to the truth", Barclay.

v18

A general allusion to Isaiah 6:9-10, more specifically Jer.5:21, Ezk.12:2. Jesus' words "express consternation at the unbelief and lack of perceptive response of those he has tried to teach", Boring. The Gk. may be taken as a statement, but it is usually treated as a question; "*Or is it that* having eyes you do not see, and having ears you do not hear?" Cassirer. The next clause "And don't you remember?" may be treated separately, as NIV, but it seems likely that it introduces the question in v19 "Don't you remember the time when I broke?", Barclay.

ΕΧΟΝΤΕΣ [ΕΧΩ] pres. part. "**do you have**" - HAVING [EYES]. The participle is adverbial, best taken as concessive; "although you have eyes you do not see", but possibly causal, "because"

ΟΥ "-" - [DO YOU] NOT [SEE, AND HAVING EARS, DO YOU NOT HEAR]? This negation is used in a question implying an answer in the affirmative.

v19-20

ὅΤΕ "when" - [AND DO YOU NOT REMEMBER] WHEN. Temporal conjunction serving to introduce a temporal clause.

ΕΙΣ + acc. "**for [the five thousand]**" - [I BROKE THE FIVE LOAVES] TO, INTO = FOR [THE FIVE THOUSAND]. Here the preposition expresses advantage.

κλασμάτων [α ατος']; gen. "**[basketfuls] of pieces**" - [HOW MANY BASKETS FULL OF] FRAGMENTS [DID YOU PICK UP]? Genitive complement of the adjective **πληρεις**, "full", "baskets full of broken pieces", or possibly better classified as a genitive of content, so Decker.

αὐτῷ dat. "-" - [THEY SAY] TO HIM [TWELVE. WHEN THE SEVEN FOR THE FOUR THOUSAND, HOW MANY BASKETS FULL OF PIECES DID YOU PICK UP? AND THEY SAY TO HIM, SEVEN]. Dative of indirect object.

v21

αὐτοῖς "to them" - [AND HE WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of direct object.

οὐτω adv. "still not" - [DO YOU] NOT YET [UNDERSTAND, COMPREHEND]? Temporal adverb. The negation **οὐ** would normally imply an answer in the affirmative, but this is a real question. The adverb points to a future when the disciples will understand. For this reason, "do you still not understand", TNIV, REB, ... misses the point somewhat. The disciples will understand, but don't understand at the moment. None-the-less, the reader, as with the disciples, "potentially stand in the same place as the 'outsiders'". Just as the disciple in the narrative cannot feel superior to the 'outsiders', readers cannot feel superior to the *dumb* disciples. Neither the disciples in the narrative, nor the readers who hear it, may claim any insight or faith based on their own achievement or virtue", Boring.

8:22-30

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

1. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

i] Christ opens the eyes of the blind and even the disciples begin to see

Synopsis

On arriving at Bethsaida, a blind man is led to Jesus for healing. The healing is gradual, with Jesus laying his hands on him twice before he is able to see clearly. Then, in the village of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asks his disciples "who do people say I am?" After a little fudging, Peter exclaims "you are the Christ / the messiah".

Teaching

Like the healing of the blind man, the disciples are slowly beginning to see the real Jesus - Jesus is the messiah.

Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-6. In the section *Growing Faith*, 8:22-10:52, Mark emphasises the journey motif, of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and the cross. This journey, for the disciples, is a journey of growing faith.

An extended *Markan sandwich* is evidenced in 8:22 through to 10:52. The two-part healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, and the healing of blind Bartimaeus, serve as the book-ends to three teaching units: 8:31-9:29; 9:30-10:31; 10:32-52. All three units are headed with the revelation that the Son of Man must suffer, die and rise, which revelation the disciples fail to properly understand. Each of these revelations of the Son of Man is followed up by teaching on the issue of discipleship. Although cross-bearing is often understood in the terms of self-denial, for Jesus it involves reliance on the cross-bearing of Christ for salvation. Like the blind man at Bethsaida, the disciples only partially understand Jesus. For them he is the Christ, the messiah, although only in a superficial sense. Finally, the disciples, like Bartimaeus, do see; they understand that Jesus is the saviour of mankind through his death and resurrection, and that faith in the faithfulness of Christ, his act of obedience on our behalf, is the means by which all believers share in that blessing.

ii] Structure: *The blind begin to see*:

Episode 1:

The healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, v22-26;

Episode 2:

The confession of Peter, v27-30;

Jesus foretells his death and resurrection, v31-33;
Jesus' call to cross-bearing, v34-9:1.

iii] Interpretation:

The episode before us presents in two linked parts. The first is a simple narrative in the form of a healing story. The story focuses on Jesus' unique request, with regard to the effectiveness of the healing, "can you see anything?", and on its step-by-step nature, again quite unique in the gospels. The second episode entails Peter's confession of the Christ, v27-30, which goes on to a command for silence, v31-33, and instructions on discipleship, v34-9:1.

In the healing of the blind man, we are reminded that "blindness is not hopeless", Boring, and given the context, the disciples' spiritual blindness is well in mind. The visible symbol of spit on the eyes, along with the touch of the hand, has prompted numerous allegorical interpretations, but we are probably best served if we don't make much of these acts; See v23.

With Peter's confession of the Christ, we witness the disciples, like the blind man, slowly coming to faith. For the disciples at least, the messianic secret is out.

iv] Synoptics:

The blind man at Bethsaida. This miracle story is peculiar to Mark and is very similar to in style to another miracle particular to Mark, namely, the healing of the deaf mute, 7:32-37. The two stories may be a doublet, but it is more likely that their similar nature has caused some alignment during oral transmission.

The confession of Peter, Matt.16:13-20, Lk,9:18-21. Matthew's account is more developed than Mark, although there is alignment in vocabulary. Luke's account is closer to Mark than Matthew's account.

Text - 8:22

Christ opens the eyes of the blind: i] The healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, v22-26. Crossing over the sea of Galilee, 8:13, Jesus and the twelve enter the district of Gaulanitis and the village / town of Bethsaida Julias, beside the north-eastern shore of the sea. There, some people bring a blind man to Jesus. Jesus attempts to limit public involvement in the healing by leading the man outside the town. Jesus continues to maintain a low profile when it comes to miracles - the truth is present for eyes that see, but for the rest, the mystery must remain. Jesus uses spittle as an acted-out symbol of the healing process, and so reinforces the symbolic nature of what he is about to do. The healing is unique in that it is achieved gradually and with difficulty. It was only partially successful

and so Jesus has a second go at getting it right. Mark does not use the incident to expose limitations in Jesus' healing power, but rather to use the slow recovery of the blind man's sight as an illustration of the disciples' slow growth toward a full understanding of Jesus' person.

ερχονται [ερχομαι] pres. "**they came**" - [AND] THEY CAME. Indefinite plural. Who came? It's interesting that in this pericope and its parallel, the disciples are not mentioned.

Βηθσαιδαν [α] "**Bethsaida**" - TO, INTO [BETHSAIDA]. A large town in the tetrarchy of Herod Philip about a mile from the north-east corner of lake Galilee, although note that Mark uses the word **κωμη**, "village", in v23, which may indicate that he is referring to a related lakeside village, rather than the main town.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [AND THEY BRING] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object. Note again, the "they" is indefinite.

παρακαλουντιν [παρακαλεω] pres. "**begged**" - [A BLIND *man* AND] THEY BEG, URGE, EXHORT, BESEECH, PLEAD [TO HIM]. Historic present indicating narrative transition.

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT. introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech / entreating, expressing what they asked, namely, "that he might touch him".

αψηται [απτω] aor. subj. + gen. "**to touch**" - HE MAY TOUCH, HOLD [HIM]. "Him", functioning as the genitive direct object of the verb "to touch, take hold of."

v23

"Just as, in the prophet's interpretation of the first exodus, God took Israel by the hand and led them out of Egypt, so in the eschatological exodus to come, God will grasp Israel's hand, lead them out of captivity and open their blind eyes", Boring.

επιλαβομενος [επιλαμβανω] aor. part. + gen. "**he took**" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN HOLD OF, GRASPED [THE HAND OF THE BLIND *man*]. The participle is adverbial, probably consecutive, "with the result that / so that." "The hand" is a genitive of direct object after the **επι** prefix participle "having taken hold of." The action of "taking hold of" indicates that Jesus must lay his hand "on" the blind man to lead him; "So he took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village", Moffatt.

πτυσας [πτυω] aor. part. "**when he had spit**" - [HE TOOK HIM OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE AND] HAVING SPIT [INTO THE EYES OF HIM AND HAVING LAID, PLACED, PUT THE HANDS]. This participle, as with "having laid", is adverbial, probably temporal, as NIV; "then he spat into his eyes and laid his hands on him." Healing through gestures was common among healers of the day, but why does Jesus use

similar gestures? Certainly, the laying on of hands has Biblical precedence and obviously the use of spittle had a common therapeutic use (although not on the Sabbath!, cf., Marcus). It is clear that Jesus didn't need to use such actions, for on many occasions he heals with nothing more than a word. We can only but assume that, from Jesus' perspective, he considered that the actions would be helpful for the blind man and possibly the onlookers. Jesus displays the outward vesture of a healer (for us, a white coat and a stethoscope), although unlike the healers of his day, he actually does heal.

αυτω dat. pro. "**on him**" - ON HIM. The dative is locative, of place, "on / upon him."

επηρωτα [**επερωτα**] imperf. "**Jesus asked**" - HE WAS ASKING, QUESTIONING [HIM]. Cranfield notes that only here in the NT does Jesus ask a question of someone he is healing. It's as if Jesus is asking whether the healing has worked, which of course, it has not. It is argued that Jesus knew that the healing hadn't worked properly which is why he asks the question, although if he knew it hadn't worked, why did he need to ask? Surely, the way Jesus plays out this episode serves primarily to reveal its sign value.

ει "-" - IF. Here used as an interrogative particle in a direct question. Not classical, and only used here in Mark.

τι βλεπεις "**do you see anything?**" - ANYTHING YOU SEE? The "anything" is emphatic by position; "can you see at all?", Phillips.

v24

αναβλεψας [**αναβλεπω**] aor. part. "**he looked up**" - [AND] HAVING LOOKED UP, RECOVERED SIGHT. Better "looked up", than "recovered his sight"; "at the question the man involuntarily raised his eyes", Swete. The participle can be treated as adverbial, temporal, "after he looked up he said", but better an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the action of the main verb "said", as NIV. The aorist is possibly inceptive, "he began to see and said", Moffatt.

βλεπω "**I see [people]**" - [HE WAS SAYING] I SEE [MEN] *walking*. "Men" indefinite, so "humans" = "people".

οτι "-" - THAT. An unusual use of this conjunction here to form a dependent statement of perception and so dropped in some texts, see Cranfield for a possible Aramaic influence. Of course, a causal sense may be intended, so Taylor; "I can see the people, for they look to me like trees, only they are moving about", Goodspeed. Decker classifies it as expegetic; "I see people, that is, like trees"

ως "**like**" - AS, LIKE [I SEE TREES]. Comparative; "looking like trees", Cassirer.

περιπατουντας [περιπατω] pres. part. "**walking around**" - WALKING. This participle presents as the accusative complement of the direct object "trees", standing in a double accusative construction and stating a fact about the "trees", namely, that they are walking, but it is masculine, whereas "trees" is neuter. It agrees with **ανθρωπους**, "men", so possibly, "I see men walking, as if looking like trees." Decker classifies it as adjectival, attributive, even though anarthrous, limiting "men"; "who are moving about."

v25

Jesus now completes the healing. As already noted, this two-stage healing "suggests a process of revelation as much for the disciples, we suspect, as for the blind man at Bethsaida", Edwards.

ειτα παλιν adv. "**once more**" - [AND] THEN AGAIN. Sequential adverbs referring back to Jesus' previous action of laying hands on the blind man.

επι "**on [the man's eye]**" - [HE PLACED THE = HIS HANDS] ON, UPON [THE EYES OF HIM]. Spatial. More detail is given, now indicating where Jesus placed his hands.

διεβλεψεν [διαβλεπω] aor. "**his eyes were opened**" - [AND] HE SAW CLEARLY, DISTINGUISHED CLEARLY [AND HE WAS RESTORED]. The first of two aorist verbs ("signals the complete healing", Guelich) expressing the consequent action involved in Jesus' healing touch - he saw clearly (looked intently) and he fully recovered his sight (was restored, made sound). This is followed by the imperfect verb **ενεβλεπεν**, "he was seeing", expressing durative action, what he was able to go on to do - and he was able to look at [everything clearly / plainly].

τηλαυγως adv. "**clearly**" - [AND HE WAS SEEING] CLEARLY. Adverb of manner; "clearly from afar", MM.

v26

Jesus' command to return home and keep away from the crowded village may again reflect his preoccupation with maintaining a low profile so as to not stir up messianic fervour, but it may also serve as a prophetic allusion, cf., Isa.35:5f.

εις + acc. "**home**" - [AND HE SENT HIM] INTO [THE HOME OF HIM]. Spatial, expressing the direction of the action and arrival at. "He sent him to his house", Torrey.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "**saying**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to send", or modal, expressing the manner of his being sent, redundant. Possibly "commanding"; "with the command", Torrey.

μηδε εισελθης [εισερχομαι] "don't go [into the village]" - YOU MAY NOT GO [INTO THE VILLAGE]. A subjective of prohibition forbidding an intended action, in this case, forbidding him to enter the village. There is a variant reading which is supported by some commentators, eg. Turner, Taylor, Cranfield, .. μηδενι ειπης εις την κωμην, "do not speak to anyone in the village", effectively commanding the man not to speak of his cure there. Marcus dodges the problem by suggesting that the verse is a redactional addition - always a handy *get out of jail free card*. It does seem strange to send him home, but then tell him he is not allowed to enter the village. It is possible that Jesus is telling him not to enter the village in the sense of taking up his former profession of begging. At any rate, the command is but another example of Jesus' strategic application of the messianic secret.

v27

ii] The confession of Peter, v27-30. Caesarea Philippi is some 50 kilometres North of Bethsaida, near the source of the Jordan River, on the slopes of Mount Hermon. Jesus sets out to reveal new insights to his disciples, and in typical form, he does this through a question. What were the crowds saying of Jesus? The astonishing signs performed by Jesus produced quite a few reactions: they provoked the crowds to wonder; they left the disciples befuddled; they assured the religious leaders of Jesus' Satanic origins; and they stirred up the forces of darkness. Jesus now draws out the significance of his person with a question to Peter. Answering on behalf of the disciples, Peter proclaims his faith in Jesus as messiah. The term "messiah" means "the one anointed by God." The messiah is the righteous prophet, priest and Davidic king, God's special representative who will realise Israel's hopes - the establishment of an eternal theocratic kingdom safe and secure from the powers of darkness.

This short narrative encapsulates Peter's pronouncement and heads a collection of important sayings of Jesus.

Καισαρειας [α] gen. "around Caesarea" - [AND JESUS WENT OUT, AND THE DISCIPLES OF HIM, INTO THE VILLAGES] OF CAESAREA [OF PHILIP]. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / location; "the villages *located around the town of Caesarea Philippi*." The genitive "of Philip", is also adjectival, idiomatic, "Caesarea *named after Philip the tetrarch*", "Philip" being added to distinguish the town from the coastal town of Caesarea. The town "was at the source of the Jordan on the slopes of Hermon in the midst of a very beautiful and fertile country", Cranfield.

εν + dat. "on [the way]" - [AND] ON [THE WAY]. Temporal use of the preposition, "while on the way"; "As they went", TH. Note Luke, "as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him", 9:18.

επηρωτα [επερωτω] imperf. "**he asked**" - HE WAS ASKING, QUESTIONING [THE DISCIPLES OF HIM SAYING TO THEM]. A disciple would normally ask questions of his Rabbi, not the other way around. The participle **λεγων**, "saying" may be taken as attendant circumstance, or adverbial, manner / means (redundant), followed by the dative of indirect object **αυτοις**.

με acc. "**I**" - [WHOM SAY THE MEN] ME. The accusative subject of the infinitive verb to-be - an accusative infinitive construction. Emphatic position "to emphasise the figure of Jesus", Gundry.

ειναι [ειμι] pres. inf. "**am**" - TO BE. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech after a verb of saying or thinking; "whom do people say that I am?"

v28

The point is simple enough, "popular opinion does not hold Jesus to be the Messiah", Taylor. Jesus is viewed as John the Baptist come back to life, a raised-up Elijah (the greatest of all prophets), or possibly just an honoured modern-day prophet, but not the messiah.

οι δε "**they**" - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, a change in subject from Jesus to the disciples.

αυτω dat. pro. "**to him**" - [SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

λογεντες [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing Mark's account of what they said. Not found in some texts, but probably original.

Ιωαννην τον βαπτιστην acc. "**[some say] John the Baptist**" - [JOHN THE BAPTIST AND OTHERS ELIJAH]. The accusative "John the Baptist" stands as the accusative predicate of an assumed infinitive of the verb to-be with its accusative subject "you", serving to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they say; "they replied, '*Some say you to be = are* John the Baptist, others Elijah, and others" All three options are voiced by the people individually, so "some say John the Baptist and others say Elijah ..." A devalued assessment of Jesus' person.

οτι "-" - [BUT/AND OTHERS] THAT. Again, used to introduce a dependent statement, indirect speech, expressing what some say. The clause is again elliptical with **λεγουσιν**, "say", and **ει**, "you are", assumed; "but others *say that you are* one of the prophets".

των προφητων [ης ου] gen. "**of the prophets**" - [ONE] OF THE PROPHETS. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

v29

Christ is the person in whom all God's saving purposes are consummated and so for one Jew to give this title to another Jew, is the greatest of all complements. Peter gives this recognition to Jesus, although unlike the blind man who now sees clearly, Peter and the disciples have a way to go in their understanding of the person of Jesus.

δε "but" - [AND HE QUESTIONED THEM], BUT/AND [YOU]. Transitional. Note the emphatic position of "you" in the Gk. "But you yourselves, who do you say I am?", Weymouth. Note also that **αυτος**, "he", takes an emphatic position, although Cranfield suggests that it simply stands for **ὁ δε**, "but/and he [asked them]", i.e., indicating narrative transition, a change in subject from the disciples to Jesus.

με "I" - [WHOM DO YOU SAY] ME. The position of this pronoun is advanced in the Greek, separating it from the infinitive, so giving emphasis to the one it references, namely, Jesus.

ειναι [ειμι] pres. inf. - "**am**" - TO BE. Again, Mark uses the infinitive verb to-be to form a dependent statement, indirect speech, "whom do you say that I am", here again taking the accusative personal pronoun as its subject, i.e. an accusative infinitive construction.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "-" - HAVING ANSWERED [PETER SAYS TO HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "says"; redundant.

συ "you" - YOU [ARE]. Emphatic by use.

ὁ χριστος "the Christ" - THE CHRIST, THE ANOINTED ONE = THE MESSIAH. The related verb to-be, **εἶ** is a historic present. The title "Christ" refers to someone consecrated to God's service, and in particular to "the hoped-for ruler who was to restore the kingdom of David to more than its former glory and prosperity", Cranfield. So, Jesus is the "one in whom the life of the whole nation of Israel finds its fulfilment and meaning and in whom the new Israel now is the anointed people of God", Cranfield. Clearly Peter has caught a glimpse of this reality.

v30

Jesus maintains the messianic secret, i.e., he maintains a low profile with regard his messianic credentials (eg. miraculous signs which fulfil prophetic expectations) so as to quell popular political messianic aspirations, enabling an unclouded response to the gospel for those "with eyes to see".

επειμησεν [επιτιμω] aor. "**Jesus warned**" - [AND] HE REBUKED, STERNLY WARNED. The word primarily means "to rebuke", but here in the sense of a "stern command". "He strictly ordered them", Junkins.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - Dative of direct object after the επι prefix verb "to rebuke / warn."

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement, indirect speech, expressing what he said; "that they should tell no one". "That they should not mention this to anyone", Phillips.

περι + gen. "**about [him]**" - [THEY SHOULD TELL NO ONE] ABOUT, CONCERNING [HIM]. The preposition expresses reference / respect.

8:31-9:1

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2 Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

ii] Jesus teaches suffering and true discipleship #1

Synopsis

Following the confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus speaks of his coming suffering and then goes on to speak on the issue of cross-bearing discipleship.

Teaching

Jesus' call to commitment is a call for identification with his perfect self-renunciation / humiliation, possessed through the instrument of faith.

Issues

i] Context: See 8:22-30.

ii] Structure: *The cost of being a disciple:*

Episode 1:

The healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, v22-26;

Episode 2:

The confession of Peter, v27-30;

Jesus foretells his death and resurrection, v31-33;

Rebukes all round, v32-33;

Jesus' call to cross-bearing, v34-9:1.

Saying #1: Take up your cross, v34;

Saying #2: To save one's life is to lose it, v35;

Saying #3: What good is it to gain the whole world? v36;

Saying #4: What can one exchange for their soul? v37;

Saying #5: Being ashamed of the Son of Man, v38;

Saying #6: Seeing the kingdom come with power, 9:1.

The division of this passage at 8:31 is somewhat arbitrary, given the close link Peter's confession has with what follows. Following the two question-answer form of v27-30, Mark records Jesus' first passion prediction, v31, along with the twin **ἐπιτιμῶ**, "rebuke" of Peter and Jesus, v32-33. Then follows Jesus' cross bearing saying, v34, along with three related sayings stitched together with an explanatory **γὰρ**, "for", v35-38. This cluster of sayings concludes with an independent eschatological saying concerning the coming of the Son of Man **ἐν δυνάμει**, "in power", 9:1.

iii] Interpretation.

Following Peter's confession, Jesus speaks of his coming death and goes on to address the issue of self-sacrifice. Mark will repeat this pattern two more times, 9:30-37, and 10:32-45.

When it comes to denying self and taking up one's cross, v34ff, the bulk of commentators see these images as illustrations of self-denial, of self-sacrifice in the terms of Jesus' cross. Of course, commentators vary in the way they apply cross-bearing discipleship, with some sidestepping the issue altogether, and others into the business of weighing their readers down with an impossible load.

Sherman Johnson says of the images of discipleship in this passage that they serve to deny our "own ambitions and interests." A.M. Hunter, always a valuable source of potted theology, paraphrases Jesus' words as "you must be willing to live as men on the way to the gallows." Discipleship involves "the self-renunciation of the true missionary, one who like Paul 'counts not life dear' - a glad St. Francis, Livingstone or Schweitzer." William Lane writes of this call to discipleship: it permits "no turning back and if necessary, a willingness to submit to the cross in pursuance of the will of God." Hugh Anderson says of denial that it is "forsaking one's selfish pretensions and worldly securities for the sake of Jesus." Of cross-bearing Cranfield says, it calls for a discipleship that "must be ready to face martyrdom." Earle Ellis, addressing the Lucan passage says, "the requirement to enter the kingdom is utter and ultimate commitment to the way of Jesus. The suffering messiah means also a suffering messianic community. In its original context *to take up his cross* meant only one thing, to die with Jesus in Jerusalem."

The problem with this cross-bearing discipleship approach is that it runs counter to both experience and divine grace. Few believers ever come close to the devotion of St. Francis. We have moments of renewal, of rededication, but most of the time we struggle with the bare essentials of discipleship. So, the more a theologian stresses cross-bearing discipleship, the more they reinforce failure and so undermine grace.

If this passage is not ethical, is not demanding of disciples a life of cross-bearing self-sacrifice, a life of self-denial, of giving up our time, talent and tinkle for the kingdom, then what is its intention?

It could be argued that Jesus is doing nothing more than illustrating a Biblical principle, namely, God's ways are not our ways, such that when we are weak then we are strong, 2Cor.12:10. Christ lived this pattern, and set it as the pattern of life for his people as they too work to usher in the new age of the kingdom. In simple terms, the realisation of the kingdom is

"not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD Almighty", Zech.4:6. Such is true, but is this the intent of Jesus' words here? Probably not!

Another possibility is that Jesus is making this radical demand in order to expose the sinful condition of his disciples, and so prompt their dependence on divine grace for salvation. Jesus often employs this tactic with the Law, as Paul puts it, "the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith", Gal.3:24. Jesus sets a standard of righteousness that only he can meet - a perfect holiness, or as here, perfect cross-bearing. When confronted with the righteous demands of God, a disciple is forced to admit their own condition of loss and turn to God for mercy. In an act of grace, resting on the perfect obedience of Christ, the disciple who rests on Christ in faith is identified with Christ and therefore, treated by God as if they are that righteous person. Thus, in Christ, we stand justified - JUST IF I'D never sinned. Again, such is profoundly true, but is this the intent of Jesus' words here? Probably not!

We have not heard the last word on this very difficult passage, but it seems likely that the cross we are to carry is not our own, it is Christ's cross, a light load indeed; "my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Jesus, having spoken to his disciples about his death and resurrection, "called the crowd to him, along with his disciples", and to this mixed gathering, believers, seekers and unbelievers, he speaks about denial of self and cross-bearing, v34. This is a call for commitment to the gospel, not a call for sacrificial discipleship. This is a call for faith in a standing before God which is vicariously realised through an identification with the perfect self-renunciation of Jesus. A person's acceptance of Jesus will involve embarrassment, given that Jesus is a humiliated messiah, and yes, it may even involve danger (cf., Gundry for his take on this issue). So, Jesus employs figurative language to describe commitment to, and thus identification with, the suffering but glorified Christ (the Son of Man who suffers, is rejected and killed, but is rises on the third day). What we have here is a call to commitment, a call to rely on the cross-bearing of Jesus.

Eschatology: "There are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come in power", NAB, Mk.9:1. Numerous interpretations are proposed for this prophecy: the transfiguration, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, coming of the Holy Spirit, mission of the church, the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ's second coming. Schweitzer argued that Jesus thought the kingdom would dawn in his generation, but was wrong. This false assumption was even held by the disciples. Dodd pushed in the same direction, but with a greater respect for

scripture (arguing for a realised eschatology [the kingdom was present in the ministry of Jesus, but unrecognised]). We may be on safer ground if we view the coming kingdom as both realised and inaugurated - *now / not yet*). More extreme views have been posited, eg., "the saying is probably best understood as an independent logion pronounced as a saying of the risen Jesus by an early Christian prophet - a word of consolation in view of the delay of the Parousia, which promises that at least some of the first generation will live to see it", Boring.

Although the interpretation of this eschatological saying of Jesus is anything but settled, we are best to understand his words in the terms of Daniel's coming / reigning Son of Man, 7:13. The kingdom's "coming" in judgment (the great assize), is exercised by Jesus at the right hand of the Ancient of Days (Stephen's vision, Acts 7:56), and is evidenced in all the expressions of this "coming" / judgment, past, present and future. Easter, Pentecost and mission, all display the kingdom's coming in power. Even the transfiguration, which follows this prediction, images the kingdom's coming in power. Most commentators think that the particular focus in mind is the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. This event certainly serves as the essential paradigm of that final day when the Lord will fold up the Monopoly Board and say, "Game's over!" Yet, for those with eyes to see, generation by generation, "the kingdom of God has come with power"; the game is over, it's just that some of the players haven't realised it yet.

However we handle this time / space conundrum, the mixed audience with Jesus this day faces a decision of commitment, and this in the knowledge that in the realisation / inauguration, *now / not yet*, of the kingdom of God, only some will get to experience it - those who commit to the Committed One; those who identify with the cross-bearing one.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt16:21-28, Lk.9:22-27. The record of these linked independent sayings is very similar, so either, someone followed someone, or they were already a set tradition before our gospel writers got to them (which may well be the case). As already noted, most scholars opt for Markan priority. Luke leaves out the Peter / Jesus exchange, v32-33. Interestingly, Luke has Jesus addressing "all", while Matthew has him addressing the "disciples". This would imply Markan priority, because obviously Matthew has missed the point and assumed that Jesus' words are for "disciples", rather than "the crowd with his disciples." This also implies that Luke is following Mark, rather than Matthew, but of course, he may just be following the extant oral tradition of his day. Note that Matthew adds a negative thrust to the eschatological warning, Matt.16:27

v] Homiletics: *Take up your cross*

During the 1970's, a focus on discipleship became quite strong within Western Christianity. It grew out of the Jesus Revolution, and expressed itself in communalism and simple living. The trigger was most likely an explosion of the free spirit, *sex, drugs and rock-n-roll*, linked to the economic downturn that preceded the boom of the 80's, along with the social division that was generated by the Vietnam war. Social upheaval prompted a flight to fundamentals.

In the search for a firm foundation, *cross-bearing discipleship* was promoted, and this along with the apostolic communalism of the Jerusalem church. Luke / Acts became the source text for what was to become a powerful and influential Christian movement. Personal discipline and social activism soon found expression in fundamental, sacramental and liberal faith-circles, and continued to influence these circles from the 80's on (eg. The New/Liberal Evangelical Movement).

Today, most of the disciples of the Jesus revolution have long given up their activism of cross-bearing discipleship. If you're lucky, they still may go to church, but suffering for Jesus is no longer the path they follow. In fact, many of these enthusiastic believers have given up following Jesus because it's all too hard.

Our reading today is one of the source texts for the discipleship movement. Yet, it is unlikely that Jesus' words are a call to material sacrifice, a call to poverty. Some people argue that these "hard" words of Jesus serve to separate the fair-weather seeker from the genuine item, but it is more likely that they serve to remind us that the only cross-bearing that is worth anything is the sacrifice of Christ. For a believer, cross-bearing entails identifying with Christ's sacrifice on our behalf. Only in Christ's perfection do we stand perfect before God, only in his humiliation do we find acceptance.

Text - 8:31

Suffering and discipleship: i] Jesus foretells his death and resurrection, v31-33. Having heard the disciples confess him as a messiah, Jesus now tells them that he will be a suffering messiah. In fact, his suffering, which will involve rejection and death at the hands of his own people, is necessary. It is necessary in that it is God's will, but because it is God's will, Jesus will break the bonds of death and rise again. Peter is not willing to accept the idea of a suffering messiah and so takes Jesus aside to straighten him out - as a friend (in love) of course! The trouble is that the other disciples have most likely overheard Peter's rebuke and so a public dressing-down is in order. From the beginning of his ministry,

Satan has offered a way of gaining a kingdom apart from suffering and humiliation. Peter unwittingly becomes Satan's agent and repeats the temptation, and so Jesus tells him to get back with his fellow disciples where he belongs.

διδασκειν [διδασκω] pres. inf. "**to teach**" - [AND HE BEGAN] TO TEACH [THEM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "he began." This form of words is used to break from the preceding episode and introduce a new point. Increasingly, Jesus' teaching is to the disciples as here, although note the change in v43. "And he proceeded to teach them", Moffatt.

ὅτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus taught them. This is the first of three similar predictions, 9:31 and 10:33-34, the last being the most detailed one.

του ανθρωπου [ος] gen. "**[Son] of man**" - [THE SON] OF MAN. The genitive is relational. For the messianic title "Son of Man", see 2:10.

δει + inf. "**must**" - IT IS NECESSARY. This verb is often used to express divine compulsion, implying that it is God's will and that therefore, the outcome will be for the best. "It was inevitable that", Phillips.

παθειν [πασχω] aor. act. inf. "**suffer**" - TO SUFFER [MUCH]. This infinitive, along with "to be rejected" and "to be killed", together form a nominal construction subject of the verb "is necessary." The adjective **πολλα**, "many things, serving as a substantive, could be taken as an adverb, so Gundry, "suffer greatly." Note Jesus' shift to "Son of Man" as the suffering one. The notion of a suffering messiah is not an easy idea for the disciples to come to grips with. In the face of identity problems, Jesus often moves to his favoured self-identification - the mysterious Son of Man. The messianic "Son of Man" is glorious, rather than suffering - an interesting twist! The extent of Jesus' suffering is emphasised - rejection and death

αποδοκιμασθηναι [αποδοκιμαζω] aor. pas. inf. "**rejected**" - [AND] TO BE REJECTED. The infinitive, as above. Note that Mark lists the three groups involved in Jesus' humiliation, but it is interesting that Jesus' main opponents, the Pharisees, are not mentioned. Of course, the scribes were usually Pharisees.

ὕπο "**by**" - BY [THE ELDERS AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE SCRIBES]. Expressing agency, as NIV.

αποκτανθηναι [αποκτεινω] aor. pas. inf. "**he must be to be killed**" - [AND] TO BE KILLED. The infinitive, as above. In a reading back of tradition, the word crucifixion would be used, but Mark is preserving the original sense of the words held in the apostolic oral tradition.

μετα + acc. "**after**" - [AND] AFTER [THREE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition. This "after" causes a timing difficulty (actually after a day and half) and so in Matthew and Luke it is **τη τριτη**, dat., "on the third day." The difficulty

underlines its originality, given the normal practice of counting part of a day as a day. The number three, of course, is dictated by Old Testament precedence, eg., Jonah in the big fish.

αναστηναι [**ανιστημι**] aor. pas. inf. "**rise**" - TO RISE. The infinitive, as above. This verb can be transitive or intransitive, and since the Son of Man is the subject, it is obviously intransitive here; "rise". Jeremias treats the passive as theological - God does the raising. Marcus has Jesus raising himself, while Boring simply has "rise", without any thought as to who does the raising, as NIV.

v32

ελαλει [**λαλεω**] imperf. "**he spoke**" - [AND] HE WAS SPEAKING. An imperfective / durative sense may be intended, although the imperfect is often used of speech; "he kept telling them this", Barclay.

παρησια [**α**] dat. "**plainly**" - [THE WORD] WITH BOLDNESS, FRANKNESS, OPENNESS. The dative is adverbial, expressing manner; "with boldness", "outspokenly", Gundry. Emphasising that Jesus made a point of telling his disciples about his coming death and resurrection. "He said all this quite openly", NJB.

προσλαβομενος [**προσλαμβανω**] aor. part. "**took [him] aside**" - [AND PETER] HAVING TAKEN ASIDE [HIM]. The participle is adverbial, probably best viewed as temporal; "At that point, Peter took him aside ..," Why take Jesus aside? Is Peter embarrassed with what he is about to say, or what Jesus has just said?

επιτιμαν [**επιταμω**] inf. "**to rebuke**" - [BEGAN] TO STERNLY WARN, REBUKE. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "began". The word is used of the casting out of a demon, so it is quite strong. Peter tries to set Jesus straight; "Peter took hold of him and sternly forbade him to talk like that", Barclay.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to rebuke."

v33

ο δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the dialogue, a change in subject from Peter to Jesus.

επιστραφεις [**επιστρεφω**] aor. pas. part. "**when [Jesus] turned**" - HAVING TURNED AROUND [AND HAVING SEEN THE DISCIPLES OF HIM]. As with "looking", possibly just an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "rebuked." The NIV, as with CEV, etc. treats it as adverbial, temporal. Descriptive of Jesus observing that the other disciples have most likely overheard Peter's words and therefore, a public admonition is

necessary. "At that, Jesus turned round, and when his eyes fell on his disciples, he remonstrated with Peter", Cassirer.

Πετρω [ος] dat. "**Peter**" - [HE REBUKED] PETER. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to rebuke"; "he corrected Peter", CEV.

οπισω + gen. "[**get**] **behind** [**me**]" - [AND SAYS, GO AWAY] AFTER, BEHIND [ME]. Here probably being used adverbially, "get behind me." "Out of my sight", BAGD, is far too strong. Jesus is telling Peter to get back with the disciples and accept his authority, rather than tell him what he should, or should not say. Jesus is certainly not saying, "cease to be my disciple."

σατανα [ας] "**Satan**" - Vocative. Aligning Peter with Satan is extremely harsh, although it is most likely that the temptation which has come through Peter's words is Satanic in origin. Peter has unwittingly promoted the temptation that the kingdom can come by means other than the "cup" of suffering, a temptation that Jesus has constantly faced.

οτι "-" - THAT / BECAUSE. Either recitative, introducing direct speech, as NIV, or causal, "because your thoughts are not God's."

ου φρονεις [φρονεω] "**you do not have in mind**" - YOU ARE NOT THINKING ABOUT. "To take someone's side", Cranfield. Peter is lit. "not thinking the things of God, rather the things of human beings."

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [THE THINGS] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "the things" = "the truths that belong to God", or descriptive, idiomatic / source, agent, "*that are from / originate from* God." The "things of God", expresses the idea that glory comes through the suffering of God's messiah. The "things of human beings" proposes a glory for the messiah apart from suffering. As "all the kingdoms of the world" are Satan's domain, it is obvious that humanity will promote Satan's way to glory through power (evidenced in modern management, marketing etc.) rather than God's way to glory through humiliation (love, mercy, compassion leading to suffering). "Your thoughts are not God's thoughts, but man's", Weymouth.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT [THE THINGS OF MEN]. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not, but".

v34

ii] Jesus' call for commitment, v34-9:1. Saying #1: Jesus now calls for decision, v34. To those who really want to be disciples, Jesus calls for an acceptance that will likely bring with it embarrassment and shame. Three images of "coming after", serve to exegete the nature of a decision for Christ. It involves: a) denial - a loss of status through an association with a messiah in conflict with the world; b) cross-bearing - the consequent shame of identification with a

humiliated, rather than a glorious, messiah; c) and following - taking the lead from a gentle and humble man.

προσκαλεσάμενος [**προσκαλεω**] aor. mid. part. "**then he called [the crowd] to [him]**" - HAVING CALLED TOGETHER, CALLED TO ONESELF, SUMMONED [THE CROWD]. The participle is adverbial, probably forming a temporal clause, as NIV. It is important to note that Jesus calls the crowd to him, while the disciples tag along. The point is that Jesus now speaks to the crowd, as well as his disciples. The implication is that Jesus is calling people to commitment (identification with Christ and his cross), rather than calling people to cross-bearing discipleship. The focus is on Jesus and his suffering, not the suffering of the disciple. If we would follow Christ, we must be willing to accept a suffering messiah, which suffering, of course, we may well have to share. "[Then] Jesus called both the crowd and his disciples to him", Barclay.

συν + dat. "**along with**" - WITH [THE DISCIPLES OF HIM, HE SAID TO THEM]. Expressing accompaniment.

ει + ind. "**if**" - IF [ANYONE / SOMEONE WISHES / DESIRES]. Introducing a conditional clause, 1st class, where the condition is assumed to be true; "if, *as is the case*, *then*" Here the condition is emphasised: "if anyone really does want to follow behind me..." Gundry.

ακολουθειν [**ακολουθεω**] pres. inf. "**[would] come**" - TO FOLLOW. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to wish, will, desire". Follow as a disciple, i.e., commit to an association with Jesus.

οπισω + gen. "**after**" - AFTER [ME]. Spatial.

απαρνησασθω [**απαρνεομαι**] aor. imp. "**he must deny [himself]**" - *then* LET HIM DENY, RENOUNCE [HIMSELF]. The aorist, as with "take up", may specify the action and make it prior to the durative present "follow me." The word is commonly taken to mean self-denial in varying degrees of selflessness. It may just mean the shame of accepting a messiah facing death, a messiah in conflict with the world. Such acceptance prompts a confrontation with the world, but not necessarily a renunciation of the world. "He must give up all claims upon himself", TH.

αυτου gen. pro. "**his [cross]**" - [AND LET HIM TAKE UP THE CROSS] OF HIM. The genitive is possessive. It is hard not to see Christ's cross in this image, although, at this point of time, the image would conjure up the cross-bearing criminal who is shamed in the presence of neighbours and friends. Jesus has not said how he is to be "killed", and so rather than reflecting Jesus' suffering, the image may simply illustrate the shame involved in accepting a humiliated messiah who is executed as a common criminal.

μοι dat. pro. "**me**" - [AND LET HIM FOLLOW AFTER] ME. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow after."

With four stitched sayings, Mark provides four reasons for deciding in favour of Jesus. As is often the case with sayings in the New Testament, the sayings are stitched together with the conjunction **γὰρ**. It is often translated to express reason, "for", as NIV, and here reason is implied, but its primary role is that of a stitching device.

Saying #2: The person who seeks to protect themselves from the shame of an association with Jesus will inevitably lose life itself, whereas the person who decides for Jesus, accepts Jesus, who accepts the gospel, will gain eternal life. Mark's additional words "and for the sake of the gospel" strengthens the sense of commitment, rather than sacrificial service, cf., Matt.16:25, Lk.9:24.

ὅς ... εἰς + subj. "**whoever**" - [FOR] WHOEVER. Introducing an indefinite relative clause which is conditional; "whoever, *as may be the case*,, *then* they will lose it"

θελῆ [θελῶ] subj. "**wishes**" - WILLS, WANTS DESIRES. The person who wants to protect their security and their standing now, rather than accept Jesus, will find they lose eternal life.

σωσαι [σωζῶ] inf. "**to save**" - TO RESCUE, SAVE, PRESERVE, KEEP. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "wishes". Mark has "wants to save", Luke has "seeks to preserve", and Matthew has "finding". Mark emphasises decision for unbelievers in radical terms: "to cling to the things of life, the things which humanity naturally values most, is the way to forfeit true life", France. Clinging to one's physical life is the perfect example of this clinging, but it obviously extends to a loss of privilege, advantage, reputation and comfort.

τὴν ψυχὴν [ἡ] "**life**" - THE SOUL, BEING, LIFE [OF HIM]. The Greek sense "soul" is probably not intended, either here or in v36, 37. Possibly "spiritual life", as opposed to life in the physical body; "a life which is his true life, his soul, himself", Lagrange. The Hebrew sense of the word meant the whole self, and thus the mortal self, of "being alive." It seems more than likely that Jesus / Mark is using the word to mean the perishable body, the whole self, thus "life". It is pushing too far to suggest that a person who saves the mortal body at the cost of denying their faith forfeits eternal life, so Boring. If this were the case, then only John, out of the twelve, is saved.

ἀπολεσει [ἀπολλυμι] fut. ind. act. "**will lose**" - HE WILL RUIN, LOSE, DESTROY [IT]. "Whoever will lose their life", in the sense of commit to Christ, rather than just be willing to lose, will save their life, ie. whoever makes the decision to follow Jesus ("for me and for the gospel"), will save their life (rescue their being for eternity). "If you want to save your life you will destroy it", CEV.

ὅ [δε] "**but**" - BUT/AND. The contracted form of δε; Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point.

ὅς ... ἂν "**whoever**" - WHOEVER [LOSES THE LIFE OF HIM]. Introducing a conditional clause, as above.

ἕνεκεν + gen. "**for**" - FOR THE SAKE OF [ME]. Causal; "for the sake of."

του ευαγγελιου [ος] gen. "**the gospel**" - [AND] THE IMPORTANT NEWS, GOSPEL, [WILL SAVE IT]. Some texts do not have "for me", but only "for the gospel." A demand for loyalty to Jesus and his message.

v36

Saying #3: This, and the next saying, supports the point made in saying #2: "There is no one who would choose to *keep* all the wealth of the world at the expense of his or her own life, and there is nothing, no matter how valuable, that one can offer in exchange for one's own life", Boring.

τί "**What for ...**" - [FOR] WHAT. Interrogative pronoun. The sense of the clause is "In what way does gaining the whole world and forfeiting their life profit a person?" As with the next saying, "What would a person give in exchange for his life?" the answer is implied; there is nothing more precious than life. Thus, taken with v35, the point is that deciding for Jesus has its downside, but its upside is far greater.

ωφελει [ωφελεω] pres. "**good is it for**" - DOES IT PROFIT, BENEFIT, GAIN [A MAN]. "What does anyone gain by winning the whole world at the cost of his life?" REB.

κερδισαι [κερδαινω] aor. inf. "**to gain**" - TO GAIN [THE WHOLE WORLD]. The infinitival construction "to gain the whole world and to forfeit the soul of him" serves as the subject of the verb "to profit"; "What does to gain profit a man?"

αυτου gen. pro. "**his**" - [AND TO FORFEIT, LOSE THE LIFE, SOUL, BEING] OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

v37

Saying #4.

δοι [διδωμι] aor. subj. "**give**" - [FOR WHAT] MAY [A MAN] GIVE. Deliberative subjunctive.

ανταλλαγμα [α ατος] "**in exchange**" - IN EXCHANGE, SOMETHING GIVEN IN RETURN, RECOMPENSE, PURCHASE PRICE. Accusative complement of the direct object τί, "what", standing in a double accusative construction and stating a fact about the object. "For what could a man give that was an equal exchange for his life?" Barclay.

της ψυχης [η] gen. "for [his] soul" - OF THE LIFE [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, verbal, objective, "what could a person give that would be a fair recompense for their life?"

v38

Saying #5. A salutary warning concerning the inevitable day of judgment. A person who is ashamed of Jesus today will find themselves on God's wrong side on the day of judgment.

ὅς ... εαν + subj. "if anyone" - [FOR] WHOEVER. Again, introducing an indefinite relative clause which happens to be conditional here; "whoever, *as the case may be*, then the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes" Unlike Matthew, 16:27, Mark (so also Luke) uses the indefinite "whoever". The saying warns believers, and unbelievers alike, that they should not allow the shame of an association with Jesus, the humiliated messiah, to bar their acceptance of him. To do this is to bring upon themselves eternal rejection.

επαισχυνθη [επαισχυνομαι] aor. pas. subj. "is ashamed" - WOULD BE ASHAMED OF [ME]. In the sense of "ashamed to acknowledge his relation to me", TH.

εμουσ adj. "my [words]" - [AND] MY [WORDS]. "Words" is absent in some texts, so "mine" = "my people." "My words" is most likely original.

εν + dat. "in" - IN. Local, expressing sphere.

τη μοιχαλιδι adj. "adulterous" - [THIS] ADULTEROUS [AND SINFUL GENERATION]. Taking the religious meaning "faithless / godless / apostate / disloyal". "Among these unfaithful and sinful people", CEV.

και "-" - [THE SON OF MAN WILL BE ASHAMED OF THEM] AND = ALSO. Here adjunctive; "the Son of Man will also be ashamed of them."

ὅταν + subj. "when" - WHENEVER = WHEN [HE COMES]. This construction forms an indefinite temporal clause. "When he comes back (returns)", Williams, misses the mark somewhat. There are many comings of the Son of Man and it is dangerous to assume that references to his coming are to his coming back to earth at the end of the age. The Daniel image of the coming of the Son of Man is of his coming to the Ancient of Days to receive his glorious kingdom, Dan.7:13. It is a coming to heaven, to the right hand of the Father, to exercise rule, and as a consequence, judgment. This coming is imaged as a coming in the clouds. It is the "coming" seen by Stephen in his vision. The coming of Christ to the Ancient of Days to enact judgment, always raises a continuity problem in relation to time on earth, but of course, God is not bound by created time. We live within a divine eschatological *now / not yet* moment; Christ is come and is enacting judgment, and he is coming and will enact judgment. This moment is best described as a moment of grace, a moment of opportunity, a kindness from a gracious God.

Anyway, Mark's point is that the coming judgment is a good reason to overcome fear and shame and so respond in trust to Jesus. Do we want to be found on God's wrong side on the day of judgment?

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN. The dative is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of Christ's coming; "with the Father's glory."

του παρος [ηρ ρος] gen. "**Father's**" - [THE GLORY] OF THE FATHER [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / verbal, subjective, "the glory *that radiates from / is exhibited by* his Father."

μετα + gen. "**with**" - WITH [THE HOLY ANGELS]. Expressing accompaniment, "in association with."

9:1

Saying #6. Christ's call for commitment is reinforced with a reminder that only some of his audience, those whom the Son of Man is not ashamed of, will pass through the great assize unscathed and see the glory of the coming kingdom. Matthew makes the point more clearly by tying together sayings #5 and 6 with the words "then he will repay everyone for what he has done", Matt.16:27b. Saying #6 has prompted endless debate, due to the statement that the committed ones will not actually die before they see the kingdom come in glory; see *Eschatology* in "Interpretation" above. Apart from the complexities of this verse, its message is simple enough: the coming kingdom brings with it either blessing or cursing (judgment), and now is the hour for decision.

ουτοις "**to them**" - [AND HE WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object. An indication that the words are a continuation from v38 and therefore are to the crowd as well as the disciples.

υμιν dat. "**[I tell] you [the truth]**" - [TRULY I SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object. This statement serves to underline the importance of the following words. "I can assure you", CEV.

οτι "-" - THAT. Here introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus wants to say to them.

τινες pro. "**some**" - [THERE ARE] SOME [HERE]. Predicate nominative.

των εστηκοτων [ιστημι] gen. perf. part. "**who are standing**" - OF THE ONES HAVING STOOD. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. Used in the sense of "existing"; "some of those who are alive here today."

ου μη γευσωνται [γευομαι] aor. subj. "**not taste**" - [WHO] WILL BY NO MEANS TASTE. The double negative + the subjunctive forms a subjunctive of emphatic negation. Semitic expression for "die", so "will not die", CEV.

θανατου [ος] gen. "**of death**" - OF DEATH. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to taste."

ὡς αὐ + subj. "**before**" - UNTIL [THEY SEE]. This construction introduces an indefinite temporal clause of time up to; "until". "Until" they see the coming kingdom in power, see the exercise of Christ's reign come in power during their lifetime, see the Son of Man coming in judgment. "See" in the sense of "be aware of", "experience".

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [THE KINGDOM] OF GOD. Often classified as a subjective genitive, but idiomatic / source, or possessive, are also possible; see 1:15. This reference to the coming of the kingdom is found in Luke 9:27, missing "come in power", and Matthew 16:28, with "the Son of Man coming in his kingdom", "Son of Man" being a possible variant. A similar image is found in 13:26, "see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power" (Lk.21:27, Matt.24:30) + "this generation will not pass away until all these things have happened", v30 (Lk.21:32, Matt.24:34). The coming of the Son of Man and the coming of the kingdom may refer to different events, although this is unlikely. It is more likely that both refer to the coming of the Son of Man to the Ancient of Days to take up his royal authority in the kingdom, to reign in glory and power, cf. Dan.7:13, = the great assize, judgment.

εληλυθειαν [ερχομαι] perf. part. "**come**" - HAVING COME. The participle is probably adjectival, attributive, limiting "kingdom", a kingdom which comes in power. Given the aorist "see", and the perfect participle "having come", the kingdom is impacting *now*, and culminating *then*; "near, at hand".

εν + dat. "**with**" - IN [POWER]. Here adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the kingdom's coming, as NIV.

9:2-13

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

iii] The transfiguration - The ultimate revelation upon God's mountain. "Hear Him"

Synopsis

About a week after Peter's confession, Jesus takes Peter, James and John up a high mountain, possibly a spur off Mount Hermon. There he meets with Moses and Elijah, and as Luke tells us, discusses his coming *exodus* in Jerusalem. Finally, a voice from heaven reminds the disciples who Jesus is, and that they should "listen to him."

Teaching

Jesus is the faithful servant of God, "Son of God", the long-awaited prophet like unto Moses; "listen to him."

Issues

i] Context: See 8:22-30. It is most likely that 9:1 is part of the preceding episode, integrally tied to 8:38. Verse 2 better serves as the beginning of this passage. Most commentators agree that the prophecy concerning the coming of the kingdom of God in power is by no means fulfilled in the transfiguration, none-the-less, the transfiguration, in its own way, is certainly part of the kingdom's powerful realisation in the "now", in and through Christ. This link is established by Mark in his contextual arrangement of his gospel tradition. See notes for 9:1 in Mark 8:31-9:1.

ii] Structure: *Jesus is transfigured:*

Jesus transfigured, v2-8;

Maintaining the messianic secret, v9-10:

Elijah and the Suffering Servant, v11-13.

iii] Interpretation:

The account of Jesus' transfiguration is closely tied to the disciples' confession at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus' subsequent teaching on his death and resurrection, and his demand that disciples identify with his cross and empty tomb. The story portrays Jesus as the faithful servant of God ("Son of God" = messiah), the long-awaited prophet like unto Moses. As the messianic prophet, Jesus proclaims the way into the coming kingdom, namely faith in the faithfulness of the messiah, and to this end we must "listen to him."

So, the transfiguration serves to reveal Christ as the faithful Son of God, son in the sense of the faithful servant, messiah, and here, particularly, prophet. Jesus wears the mantle of Moses; he is the prophet like unto Moses and so we must listen to him. On the journey to the promised land, he meets with God before he sets out to inaugurate the kingdom through his death and resurrection, both as an "exodus" (an escape from bondage) and a victory over the powers of darkness. Thus, "the kingdom of God is at hand."

iv] Synoptics:

The Transfiguration: Matt.17:1-13, Lk.9:28-36. This episode is usually classified as a resurrection narrative, although a theophany may be a better classification.

Keeping the messianic secret until Jesus is raised from the dead, Matt.17:9-13.

The significant feature of the transfiguration is its Exodus imagery and the insights it gives us into the Biblical theology of "the kingdom of God." The transfiguration incident draws on the story of Moses climbing Mount Sinai with three friends, confronting the divine, radiating the divine aura and being covered by the cloud of God's presence. Luke goes further, telling us that Jesus discussed "his exodus which he was about to complete in Jerusalem", Lk.9:31. Mark makes this link by reminding us that "the Son of Man must suffer." For all three gospel authors, the transfiguration of Jesus presents as firmly fixed in tradition.

v] Homiletics: *Hearing Jesus*

We live in an age where nothing is true in itself, other than our own truth. We could once say, "I think and therefore, I am", now we say, "I think and therefore, it is true." In the secular world, truth is relative, not fixed. Still, it is one thing to believe that "I am true to myself", but another to believe that "my truth is universal." How fascinating it is that in an age where the notion of objective truth is derided, we are constantly imposed upon by a politically correct thought-police who act as if their ideas are universally true. Where is the sense in it all?

As believers, we are not able to extract ourselves from an age where everything is relative. Of course, we can join the thought-police and seek to impose our own brand of Christianity on our community. Mind you, given that fundamentalist Islam is into the imposing business, we would do well to avoid such lunacy. So, how do we survive in an age where it is believed that nothing is true except the musings of the thought-police?

The way through the maze is to acquire "the mind of Christ", or as our reading today put it, "listen to him", listen to Jesus. The way through the

maze of life is made clear by understanding the revealed Word of God - hearing Jesus, allowing him to teach us, treating him as a prophet, listening and learning from him. In the end, Jesus is the Word of God, and through his Word he will guide us along the narrow and rock-strewn way of life.

Text - 9:2

i] The glory of the transfiguration, v2-8. Although not a full re-enactment of Moses' ascent up Mount Sinai, Jesus, none-the-less, takes the inner circle of his disciples up a high mountain, and there "his whole appearance changes before their very eyes." His clothes, probably his whole person, is shrouded with a dazzling brightness. In the midst of a settling mist, the disciples witness Jesus speaking with Moses, as well as Elijah, another prophet who spoke with God and lived to tell. During the Exodus it was Moses who was radiant on the mountain, now it is Jesus. With the weather settling in, the disciples want to keep the conversation going, so they offer to build some shelters. Luke tells us that the discussion concerns Jesus' "exodus" (his departure), "the destiny he was to fulfil in Jerusalem." Of course, the disciples miss the point of the occasion, they don't need to listen to what Moses and Elijah have to say, they need only listen to Jesus.

μετα + acc. "**after**" - [AND] AFTER [SIX DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition. This unusual time signature serves to link the transfiguration to the preceding episode.

παραλαμβανει [**παραλαμβανω**] pres. "**took**" - [JESUS] TAKES [PETER AND JAMES AND JOHN]. Historic / narrative present, serving to introduce the next step in the narrative. The taking of three disciples ties in with the "some standing here" of v1.

εις "-" - [AND LEADS THEM UP TO, INTO [A MOUNTAIN HIGH]. Expressing direction of action and arrival at. Obvious Sinai imagery. They move up to meet with the divine in a place close to heaven, a "suburb of heaven", Gundry, or as the Scotts would say, *a thin place*.

κατ ιδιαν "**where they were all alone**" - ACCORDING TO ONE'S OWN = PRIVATELY, APART, BY THEMSELVES [ALONE]. Idiomatic. "Where they could be alone", CEV.

μετεμορφωθη [**μεταμορφωω**] aor. pas. "**there he was transfigured**" - [AND] HE WAS TRANSFIGURED, TRANSFORMED, VISIBLY CHANGED. Divine passive, God does the transfiguring, although this aspect of Greek is possibly overdone. It is possible that it is just Jesus' clothing that changes in appearance, although it is more likely the whole of Jesus' person. It is not necessarily a change in form, but certainly in appearance. "His whole appearance changed before their eyes", Phillips.

εμπροσθεν "**before**" - BEFORE, IN FRONT OF [THEM]. Local / spatial. "In the presence of", TH; "there in front of the disciples", CEV.

v3

στιλβοντα [**στιλβω**] pres. part. "**dazzling white**" - [AND THE GARMENTS OF HIM BECAME] GLITTERING, SHINING, GLEAMING, GLISTENING. The participle, with **εγενετο**, "became", probably forms a periphrastic construction, "his cloths became radiant", ESV, although Decker suggests it is adjectival. The word is used of a highly polished surface. Commentators tend to see the dazzling presence of Jesus in terms of a divine manifestation, as if it were a theophany. Yet, the radiance of Jesus, as with the radiance of Moses on Mount Sinai, serves to identify Jesus as the new Moses / Elijah, the new prophet. He is now the one we must listen to.

λιαν adv. "**whiter**" - EXCEEDINGLY, INTENSELY [WHITE]. The adverb serves as an attributive adjective; "intensely white", ESV.

οια "**than**" - OF SUCH A KIND AS, LIKE. Here comparative.

γναφευς [**υς εως**] "**anyone**" - A BLEACHER. Nominative subject of the verb "to be able." Referring to a person whose trade is to bleach, whiten, cloth with nitrium.

επι + gen. "**in [the world]**" - ON, UPON [THE EARTH]. Spatial. Bishop suggests that this modifier does not need to be translated as it simply identifies "the launderers" work-place, ie., "on the ground". Most translators opt for "no launderer (fuller / bleacher) on earth." "Whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them", NJB.

λευκαναι [**λευκαινω**] aor. inf. "**[could] bleach**" - [IS NOT ABLE] TO WHITEN [THUS]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "is able."

v4

The appearance of Moses and Elijah has prompted numerous interpretations. The commonly held view that they represent the law and the prophets is unlikely. It is often noted that both did not die (they were translated), although with Moses this is only assumed, and in any case, why didn't Enoch join the party? We know that they both met with God on a high mountain and that the return of Elijah and the prophet like unto Moses was anticipated and would evidence the coming kingdom. So, it is likely that Jesus takes on the mantle of both Moses and Elijah, leading his disciples through the wilderness to the promised land and revealing to them the way to life eternal.

ωφθη [**ορω**] aor. pas. + dat. of pers. "**appeared**" - [AND MOSES WITH ELIJAH] APPEARED. This verb, "look at, see" takes the sense "appeared" in the

passive. Here a supernatural appearing. It is interesting that Elijah is mentioned first, given that the situation is Mosaic, and that Elijah is **συν**, "with", Moses, as if Elijah is tagging along with Moses. If no precedence is intended, then the NIV "and" is on the mark.

αυτοις "**before them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object after the passive verb "to appear".

ησαν συλλαλουντες [**συλλαλεω**] pres. part. "**who were talking with**" - [AND] THEY WERE TALKING WITH. Imperfect verb to-be with the present participle forming a periphrastic imperfect construction. This construction may heighten aspect, here duration, "had a long discussion with", but often it is nothing more than a stylistic flair. "Elijah along with Moses appeared to them, and conversed with Jesus", Moffatt.

τω Ιησου [**ος**] dat. "**Jesus**" - JESUS. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb "to talk with."

v5

αποκριθεις [**αποκρινομαι**] aor. pas. part. "[**said**]" - [AND] HAVING ANSWERED [PETER SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle, pleonastic / redundant. Semitic form used to introduce, or continue a discourse.

τω Ιησου [**ος**] dat. "**to Jesus**" - TO JESUS. Dative of indirect object.

ραββι "**Rabbi**" - TEACHER. Vocative. Usually regarded as an inappropriate description of Jesus, yet, given the circumstances, if the lesson is "listen to him", then maybe it is very appropriate.

ειναι [**ειμι**] inf. "**to be**" - TO BE [HERE IS GOOD *for* US]. The infinitive of the verb to-be forms a nominal phrase subject of **εστιν**; "to be here is good. "It is a wonderful thing for us that we are here", Barclay.

ποιησωμεν [**ποιεω**] aor. subj. "**let us put up**" - LET US MAKE. Hortatory subjunctive. Peter's suggestion is not necessarily absurd, given that his intention is probably to keep the discussion going between such great ones. There would be much to learn from listening in, although it is Jesus they must listen to.

σοι dat. pro. "**[one] for you**" - [THREE TENTS, BOOTHS, TABERNACLES, ONE] FOR YOU [AND ONE FOR MOSES AND ONE FOR ELIJAH]. Dative of interest, advantage. Three shelters to protect the great-ones from the misty cloud that was descending on them. Another possible Exodus allusion.

v6

γαρ "-" - for. More reason than cause, introducing a parenthetical explanation regarding Peter's inappropriate suggestion. Peter, in typical form, has jumped in, overwhelmed as he is with fear. This statement serves as an interesting editorial comment which has probably been carried in the pericope throughout its

oral transmission. Matthew doesn't record the comment although states that the disciples were frightened. Of course, it could be Mark's comment and Luke has reworked it, although an original oral source seems more likely.

ου ηδει [οιδα] pluperf. "**he did not know**" - HE HAD NOT KNOWN. "The rare pluperfect form grammaticalizes remoteness", Decker. Treated as if a present tense; "for he [Peter] did not know what [how] he should answer", Gundry.

αποκριθη [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. subj. "[**what**] to say" - [WHAT] HE SHOULD ANSWER. Deliberative subjunctive used in the interrogative phrase introduced by τι, "what".

γαρ "- BECAUSE [THEY WERE AFRAID]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Peter didn't know what to say; "for they were terrified", Barclay.

v7

With much the same words that were used at Jesus' baptism, the heavenly voice proclaims that Jesus is the beloved Son of God; "listen to him." This time it is a word for the disciples, not just for Jesus. When we see the term "Son of God" we tend to think in terms of the filial relationship that exists between the Father and the Son, but this title also has Old Testament significance; it refers to God's faithful servant, the messiah. The prophets, priests and kings of Israel, even Israel itself, was God's son, and in the last day, a faithful son will emerge, the messiah, and through his death, he will save his people.

νεφελη [η] "**a cloud**" - [AND THERE APPEARED] A CLOUD. Nominative subject of the periphras. Often a sign of God's presence, his *shekinah* glory.

επισκιαζουσα [επισκιαζω] aor. part. "**enveloped**" - OVERSHADOWING, COVERING, ENVELOPING [THEM]. The participle with εγενετο produces an imperfect periphrastic construction; "a cloud overshadowed them", ESV. Although anarthrous, it is possibly adjectival, attributive; "a cloud which overshadowed them." Possibly attendant circumstance, as NIV, expressing the sense of the cloud coming upon the disciples and enveloping them, ie, the verb εγενετο is treated as having independent force. Note again the Sinai imagery, particularly reinforced by the fact that God speaks from the cloud, Ex.19:9, 24:16-25.

εκ + gen. "**from [the cloud]**" - [AND THERE CAME A VOICE] OUT OF, FROM [THE CLOUD]. Expressing source, origin.

ουτος εστιν ο υιος μου "**this is my Son**" - THIS IS THE SON OF ME. Virtually a repeat of 1:11, although here, God's words are for the disciples, not Jesus, ie., the messianic secret is coming out into the open (for those with eyes to see!). There is little doubt that this title is messianic, and as such it serves to proclaim Jesus as the faithful servant of God. Most commentators hold that the title derives from two messianic proof-texts, Ps.2:7 and Isa.42:1. Psalm 2 celebrates the

crowning of the Davidic messiah and his victory over the nations. Isaiah 42 speaks of the suffering servant of the Lord who, in the power of the Spirit of the Lord, achieves justice for the nations. On the other hand, some commentators now hold that the title derives from Genesis 22:2, Abraham's attempt to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to the Lord. There is some evidence that this incident was later regarded as a vicarious offering for Israel's redemption. The corporate identification of Jesus with God's people and his vicarious offering on our behalf, fits well with the Genesis allusion. Either way, the title "Son of God" is messianic. Jesus is God's servant messiah come to save his people.

ὁ αγαπητος adj. "**whom I love**" - THE BELOVED. Given the Hebrew background to this word, the sense is "one and only", "chosen", "unique". It is by no means easy to identify the intended sense of "beloved Son." It is commonly understood in a filial sense, expressing a divine union between the Father and the Son. This is unlikely here, although Jesus is indeed divine and properly possesses an intrinsic union with God the Father. "The beloved and only one", Barclay.

αυτου gen. pro. "**[listen] to him**" - [HEAR] HIM. Genitive of direct object after a verb of perception. This divine imperative is the central element in the episode. We are to carefully note the message of Jesus, he is the one we hear (not the Writings and the Prophets??). The content of this message is contained in the previous episode, 8:31-38: the cross and empty tomb event, and our necessary identification with it. Israel is to listen to the prophet who is like Moses, Deut.18:15.

v8

Then, in the blink of an eye, the "vision" ends and the disciples are alone with Jesus.

εξαπινα adv. "**suddenly**" - [AND] UNEXPECTEDLY, ABRUPTLY, SUDDENLY, INSTANTLY. Probably a similar sense to Mark's commonly used "immediately". Referring to an instantaneous change in circumstances, an immediate return to normality, rather than the sudden action of the disciples looking around.

περιβλεψαμενοι [**περιβλεπω**] aor. mid. part. "**when they looked around**" - HAVING LOOKED AROUND. The participle is adverbial, best viewed as temporal, as NIV, or possibly just serving as a finite verb expressing the action of the subject, "the disciples suddenly looked around." "Suddenly, on looking around", Goodspeed.

ειδον [**ὁραω**] aor. "**they [no longer] saw**" - THEY [NO LONGER] SAW [ANYONE]. The language indicating that the transfiguration was no mere vision.

αλλα "**except**" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "they no longer saw anyone, but saw only Jesus." Possibly used

instead of **ει μη**, expressing a contrast by designating an exception; "no one was with them except Jesus only", Cassirer.

μεθ [μετα] + gen. "-" - [JESUS ALONE] WITH [THEMSELVES]. Expressing association / accompaniment, "Jesus alone in the company of themselves."

v9

ii] Maintaining the messianic secret, v9-10. The events on the mountain were startling, even more startling than Jesus' miracles, so, as with the miracles, the disciples are to play down the "vision". Popular messianic fervour is the last thing Jesus needs and in any case, the mystery of God's coming kingdom is only for those with eyes to see. There is, though, a time frame to the injunction. Of course, getting their head around a "rising from the dead" leaves the disciples confused.

καταβαινοντων [καταβαινω] pres. part. "**as [they] were coming down**" - [AND THEY] WERE COMING DOWN. The genitive participle and its genitive subject **αυτων**, "they", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

εκ + gen. "**down [the mountain]**" - FROM [THE MOUNTAIN]. Expressing separation, "away from."

διεστειλατο [διαστελλω] aor. "**Jesus gave [them] orders**" - HE GAVE ORDERS, COMMANDED, INSTRUCTED. Used of a "strict instruction."

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing the content of the command.

διηγησωνται [διηγεομαι] aor. subj. "**[not] to tell**" - THEY SHOULD TELL. The need to maintain the "messianic secret" obviously applies to the transfiguration as it does for Jesus' miracles.

μηδενι dat. adj. "**anyone**" - NO ONE. Dative of indirect object.

ει μη "-" - EXCEPT. Introducing an exceptive clause; cf., **αλλα** v8.

οταν + subj. "**until**" - WHEN [THE SON OF MAN]. This construction forms an indefinite temporal clause, future time; "until after", BAGD.

αναστη [ανιστημι] aor. subj. "**had risen**" - SHOULD ARISE. Glory is assured for the Son of Man, but only after the ignominy of his execution as a common criminal. The transfiguration points to that glory, but is also, in itself, "a prolepsis of the resurrection, a present momentary representation of a glorious future event", Edwards.

εκ + gen. "**from**" - FROM [THE DEAD]. Expressing source / origin.

v10

εκρατησαν [κρατω] aor. "**they kept**" - [AND THE WORD] THEY KEPT, GRASPED, HELD FAST, RETAINED. The sense is either, "they observed the warning faithfully", NJB, or "they kept the matter to themselves", NRSV.

προς + acc. "to" - TOWARD [THEMSELVES]. Here expressing association; "with, in company with" = "to themselves."

συζητούντες [συζητεω] part. "discussing" - QUESTIONING, DISCUSSING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "they kept", "they kept and discussed" The notion of the resurrection of the dead in the last day was not new to the disciples, but a rising from the dead while others are living, certainly was. "Tried to puzzle out among themselves", Phillips.

τί ἐστίν "what [rising from the dead] meant" - WHAT IS = MEANS. Interrogative.

το ... ἀναστῆναι [ανίστημι] aor. inf. "rising" - TO RISE [FROM THE DEAD]. The infinitive takes the article and so forms a substantive, "the rising", "the resurrection", BAGD, subject of the verb to-be, ἐστίν, "what the rising from the dead is / means." It is also possible, as NIV, that the article introduces a quotation, "what is meant by the words 'raised from death.'" "What he meant by the rising from the dead", Goodspeed. Note the variant Western text, ἦτοσαν ἐκ νεδρῶν ἀναστή "when he should rise from the dead." It makes better sense, but is probably not original.

v11

iii] Elijah and the Suffering Servant, v11-13. Elijah, the one who proceeds the Son of man, was set upon, as the Son of Man is set upon. The disciples note the standard teaching of the day concerning the return of Elijah, namely, that he will herald the great Day of the Lord, the terrible day of judgment when the wicked will be punished and the righteous raised to new life. What they couldn't work out is how Jesus fits in with Elijah's coming, given what they have just witnessed on the mountain. Jesus explains that Elijah certainly does come before the Day of the Lord, and that when he comes he will herald the universal restoration of all things. Jesus then explains, from the scriptures, how he, the messiah, fits in with the dawning of this new age. "But what does the scriptures say about the Son of Man? This: that he must go through much suffering and be treated with contempt", Phillips. As for Elijah, guess what, he has already come, and they did to him what they will do to the Son of Man. One wonders how long it took the disciples to work out that Jesus was talking about John the Baptist.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - [AND THEY WERE ASKING, QUESTIONING HIM] SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant.

ὅτι "why that" - THAT [SAY THE SCRIBES] THAT. The second ὅτι in this verse obviously introduces a dependent statement, indirect speech, expressing what the scribes say concerning Elijah, namely that he must come first. The first ὅτι is not so easily defined. It may also be recitative, so RV, "and they asked him, saying, [that] the scribes say that Elijah must first come", but it

could be functioning as an interrogative, standing instead of **τις**, or a relative pronoun, or **δια τί**, as NIV and most modern translations. The disciples understand the common view that Elijah will return to proclaim the coming of "the Day of the Lord", Mal.3:23-24. Yet, fitting in Elijah's return just prior to that terrible day, while having just witnessed his "return" on the mountain, and linking that with Jesus' ministry and his resurrection while the disciples are still alive, is all a bit much.

δει + inf. "**must**" - IT IS NECESSARY. Often expressing divine compulsion.

ελθειν [ερχομαι] aor. inf. "**come**" - [ELIJAH] TO COME. The infinitive serves as a substantive, subject of the impersonal verb "is necessary"; "to come first is necessary for Elijah."

πρωτον "first" - FIRST. Not "before messiah does", CEV, but rather "before the Day of the Lord."

v12

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a step in the discourse narrative, as NIV.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [HE SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

μεν και "to be sure then" - INDEED, ON THE ONE HAND BUT YET ON THE OTHER This adversative comparative is usually formed with **μεν δε**, but here **και** is functioning as the adversative. Jesus partly agrees in the first clause, "indeed", but goes on to expose the inadequacy of the scribes teaching by his question in the second clause, "yet how can it be that"?

ελθων [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**[Elijah] does come**" - [ELIJAH] HAVING COME [FIRST]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "restores."

αποκαθιστανει [αποκαφισθημι] pres. "**restores [all things]**" - RESTORES [EVERYTHING]. Gundry suggests that the present tense is futuristic, but the action of restoration is more likely progressive. In this first clause Jesus expands on what Elijah comes to do. Malachi only says that Elijah will come before the Day of the Lord. Jesus points out that what Elijah comes to do is to inaugurate the process of universal restoration of which Jesus' death and resurrection plays an integral part. Of course, the "bad" news is that universal restoration involves judgment - the Day of the Lord (there are many such Days ["comings"] leading to the last Day). "It is true that Elijah comes before the Day of the Lord, but primarily he comes to inaugurate its coming."

πως "why then" - [AND] HOW, IN WHAT WAY. Interrogative.

επι + acc. "**that**" - [HAS IT BEEN WRITTEN] CONCERNING [THE SON OF MAN]. The preposition **επι** here expresses reference / respect, "concerning / about / with reference to", rather than expressing opposition, "against", BAGD. Jesus is now

drawing attention to what the scriptures have to say concerning the Son of Man and how this information relates to the coming of Elijah. The point, of course, is to show that the death and resurrection of Jesus fits in with Elijah's work to introduce the coming day. "What does the Old Testament have to say about the Son of Man?"

ἵνα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [HE MUST SUFFER MUCH]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement, indirect speech, expressing what the scriptures have to say concerning the Son of Man. "But what does the scriptures say about the Son of Man? This: that he must go through much suffering and be treated with contempt", Phillips.

ἐξουδενηθη [ἐξουδενεω] aor. pas. subj. "**be rejected**" - [AND] BE TREATED WITH CONTEMPT, COUNTED AS OF NO VALUE, CONSIDERED AS NOTHING, DESPISED. See: Ps.118:22, Isa.53:3.

v13

The Son of Man comes as the suffering servant, as it is written of him.

ἀλλὰ "**but**" - BUT. Strong adversative.

ὑμῖν dat. pro. "**[I tell] you**" - [I SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

ὅτι "- " - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing the point that Jesus wants to make to his disciples.

Ἠλίας "**Elijah**" - ELIJAH. Nominative subject of the verb "to come." We are still not explicitly told that John the Baptist is the Elijah, but his treatment, similar to the Son of Man, makes the link. The reticence of the gospel writers to openly identify the Baptist with Elijah is interesting. The Baptist's own identification of himself as "a voice crying in the wilderness" is a powerful one, and this with the identification of Jesus as the prophetic word of God, may well be behind the need to be less than specific.

καί "- " - AND = INDEED. Emphatic; "Elijah indeed / in fact has come."

ἐληλυθεν [ἐρχομαι] perf. "**has come**" - HAS COME. "The fact is that Elijah has come", Barclay.

αὐτῷ dat. pro. "**to him**" - [AND THEY DID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object / interest, disadvantage.

ὅσα "**everything**" - AS MUCH AS. Accusative direct object of "they were desiring."

ἠθελον [θελω] imperf. "**they wished**" - THEY WERE DESIRING, THEY WILLED. "And people treated him just the way they wanted to", CEV.

καθὼς "**just as**" - AS, JUST AS. In this context, the comparative expresses a characteristic quality / standard, "exactly as / in accordance with what has been written concerning him."

επ [επι] + acc. "**about [him]**" - [IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN] CONCERNING [HIM].
Here expressing reference / respect, "about, concerning", as in v12. "As the scriptures said they would", Barclay.

9:14-29

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

iv] The healing of a possessed boy

Synopsis

Leaving the majesty of mount transfiguration, Jesus and his three disciples come upon an epileptic boy. The boy's father is desperate because his child is now suicidal. The disciples, who remained behind while Peter, James and John went up the mountain with Jesus, are unable to exorcise the evil spirit and so now Jesus takes over and heals the child.

Teaching

Prayer - faith turned to God - involves dependence on Christ rather than self.

Issues

i] Context: See 8:22-30.

ii] Structure: *Faith and Unfaith*:

A healing narrative with an associated discourse, v14-29:

Jesus returns to the world, v14-16;

The boy's condition, v17-19;

The issue of faith and unbelief, v20-24;

The exorcism, v25-27;

The disciples' failure, v28-29.

iii] Interpretation.

The journey to faith continues for the disciples. They may recognise Jesus as messiah, but they must "listen to him" if they are to discover the way of service in the messianic kingdom. From the incident of the epileptic boy the disciples learn that prayer - faith turned to God - involves a reliance on Christ rather than self, a faith evidenced in a father's request, devoid of confidence - "I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief".

As usual, this healing / exorcism narrative points beyond itself, although here the focus is not so much on the exorcism itself, but rather the practical application of faith drawn out in the developing discourse. The narrative gives account to Jesus return to *the world*, v14-16, the condition of the demon-possessed boy, v17-19, the issue of faith and unbelief, v20-24, the healing / exorcism, v25-27, the issue of the disciples' failure to heal the boy, v28-29.

Drawing out the significance of this passage: The healing of the possessed boy and the transfiguration have the same feel as Jesus' baptism and temptation. The transfiguration, with its Exodus images (prefiguring the Exodus [release] about to take place on the cross), is set against Satanic attack, struggle and suffering. The story images "the overcoming of cosmic evil in the Christ event", Boring. "This incident brings us back down from the glorious height of the transfiguration experience to the earthly sphere, where the power of evil is confronted and where unbelief is a constant danger", Hurtado.

It is somewhat difficult to draw out the truth that Mark is wanting to make in this passage. Is he, like Matthew, exposing a failure in faith? The disciples had been given the authority to cast out demons, but on this occasion they had failed. Had they doubted the extent of their authority under Jesus? Boring questions whether we have here instruction on "exorcistic technique". He believes that Mark's point is that even with our standing as Christ's disciples, we still face a faithless world and powers of darkness and thus "we must continue to depend on the power of God available through faith and prayer." Part of our problem is reflected in the two-level plane of the gospel narrative. As Marcus puts it "on one level, the evangelist is telling a story about what happened 'way back when' in Jesus' time, but on another level, he is telling a story about what is happening now in his own Christian community, and the merging of these two narrative planes contributes to literary incongruities."

It's also hard to know the degree to which Mark refers to type (cf. Biblical theology - the kingdom of God) in this episode. The use of Sinai images in the account of the transfiguration story are patently obvious, but is the return of Jesus to a faithless crowd below imaging the return of Moses to the gathered people of Israel? Does Mark want us to align the amazement of the crowd on witnessing the appearance of Jesus with the fear of Israel at the radiant face of Moses? If so, why?

Context tells us that this miracle is not a sign of the gospel, it is not a proclamation of the coming kingdom in the person of Jesus the messiah. In *Growing Faith*, 8:22-10:52, Mark has moved into the teaching phase of Jesus' ministry. So, we have here a lesson on discipleship. "Jesus calls disciples to tasks beyond their abilities, and the fact that the tasks surpass their abilities, is evidence that the ministry is Christ's not theirs. The inadequacy of the disciples is not their fault, nor should it have the effect of impairing either their faith or fellowship with Christ. Rather, inadequacy drives the disciples to prayer, which is God's gift to them and another form of fellowship with Jesus as their Lord", Edwards.

So, a father's prayer for God's forbearance of his faltering inadequate faith, secures the restoration of his son. Restoration, resurrection, freedom, release, life, found only in the asking.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.17:14-20; Lk.9:37-43a. Mark's account of the exorcism is far more detailed than Matthew and Luke (eg., Mark's comment that when the crowd saw Jesus they were "alarmed" - like the people of Israel on seeing Moses after his visit with God on the mountain???? Also, Mark's record of Jesus' question, "How long has he been like this?" leading to "everything is possible for one who believes"). Luke only records the miracle, not the discourse. As to the disciple's question "Why couldn't we drive it out?", Matthew's focus on faith is particularly noticeable, "Your faith is too small", supported by the saying on faith as small as a mustard seed. Mark only has "This kind can come out only by prayer", presumably the prayer of faith in God's promised mercy. Matthew's emphasis on faith may derive from his own source tradition, but it looks as if he is building off Mark.

v] Homiletics: *Unanswered Prayer*

The early church was fascinated with demon possession and took the view that demons were driven out with prayer and fasting. Most of the later manuscripts of Mark have Jesus' words in v29 as "this kind can only be cast out by prayer and fasting", the word "fasting" being an obvious later addition. For the church today, the words of Jesus to the bewildered disciples are often used to empower prayer. Failure in prayer is often linked to a failure in faith. Is doubt, or a weak faith, behind unanswered prayer?

A failure in fasting obviously has nothing to do with unanswered prayer, but what about a failure of faith?. We may think that a weak faith is responsible for unanswered prayer, yet faith as small as a mustard seed moves mountains. Perfect faith, doubt-free faith, lies in the province of God's perfection, and is certainly not within the reach of we mere mortals. We may convince ourselves that our faith is free from doubt, proclaim it loudly, but in the full light of day we know that we're just having ourselves on. No, all of us can well identify with the words of that father all those years ago, "I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief."

Like the disciples all those years ago, we are going to come face to face with situations that are beyond us, that we can't handle. This is when our faith is turned to God in prayer in the knowledge that what God has promised in Jesus he will do.

As for unanswered prayers, they are nearly always related to wishful thinking. How often have we asked for things that our Lord has never

promised us? The prayer of faith is always a prayer according to the revealed will of God, according to the promises of God. It is good to bring all our troubles to Jesus, but in the end, Jesus is Lord; he will act according to his sovereign will, not according to our will.

So, when happenstance happens, hand in over to the Lord, and leave it in his hands.

Text - 9:14

The healing of the boy with the unclean spirit, v14-29. i] The return, v14-16. Jesus, and the three apostles, come upon an embarrassing failure. Members of the Sanhedrin, obviously gathering evidence against Jesus, are haranguing the disciples for a failed exorcism. Jesus asks what's going on.

ελθοντες [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**when they came**" - [AND] HAVING COME [TO THE DISCIPLES]. Variant, "when he came", but the plural reading is more likely. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV. The "they" refers to Jesus and the three disciples who witnessed the transfiguration. "Great/large crowd".

περι + acc. "**around**" - [THEY SAW A MUCH = LARGE CROWD] ABOUT, AROUND [THEM]. Spatial. The "them" being the disciples who had remained behind while Jesus, Peter, James and John went up the mountain.

συζητουντας [συζητω] pres. part. "**arguing**" - [AND SCRIBES] ARGUING, QUESTIONING. The present tense, being durative serves, to express ongoing argumentation, probably of the whole crowd, rather than just the scribes. This may explain why "scribes" is anarthrous in that they are just one element of the crowd. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the experts of the law", "who were engaged in an argument."

προς + acc. "**with**" - TOWARD [THEM]. Here expressing opposition, "against", or association, "with".

v15

ευθυς "-" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. Often used to heighten dramatic movement in an episode. "Immediately the whole crowd ran forward", Weymouth, but it can also serve to indicate narrative transition, "then the whole crowd"

πας "**all [the people]**" - ALL [THE CROWD]. "The whole crowd". The reaction of the "whole" crowd heightens the impact of that reaction.

ιδοντες [ειδον] aor. part. "**as soon as saw**" - HAVING SEEN [HIM]. The participle is adverbial, best taken as temporal; "when they saw", ESV.

εξεθαμβηθησαν [εκθαμβω] aor. mid./pas. "**were overwhelmed with wonder**" - THEY WERE ALARMED, ASTOUNDED, ASTONISHED, AMAZED. The middle voice is often used with emotion. This is one of a group of key words in the gospel which express amazement. Amazement / awe is a proper initial

response to Jesus, but a response which inevitably moves on to either belief, or unbelief. The word is a strong word and made stronger by the prefix **εκ** producing an awe / amazement / wonder of extreme emotional distress and wonderment, reinforced by a perfective aspect, ie. the action is complete in itself. One wonders why the crowd reacts so strongly at the sight of Jesus. Is Mark suggesting that Jesus is still radiant after the transfiguration, in much the same way as Moses' visage was radiant after his meeting with God on Mount Sinai, ie., is Jesus showing "the lingering effects of his transfiguration", Guelich? We should remember that the people of Israel were so fearful that they were unable to look at the face of Moses after he came down from the mountain. Cranfield thinks the reaction is due to Jesus' "unexpected and opportune arrival." "They were alarmed", BAGD; "greatly amazed", Torrey.

προσπρεχοντες [**προσπρεχω**] pres. part. "**ran**" - [AND] RUNNING TO, UP TO *him*. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "they were greeting him"; "they ran up to *him* and greeted him." Adverbial, temporal, is a possibility, so Decker, "when they ran" Further emphasising the reaction of the crowd to Jesus.

ησπαζοντο [**ασπαζομαι**] imperf. "**to greet [him]**" - THEY WERE GREETING, WELCOMING [HIM]. The imperfect is durative, possibly iterative, expressing repeated greetings; "they hailed Jesus one after another", Gundry. Of course, the imperfect is often used to indicate background information, and that may be its intention here, so Decker.

v16

προς + acc. "**with [them]**" - AND HE ENQUIRED OF THEM, WHAT ARE YOU ARGUING] TO, TOWARD [THEM]? Here expressing opposition, "against". Jesus asks "them", "What are you (plural) arguing about with them?" Who are the **αυτους**, "them"? There are numerous options, but most commentators take the view that Jesus address the crowd ("them") asking what they ("you") are arguing about with the disciples ("them"). This seems the best option because in v17 it is the father, a member of the crowd, who answers Jesus' question. Some commentators differentiate between the crowd and the scribes, but as already noted, the scribes are probably just one element of an agitated mob. Of course, the scribes wouldn't be passive onlookers, but obviously intent on stirring the pot.

v17

ii] The boy's condition, v17-19. The boy possesses an evil spirit which has not only destroyed his capacity to communicate, but has sought to take his life. Jesus had given the disciples the power to exorcise, but on this occasion the powers of darkness were too strong for them. In the face of faithless humanity, Jesus feels the burden of loneliness, anguish, and disappointment.

εἷς "a man" - [AND ANSWERED HIM] ONE. Here εἷς is used instead of τις, "a certain one / somebody", TH, so NIV.

ἐκ + gen. "of" - FROM [THE CROWD]. Here the preposition serves instead of a partitive genitive.

διδασκαλε [ος] voc. "teacher" - TEACHER. Vocative. Standing for the Aramaic "Rabbi" and indicating a limited understanding of Jesus' person.

εχοντα [εχω] pres. part. "who is possessed" - [I BROUGHT THE SON OF ME TOWARD YOU] HAVING. The participle is possibly adverbial, causal, "I brought my son to you for he has a spirit that makes him mute", ESV. Although anarthrous, it is accusative in agreement with υἱον, "son", it may be adjectival, attributive, as NIV.

αλαλον adj. "that has robbed him of speech" - [A SPIRIT] SPEECHLESS, MUTE. The attributive adjective limits "spirit", accusative direct object of "has", but in what sense? Presumably the sense is that a dumb/speechless spirit, having possessed someone, makes that person speechless, ie., the person takes on the characteristics of the evil spirit. Best expressed "because he has a spirit which makes him dumb", Barclay, or adjusted for the PC police, "keeps him from talking", CEV.

v18

The symptoms are now described, indicating that the boy is an epileptic (explicitly stated in Matthew 17:15) - thrown to the ground, foaming at the mouth, gnashing of teeth, and becoming stiff. For Mark, the problem is demonic, not medical, and this because Mark is alluding to a struggle with dark powers that will find its climax at the cross in a victory of faith.

όπου εαν + subj. "whenever" - [AND] WHEREVER. This construction normally introduces an indefinite local clause (adverbial), so "wherever it comes upon him", Weymouth, although most translations opt for a temporal clause, as NIV. Either way, the evil spirit is powerful and can take hold of the boy at will.

καταλαβη [καταλαμβάνω] aor. subj. "it seizes" - IT TAKES, OVERTAKES [HIM, IT THROWS HIM AND HE FOAMS AT THE MOUTH AND GNASHES THE TEETH AND HE BECOMES STIFF]. In the sense "take hold of with hostile intent", TH, so "takes possession of".

τοις μαθηταις [ης ου] dat. "disciples" - [AND I SAID] TO THE DISCIPLES [OF YOU]. Dative of indirect object. "I talked to your followers about casting out this demon", Junkins.

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT [MAY YOU CAST IT OUT]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what he said / asked, although possibly introducing a purpose clause, "I asked / told your disciples in order that they may cast it out."

και **"but"** - AND. Possibly with an adversative sense here, as NIV.
ουκ ισχυσαν [ισχυω] aor. **"they could not"** - THEY WERE NOT STRONG. We might expect ου δυναμαι, "they were not able", but here as a stark statement underlining the disciples lack of strength, lessened somewhat by the variant reading "to cast it out" - an obvious addition. "But they could not do a thing", Junkins.

v19

ὁ δε "-" - but/and he. Transitional construction, indicating a step in the dialogue from the father to Jesus.

αποκριθεις **"Jesus replied"** - HAVING ANSWERED [HE SAYS TO THEM, O DISBELIEVING GENERATION]. A typical long winded Aramaic introduction with the attendant participle treated as virtually redundant, as NIV. "O faithless, unbelieving, disbelieving, unfaithful, ... generation." Who is Jesus addressing? Is it the father, the Sadducees, the crowd, the disciples, or everyone? Cranfield argues that Jesus' words can apply to everyone there, but they particularly apply to the disciples, since it is their lack of faith that is at issue. Cranfield goes on to suggest that the disciples' problem lay in taking their previous success for granted, but this is not the point that Mark makes. "The disciples not the least", Swete, so Marcus. "He differentiates himself from unbelieving humanity as such", Boring. Not all commentators agree, cf., Gundry, Taylor, Evans. Edwards argues that Jesus excludes the disciples from the "faithless generation". This seems likely, as Jesus never uses the term "faithless generation" for his disciples. So, it seems likely that Jesus is referring to the unbelieving crowd stirred up by the Scribes. The disciples have simply struck a situation too difficult for them to handle, and as Jesus will go on to explain, when the situation is beyond us, we can only turn to God in prayer - "prayer is faith turned to God", Grundmann.

ἕως ποτε **"how long"** - UNTIL WHEN. Temporal construction; "how long", as NIV.

προς **"with"** - [WILL I BE] TOWARD [YOU]. Here the preposition expresses association, "with / in company with". "How long must the Son of Man strive with the disbelief of humanity?"

ὑμων gen. pro. **"you"** - [HOW LONG WILL I BEAR, PUT UP WITH, ENDURE, HAVE TO BE PATIENT WITH] YOU. As a verb of emotion, "to endure" takes a genitive of direct object, although not in classical Gk.

φερετε [φερω] pres. imp. **"Bring [the boy to me]"** - BRING, CARRY [HIM TO ME]. "Bring that boy to Me", Junkins.

v20

iii] The issue of faith and unbelief, v20-24. In the presence of Jesus, the Satanic power oppresses the boy. Jesus' question to the father demonstrates empathy and interest, yet after the disciples' failure, the Father's plea now carries with it doubt. Is Jesus really able to act for his son? Yet, the power and authority of Jesus is not limited, for nothing is impossible to God. The father affirms his willingness to rely on Jesus, but exposes his humanity in identifying himself with the "faithless generation". All he can do is seek God's mercy in the face of his "faithless" faith.

ιδων [ειδον] aor. part. "**when [the spirit] saw [Jesus]**" - [AND THEY BROUGHT HIM TOWARD HIM, AND] HAVING SEEN [HIM, THE SPIRIT IMMEDIATELY]. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV. The NIV is probably right in its translation, although both the subject and the object are unclear, eg. "when Jesus saw the boy, the spirit ...", "when the boy saw Jesus, the spirit" As Gundry notes, the nominative case of "having seen" requires that it modify the neuter subject "the spirit", *ad sensum*. Of course, we then have to recognise a change in subject with "he fell to the ground", ie. "the boy fell to the ground", but then there is often a subject interchange between a demoniac and their demon.

συνεσπαρξεν [συσοαρασσω] aor. "**threw [the boy] into a convulsion** - CONVULSED, HE PULLED ABOUT [HIM]. The prefix may serve to strengthen the verb ("to convulse completely"), but as it is only found here and in Luke, there is no agreement as to the intention of the prefix.

πεσων [πιπτω] aor. part. "**he fell**" - [AND] HAVING FALLEN [UPON THE GROUND]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "convulsed".

αφριζων [αφριζω] pres. part. "**foaming at the mouth**" - [HE WAS ROLLING AROUND] FOAMING *at the mouth*. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the action of the verb "he was rolling around", as NIV.

v21

ως [αφ ου] "-" - [AND HE QUESTIONED THE FATHER OF HIM, HOW MUCH TIME IS IT] WHILE/WHEN. Here functioning as a temporal conjunction; "since", Cranfield.

αυτω dat. pro. "**[has] he [been like this]**" - [THIS HAS HAPPENED] TO HIM? Dative of interest, disadvantage.

εκ + gen. "**from [childhood]**" - [AND HE SAID] FROM [CHILDHOOD]. The preposition here is temporal; "ever since he was a child", CEV.

v22

"The father's words leave a vivid impression", Taylor.

ἵνα + subj. "to [kill him]" - [AND OFTEN, MANY TIMES AND = ALSO INTO FIRE IT THREW HIM AND INTO WATERS] THAT [IT MIGHT DESTROY HIM]. Here obviously introducing a purpose clause, "in order to destroy him."

ἀλλὰ "but" - BUT. Adversative / contrastive. The evil spirit is powerful, but Jesus is surely more powerful, so "nevertheless, if you are able", Gundry.

εἰ + ind. "if" - IF. Introducing a conditional clause, 1st. class, where the proposed condition is assumed to be true, "if, *as is the case*, *then*" If ability is the issue here, with the disciples of Jesus unable to cast out the demon, so implying that Jesus is also unable, then why don't we have a 3rd., class conditional clause? None-the-less, doubt / caution is being expressed by the Father; he is unsure if Jesus has the power to deal with the situation. Indicated by his sharp response, this is certainly how Jesus views the man's statement.

δύνη [δυναμαι] pres. pas. "you can do" - YOU ARE ABLE *to do*. The complementary infinitive ποιειν, "to do" is assumed, so "you are able to do." The issue is one of ability, not willingness. Due to the disciples' failure, they being representatives of Jesus, the father is unsure whether Jesus "is able", how the power, to perform the exorcism.

τι acc. "anything" - A CERTAIN THING / ANYTHING. Object of the assumed infinitive.

σπλαγχνισθεις [σπλαγχνιζομαι] aor. pas. part. "take pity on" - HAVING COMPASSION, PITY, MERCY. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the imperative verb "help [us]", therefore imperatival, although in the terms of a petition rather than a command; "do help us, do have pity on us", Moffatt.

ἡμας "us" - [UPON] US. Taylor notes that by the use of the plural the father has identified himself with the child's condition.

ἡμιν dat. pro. "[HELP] US" - Dative of direct object after the verb βοηθew, "to help"

v23

"The issue posed hopefully, but tentatively by the father, is whether Jesus is able to do anything. With divine indignation, Jesus rejects the inquiry as a non-question - the one who represents the power of God cannot be questioned about his ability", Boring. "A man with real faith will refuse to set limits to God's power present in Jesus", Hunter.

δε "-" - BUT/AND [JESUS SAID TO HIM]. Transitional, indicating a step in the dialogue from the father to Jesus, "if you can do anything", retorted Jesus", Phillips.

το "-" - THE [IF YOU ARE ABLE]. A neuter article is commonly used in classical Gk. to introduce direct speech, or a quote, but it is more likely serving here as a

nominalizer, turning the restatement of the protasis of the conditional clause, v22, into a nominative of exclamation, Wallace, 59-60.

παντα adj. "**everything**" - ALL *things*. The adjective is used as a noun, nominative subject of an assumed verb to-be.

δυνατα adj. "**possible**" - *are* ABLE, POSSIBLE *to do*. Predicate adjective. Again, the infinitive "to do" is assumed, so "all things are able to be done".

τω πιστευοντι [**πιστευω**] dat. pres. part. "**for him who believes**" - TO = FOR THE ONE BELIEVING. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of interest, advantage, as NIV. This rather bald statement is often removed from its context and used to support wishful thinking. Cranfield lists the usual suspects, opting for "a man who has faith will not set any limit to what I (Jesus) (or perhaps God?) can do", although properly "what I said I will do." Effective faith entails reliance on the revealed will of God in Christ, a reliance that God will do what he says he will do.

v24

The father's response causes the expositor no end of trouble. Calvin observes the contradiction of claiming to believe, but at the same time asking for help to overcome unbelief. "As our faith is never perfect, it follows that we are partly unbelievers." Calvin suggests that the father is asking forbearance for his "little" / wavering faith. On the other hand, the father may wrongly think that the issue is quantitative? "Sir I do have faith - if it is not enough, do help me (ie., help me to increase it)", Hunter. Of course, we do well to remember that faith is not quantitative, since faith as small as a mustard seed can move a mountain, and this because God does the moving. It is also possible that the father "believes, but does not have faith as a possession to which he can appeal, and he knows he must pray (an expression of faith) for faith (which he does not claim to have)", Boring. Calvin's approach seems best. So, the father's words remind us that "true faith is always aware how small and inadequate it is", Edwards. The father does indeed believe, since he brought his child to be healed, but he exemplifies, not the "faithless generation", but the faithful who struggle with their faith - *simil justus et peccator*, "at once righteous and a sinner", Luther.

ευθως adv. "**immediately**" - [AND HAVING CRIED OUT] IMMEDIATELY. Expressing again dramatic movement; "he responds promptly and without hesitation", Decker.

του παιδιου [**ου**] gen. "**of the child**" - [THE FATHER] OF THE CHILD. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

ελεγεν [**λεγω**] imperf. "**exclaimed**" - WAS SAYING. Standing with the attendant circumstance participle "having exclaimed, cried out"; "cried out and said." "At once the father of the boy cried out", Moffatt.

βοηθει [βοηθεω] pres. imp. "**help**" - [I BELIEVE] HELP, ASSIST. Note the move from the aorist (punctiliar) "help", v22, to the present (durative) "help" here, expressing ongoing help for a lingering state of unbelief - a state common to humanity. As noted above, the father asks for forbearance.

τη απιστια [α] dat. "[**my unbelief**" - THE FAITHLESSNESS, UNBELIEF [OF ME]. Dative of direct object after the verb "to help."

v25

iv] The exorcism, v25-27. Release is again achieved through Jesus' powerful and authoritative word. The description of the near-death struggle of the child's release is possibly intended to image the death and resurrection of Jesus, through which the powers of darkness will soon be defeated.

Jesus continues maintaining the messianic secret by moving to complete the exorcism before the crowd can reform / increase. It is unclear what is happening with regard the crowd. Had Jesus moved away from the crowd to deal personally with the boy and his father, or is the crowd rapidly expanding, or is this a different crowd? It is likely that what we have is a crowd moving from one point to another. Initially gathered around the disciples, it moves, with some running, to meet Jesus as he comes down the mountain, and then again reforms around him.

ιδων [ειδον] aor. part. "**when [Jesus] saw**" - [AND JESUS] HAVING SEEN. The Participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV, probably with a causal twist; "As Jesus saw that", Moffatt.

ότι "**that**" - THAT [A CROWD IS GATHERING]. Here introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Jesus became aware of; "Jesus noticed that a mob was collecting", Berkeley. The word "gathering" is strengthened by its prefixes and may express "hostile intent", TH. "The crowd closed in upon them", Manson.

επειτησεν [επιτιμαω] aor. "**he rebuked**" - HE REBUKED, COMMANDED. Here obviously with the sense "command", a command with an implied threat. "It is I who order you", Barclay.

τω πνευματι τω ακαθαρτω dat. "**the evil spirit**" - THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT [SAYING TO IT]. Dative of direct object after the επι prefix verb "to rebuke." An example of the canon of Apollonius where two dependent nouns either both take an article, as here, or both lack it. We are now told that the "spirit" is "unclean", i.e., of an evil force which makes a person ritually unclean and thus apart from the people of God; "a contaminating spirit".

το αλαλον και κωφον πνευμα "**you deaf and mute spirit**" - MUTE AND DEAF SPIRIT. Nominative of address, rather than a vocative. Again, more information is supplied in that this spirit is deaf, and thus by implication makes the possessed person deaf.

σοι dat. pro. "you" - [I COMMAND] YOU. Dative of direct object after the επι prefix verb "to give orders to."

εξ [εκ] + gen. "of [him]" - [COME OUT] FROM [HIM]. Expressing separation. μηκετι εισελθης [εισερχομαι] aor. subj. "never enter again" - [AND] NO MORE MAY YOU ENTER [INTO HIM]. A subjunctive of prohibition, Wallace p469.

v26

κραξας [κραζω] aor. part. "the spirit shrieked" - [AND] HAVING CRIED OUT. This participle, along with "having torn apart", are attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the main verb "came out", but possible temporal; "after crying out and convulsing him terribly", ESV.

πολλα adv. "violently" - [AND HAVING TORN APART] MUCH [IT CAME OUT]. Adverbial use of πολλους. Probably referring to frequency, so "repeatedly", Gundry, but possibly "greatly".

ωσει aor. "like" - [AND HE BECAME] AS IF, LIKE [DEAD]. Comparative.

ωστε + inf. "that" - SO THAT. This construction forms a consecutive clause, "with the result that many said".

πολλους adj. "many" - MANY, MUCH. Probably "most of the crowd", even "all the crowd", BAGD, "all who were present", Cranfield. Gundry argues that the crowd demonstrates by this statement, a statement which expresses the victory of the evil powers, that it is indeed the faithless generation. Boring, on the other hand, argues that Mark is simply emphasising the boy's death-like state, as opposed to his being raised up, "to point to the Christ event as a whole and communicate resurrection faith".

οτι "-" - TO SAY = SAID THAT [HE DIED]. Introducing direct speech, what the crowd said.

v27

κρατησας [κρατεω] aor. part. "took [him by the hand]" - [BUT JESUS] HAVING GRASPED [THE HAND OF HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "lifted /raised up", "grasped his hand and helped him up", but it may be treated adverbially, instrumental, expressing the means by which he lifted him up. "Hand", χειρος, is a genitive of direct object after the verb "to take hold of."

ανεστη [ανιστημι] aor. "he stood up" - [RAISED, LIFTED UP HIM, AND] HE STOOD UP, GOT UP, AROSE. Note, also used of resurrection, ie., "lived again, came to life" after having died. Probably the sense is that the boy, having been helped to his feet by Jesus, is able to stand by himself "demonstrating his restoration to health", Guelich.

v28

v] The disciples' failure, v28-29. In a short epilogue, Mark records the reason for the disciples' failure. The disciples faced a power that was beyond them and they could do nothing more than hand the matter over to the divine restorer.

εισελθοντος [εισερχομαι] gen. aor. part. "**after [Jesus] had gone**" - [AND HE] HAVING ENTERED. The genitive participle, and its genitive subject, forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal. Noted as a typical loose use of the genitive absolute, reflecting Aramaic usage, cf., Zerwick #49.

εις + acc "**indoors**" - INTO [A HOUSE]. Spatial; expressing the direction of the action and arrival at.

επηρωτων [επηρωταω] imperf. "**asked**" - [THE DISCIPLES OF HIM] WERE ENQUIRING, QUESTIONING [HIM]. Imperfect is probably progressive / descriptive, expressing action that is in progress.

κατ ιδιαν "**privately**" - ACCORDING TO ONE'S OWN. Idiomatic; "apart / privately", Zerwick.

οτι "-" - THAT = WHY. Usually classified as an interrogative use of *hoti* = **ο** + **τι**, ie., introducing a question, as NIV.

εκβαλειν [εκβαλλω] aor. inf. "**drive [it] out**" - [WE WERE NOT ABLE] TO CAST OUT [IT]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the negated verb "were not able".

εν νηστεια "-" - in = BY FASTING. This variant is rejected by most commentators and translations. The preposition **εν** is probably instrumental; "by fasting."

v29

In Matthew's gospel Jesus answers the disciples' question with the words "because of your little faith", but Mark's point seems quite different. "This kind / type" of unclean spirit, a powerful kind (Mark has made this point in his description of the boy's symptoms), necessitates prayer. Seeing Jesus didn't pray, it is usually argued that the need for pray applies to the disciples. They needed to put the exorcism into divine hands, given its difficulty, rather than rely on their own abilities. This, of course, indirectly becomes a matter of faith; "prayer is faith turned to God", Grundmann. From the boy's father we learn the lesson of faith. He asks Jesus for forbearance and his prayer was answered. The point is, the situation faced by the disciples was beyond them; the evil power was too powerful for them. Not so for Jesus. When life crushes us, we can only hand the situation over to Jesus in the knowledge that ultimately it will all be set right, if not in this life, then certainly in the next.

τουτο το γενος **"this kind"** - [AND HE SAID TO THEM] THIS SORT, TYPE, KIND. The kind of unclean spirit that is powerful.

εξελθειν [εξερχομαι] aor. inf. **"[can] come out"** - [IS NOT ABLE] TO COME OUT. The infinitive of the verb, "to come out / go out", in this context, stands for the passive of *εξελθειν*, "to be cast out", cf., Swete. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the negated verb "is able".

ει μη **"only"** - EXCEPT. Introducing an exceptive clause, expressing a contrast by designating an exception.

εν **"by"** - IN, BY [PRAYER]. Here taking an instrumental sense, "by means of".

9:30-37

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

v] Jesus teaches suffering and true discipleship #2.

Synopsis

Jesus now sets about preparing the disciples for the cross and beyond. First, he again predicts his passion and resurrection, v30-32, and then, after an unfortunate discussion among the disciples over seniority, Jesus explains, as he did with the first prediction of his death, the true nature of discipleship v33-37.

Teaching

True greatness is found in acquiescence, not in status and prestige.

Issues

i] Context: See 8:22-30. Mark now records a series of discipleship sayings which run through to v50. In the gospels, such collections of sayings are often linked together by common phrases and subject matter, although they are most likely separate sayings delivered by Jesus on a number of different occasions. Such sets of sayings can sometimes have a common beginning and ending, so forming an *inclusio*. Some commentators take the view that in v35-50 Mark presents us with a linked set of sayings on the question of who is the greatest. Yet, it seems more likely that the set of linked sayings in v42-50 focus on the unofficial exorcist with its theme of inclusion, while the sayings in v35-37 are related to the theme of acquiescence, as opposed to seniority, status and privilege.

ii] Structure: *The servant of all*:

Jesus' second passion prediction, v30-32;

The issue of true greatness, v33-34;

Teaching on seniority, v35-37:

Humility determines seniority, v35;

Seniority is reckoned by a welcoming spirit, v36-37.

iii] Interpretation:

In this, the second of three passion predictions, we are reminded that God's way of establishing his kingdom is by Jesus being "handed over", as of being handed over to judgment, v30-32. The associated exposition on discipleship consists of a narrative concerning seniority, v33-37, along with two embedded sayings: acquiescence defines greatness, v35b, an embracing of the lowly, v37. "God's kingdom will come through defeat,

not victory, and within it the world's values are turned upside down, the first are last and the last first", France.

As in the first prediction of Jesus' death, Mark again draws a comparison between Jesus' sacrificial humility, and the pathetic self-centredness of the disciples. Jesus' sacrifice is both the means for redemption and the model for ethics. The attached sayings on acquiescence / humility, as opposed to status and privilege, serve to provide the means of participating in Jesus' sacrifice and also serve to guide an ethical response.

The first saying, "whoever wants to be first must be last and servant of all", calls for dependence on the cross-bearing of Christ - we are great when we are nothing in Christ. The second saying on the receiving of Jesus in the person of a child, reminds us that in the same way a child depends on an adult, so a disciple depends in faith on Christ. True greatness is found in union with the suffering messiah.

Both sayings also guide the Christian life; acquiescence / surrender to Christ's surrender to the Father's will is the model for our following Christ. Jesus seeks to condemn "all human desires to make religion an opportunity for personal aggrandisement", Hurtado; "True greatness is service, service is true greatness", Hunter.

"Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me", v36-37. Is this an illustration about welcoming / accepting Jesus, or welcoming / accepting others, or both?

On one hand, Jesus seems to be making the point that precedence in the kingdom is found in welcoming him, for in such an act a person welcomes God and in so doing discovers greatness in his grace, i.e., Jesus is the child, rather than "the risen Christ .. is met in the child", Boring.

On the other hand, "Jesus actions of taking the child into the middle of the circle of the disciples, picking him up, and hugging him, illustrate the servant-like attitude that he wishes to inculcate", Marcus. Such is humble service and is regarded by Jesus as if done to him, and similarly regarded by the Father as if done to him. Thus, such service determines greatness / precedence / seniority in the kingdom of God. So, the service / servanthood that Jesus is referring to is the receiving / welcoming / accepting of a member of lost and broken humanity who grips the slender thread of divine mercy. The **παιδιον** represents the lost and the disciples are encouraged to receive the lost as Jesus received the lost (and received them), illustrated now in his receiving of the child. Such is servanthood of the Jesus kind, a kind defining greatness in the kingdom of God.

In passing, we should note that other interpretive approaches are suggested: The service is often understood in evangelistic terms; "whoever welcomes an evangelist (παιδιον) welcomes Jesus." Yet here, the context has nothing whatsoever to do with evangelism. Jesus' words are directed to the disciples, not unbelievers. The service is also sometimes understood as specifically done to a poor believer, or a believing child, or children in general, or even insignificant humanity,, but this seems unlikely.

It seems likely that the illustration of receiving a child encapsulates both the receiving of Jesus and the receiving of a fellow member of broken humanity who has found forgiveness in Jesus.

iv] Synoptics:

The second passion prediction: Matt.17:22-23; Lk.9:43b-45. Matthew is close to Mark, while Luke abbreviates the prediction.

The issue of greatness: Matt:18.1-5; Lk.9:46-48. A diverse handling of the tradition, with the sayings attached to separate narrative traditions: saying #1, v35, to v33-34 (Matt.18:1, Lk.9:46) - Matt.20:26-27, 23:11, Lk.22:26; and saying #2, v37, to v36 (Matt.18:2, Lk.9:47) - Matt.10:42, 18:3-5, Lk.9:48.

v] Homiletics: *True Greatness*



Following the death of Diana, princess of Wales, Kate Legge in the Australian newspaper made this comparison between Diana and Mother Teresa. "One was young and beautiful and did good works. The other was old and ugly and did good works. One had a First World eating disorder called bulimia. The other lived in the Third World where people starve to death. One wore designer clothes and once sold her dresses for \$7.8 million. The other left behind two saris and a bucket. One made

headlines with simple gestures such as touching a person with AIDS. The other lived her life among lepers and the diseased." "In one sense there is no comparison between the two women and yet the expiry of the elderly missionary, as a postscript to the dislocation over Diana's death, seems to taunt our godless worship of glamour and style."

We would be hard pressed to find a clearer present-day illustration of Jesus' teaching on becoming "the servant of all." Slighting Diana's

character is both undignified and unnecessary. The comparison between Diana and Mother Teresa is not made to exalt one and debase the other, but rather to expose the human tendency to glory in status, wealth, beauty, position, education, vitality..... As a US magazine editor commented, if she ran a picture of an elderly person on the cover, she could guarantee a drop in sales.

A person's relationship with Jesus establishes the criteria for greatness. In Christ the unlovely are lovely.

Text - 9:30

Suffering and the nature of true discipleship: i] Jesus' second prediction of his death and resurrection, v30-32. Mark now records Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem. Jesus and his disciples move through Galilee and Perea, but this time his ministry is not a public one; he spends the time teaching his disciples. Again he raises the issue of his coming death. This passion prediction is different to the first in 8:31. In the first, the Son of Man "must" suffer, be rejected and killed. This time, the Son of Man "is" "betrayed" (delivered, handed over). Instead of a necessary suffering and rejection, there is a determined handing over to martyrdom by God, cf., Jer.33:24, Isa.53:6,12. God's deeper purpose is fulfilled in the death of Jesus. As in 8:31, Jesus predicts his resurrection. Sadly, the disciples' lack of understanding continues, and this because of their little faith. They are left to respond emotionally, too afraid to ask Jesus what he meant.

ἐξελθόντες [ἐξέρχομαι] aor. part. "**they left**" - [AND] HAVING GONE OUT [FROM THERE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "they were passing", as NIV, but it may be treated as a temporal clause, "when they left there they passed through ..." The crasis κακειθεν, "and from there", is formed by και + εκκειθεν = "thence / from there", Zerwick.

δια + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH [GALILEE]. Spatial; "go through / pass through", TH, used with παρεπορευοντο, "to pass by."

ουκ ηθελεν [θελω] imperf. "**Jesus did not want anyone**" - [AND] HE DID NOT WANT. The imperfect, being durative, possibly expresses ongoing action.

ινα + subj. "-" - THAT. Here introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Jesus willed. A dependent statement in the form of an object clause would properly be formed by an infinitive, but hina + subj. had started to take over this role even though it was commonly used to form an adverbial clause, final, expressing purpose, cf., Zerwick #406/7. So, the sense may best be expressed as an infinitive; "Jesus did not wish [his presence] to be known", Barclay. Note that when θελω takes an infinitive, the infinitive is usually classified as complementary, but the above classification is acceptable.

τις γνοι **"to know where they were"** - ANYONE SHOULD KNOW. "Presence / where they were" assumed. Not for the purpose of maintaining the messianic secret, but for an opportunity to teach the disciples, cf., v31a.

v31

The second *Son of Man must suffer* saying.

γαρ **"because"** - BECAUSE [HE WAS TEACHING THE DISCIPLES OF HIM]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Jesus didn't want the populous to know he was in the vicinity. "For he was occupied with teaching his disciples", Cassirer. The verb "teaching" is imperfect, but it is not necessarily expressing durative action since it is common to use the imperfect in verbs of speech, cf., Zerwick #272.

αυτοις dat. pro. **"to them"** - [AND HE WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech expressing what he was saying.

ο υιος του ανθρωπου **"the Son of Man"** - THE SON OF MAN. For the title "Son of Man", see Mk.2:10. The genitive "of man" is adjectival, relational. Jesus' self-designation. As a messianic title it maintained the messianic secret in that in Aramaic the phrase could be understood as simply "a man", but of course the title refers to Daniel's "Son of Man", the coming one, the one who comes to the Ancient of Days to receive glory, honour and power and take up his eternal reign, cf., Dan.7:13.

παραδιδοται [παραδιδωμι] pres. pas. **"is going to be betrayed"** - IS BEING HANDED OVER, GIVEN OVER, BETRAYED. Delivered up to "oppressive and violent treatment", Gundry. The present tense may express present action, "being given over to wicked men", although it is usually treated as a present tense with future force, "will be", Taylor, Moule. The possible meanings of the word prompt translations like "will be betrayed / arrested", but the word has significant LXX precedence, "is being handed over / delivered up" [by God = divine passive] into human hands, even of being delivered up to judgment. So Jesus, as the suffering servant, preaches and is delivered up [by God (through Judas??)], cf., Isa.19:4, 53:6, 12, Dan.4:14....; "will be given into the power of men", Cassirer.

εις acc. **"into"** - TO, INTO [THE HANDS OF MEN AND THEY WILL KILL HIM]. Expressing the direction of the action and arrival at. Not "given over / handed over by (dative) human hands", but "to / into". The NIV literal translation means "into the power of men", TH, Barclay, ... "Kill" in the sense of "execute him."

αποκτανθεις [αποκταινω] aor. pas. part. "-" - [AND] HAVING BEEN KILLED. The participle is adverbial, possibly temporal, virtually redundant; "and when he is killed, after three days ...", ESV.

μετα acc. "**after**" - AFTER [THREE DAYS HE WILL ARISE]. Temporal use of the preposition, cf., Hos.6:2, Dan.7 = the suffering and speedy vindication of the Son of Man. The preposition **μετα** + acc. is adverbial here, temporal. Resurrection = vindication.

v32

The reasons for the disciples' lack of knowledge and their hesitation in seeking clarification is of no interest to Mark, and so should probably be of no interest to us! Mark's "emphasis falls on ignorance and fear as such, because they provide foils that make Jesus' foreknowledge and awesomeness stand out", Gundry.

οἱ δε "**but**" - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional, indicating a step from dialogue to narrative / editorial comment.

ηγνοουν [**αγνωω**] "**did not understand**" - WERE IGNORANT = NOT UNDERSTANDING [THE WORD = PROPHECY]. The disciples did not fully understand the Christ event until after the resurrection.

επερωτησαι [**επερωταω**] aor. inf. "**to ask [him] about it**" - [AND THEY WERE AFRAID] TO ASK, INQUIRE [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "were afraid", while "him" functions as the object of the infinitive. "About it" added for meaning; "they were too afraid to ask him what his words meant", TH.

v33

ii] The issue of true greatness, v33-34. In Matthew, the disciples ask Jesus "who is the greatest", but here Jesus is aware that the disciples are discussing the issue, and so, for the purpose of teaching, he asks them what they were talking about on the way. The disciples aren't very forthcoming, given the nature of the subject.

γενομενος [**γινομαι**] aor. part. "**When he was [in the house]**" - [AND THEY CAME INTO CAPERNAUM, AND] BEING [IN THE HOUSE]. The participle is adverbial, probably introducing a temporal clause, as NIV.

διελογιζεσθε [**διαλογιζομαι**] imperf. "**[what] were you arguing about**" - [HE WAS QUESTIONING THEM, WHAT] WERE YOU DISCUSSING, DEBATING, DISPUTING. Variant addition **προς εαυτους**, "among yourselves". Not necessarily "arguing", so possibly "what were you discussing ...?", Cassirer, but the NIV take is probably on the mark.

εν τη οδω "**on the road**" - ON THE WAY. The preposition **εν** is possibly adverbial here, temporal; "what were you talking about while we were traveling?" As with the first passion prediction, it is possible that Jesus has delivered the second while travelling from the region of Mt. Hermon and Caesarea Philippi,

through northern Galilee to Capernaum, ie., while travelling (although detailed geographical movement in the gospel may be Mark's construction). Anyway, while travelling, discussion on the issue of seniority ensues.

v34

οἱ δε **"but"** - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Jesus to his disciples.

ἠσιωπων [σιωπαω] imperf. **"kept quiet"** - WERE BEING QUIET, SILENT. The imperfect is durative; "kept silent."

προς + acc. "-" - TOWARD [ONE ANOTHER]. Here expressing association, "with, in company with."

γαρ **"because"** - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they kept quiet.

εν + dat. **"on [the way]"** - ON [THE WAY]. Adverbial use of the preposition, temporal; "while they were on the way." The repetition of this phrase used in v33 is not present in some texts. Obviously some scribes "did not recognise the deliberate Markan emphasis", Boring.

διελεχθησαν [διαλεγομαι] aor. **"they had argued"** - THEY DISCUSSED, ARGUED. Used only here in Mark. Possibly "argued", but better "debated / discussed". The aorist is used to express a perfective aspect, ie., completed action, but obviously requires a pluperfect in English; "they had been arguing with each other", Barclay.

μειζων [μεγας] comp. adj. **"greatest"** - [CERTAIN = WHO WAS] GREATER. Predicate adjective. Another example where NT Gk. uses the comparative for the superlative when the comparative should only be used for the superlative if the comparison is between two items. Origin notes that it was only natural for the disciples to discuss the issue of precedence, given that Jesus had selected three particular disciples to accompany him up the mountain. Mark does not say that Jesus was angry with the disciples for discussing this issue, nor does he actually say why the disciples were reticent to tell Jesus what they were discussing. It is usually understood that the disciples were somewhat embarrassed, and may not have wanted Jesus to know that they were discussing the whys and wherefores of precedence among their number.

v35

iii] Mark now records a series of discipleship sayings which carry through to 9:38-50, *Partners in discipleship*; a) The first saying - humility determines precedence / greatness / seniority in the kingdom of God, v35. Jesus explains that in the kingdom of God, greatness, in the sense of a high status, or rank, belongs to "the servant of all". In the kingdom, the "last" is assessed as the "first", last in

the sense of a servant, a servant like Jesus. As the early church father Polycarp put it, we must walk "according to the truth of the Lord, who was 'the servant of all'". Of course, this does not promote the idea that we should strive to be last so that we can be first, rather that, in the kingdom, precedence is gauged on the basis of acquiescent service, Christ being the servant's servant, *par excellence*. The term "servant of all" is often understood as a form of cross-bearing discipleship which parallels Jesus' life-giving sacrifice - the way of glory is through suffering and death. Jesus does link his sacrifice with servanthood, although it does not necessarily follow that servanthood equals sacrifice. Note the similar context found in 10:41-45.

καθισας [καθιζω] aor. part. "**sitting down**" - [AND] HAVING SAT DOWN. Attendant circumstance participle, "Jesus sat down and called ...", or adverbial, Modal, or temporal, "when he sat down", or causal, "so [as a result] he sat down", Moffatt. This is the normal posture for a Rabbi, he sits to teach and his disciples stand to hear.

εφωνησεν [φωνεω] aor. "**Jesus called**" - HE CALLED OUT TO GATHER [THE TWELVE AND HE SAYS TO THEM]. The word expresses speech with a raised voice. It is probably used to emphasise what Jesus is about to say (assisted by the historic present "and says"), even displaying "the vigour with which Jesus exercises authority over his disciples", Gundry; "so Jesus drew his disciples close to him and emphatically told them ..."

ει + ind. "if" - Introducing a 1st class conditional clause where the proposed condition is assumed to be true, "if, *as is the case*, *then* .." Here introducing direct discourse.

ειναι [ειμι] "**to be**" - [SOMEONE DESIRES, WILLS, WISHES] TO BE. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "wishes".

πρωτος adj. "**first**" - FIRST *in rank*. Predicate nominative of the verb to-be.

εσται [ειμι] fut. "**he must be**" - HE WILL / SHALL BE. It is usually regarded that the future tense here has strong imperatival force, "he shall be" = "he must be", but a predictive future should not be ruled out, particularly as most imperatival futures are 2nd person. If we read the future as taking imperatival force we end up following Taylor who argues that Jesus is rebuking "personal ambition"; if, on the other hand, we read the future as predictive, then we are more inclined to understand Jesus' words as kingdom truth, namely that in the kingdom it is the servant who takes precedence; "whoever will be last, will be first of all".

διακονος [ος] "**the servant**" - [LAST *in rank* OF ALL AND] SERVANT, SLAVE. Predicate nominative. "Servant", servanthood, exegetes what Jesus means by "last". That is, "discipleship corresponds to Christology; as the Messiah is the

servant who gives himself for others", Boring. "True greatness is a matter of humble service", Cranfield.

παντων gen. adj. "of all" - OF ALL. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative. Expressing a universal application.

v36

b) The second independent saying, along with its introductory narrative, encapsulates the truth that precedence / greatness in the kingdom is appropriated by a welcoming spirit, v36-37. Jesus uses a child to illustrate and apply what he means. As indicated in *Interpretation* above, Mark's placement of this pericope serves to make the point that precedence in the kingdom is found in welcoming Jesus, for in such an act, a person welcomes God and in so doing discovers greatness in his grace. Yet, at the same time, as Jesus "welcomes", accepts, receives, all who come to him, disciples need to display the same willingness to accept those who seek God's mercy in Christ. When we embrace a forgiven sinner, we embrace Jesus, we embrace God.

Interpretations of this illustration usually rest on a specific understanding of the **παιδιον**, "child". Cranfield offers two possibilities which can be further divided:

a) "because the **παιδιον** belongs to me - as a believer":

- A believing-child. Gundry argues that a believing-child is received "on the ground of my name" which "specifies the basis of that acceptance, viz., his (Christ's) own reception of such a child";
- A lowly believer. The weak members of the Christian community who mediate the presence of Christ, cf. Boring;
- All believers;
- Evangelists/ministers. Evans argues that "in my name", which serves to qualify "welcomes/receives/accepts", is making the point that "if someone comes in the name of Jesus, he must be received, for that is equivalent to receiving Jesus himself". Note that in Aramaic the word for "servant" and "child" is the same;
- Seekers. Disciples are to be like Jesus who receives/embraces the **παιδιον**, the lost - the hungry, thirsty, lonely, naked, sick and imprisoned who seek the mercy of God, cf. Edwards.

b) "because the **παιδιον** (in his human need and without necessarily being a believer) is my representative":

- Children in general;
- Insignificant humanity. Forgiven sinners in general seems best - from the apprentice to the old tradesman.

λαβων [λαμβάνω] aor. part. "**he took**" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN [A CHILD]. The participle is probably adverbial, temporal, "then he took a little child", Moffatt.

αυτων gen. "**them**" - [HE SET, MADE HIM STAND IN *the* MIDST] OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. Possibly "in front of them", Zerwick; "made him stand where they could all see him", Barclay.

εναγκαλισαμενος [εναγκαλιζομαι] aor. part. "**taking him in [his] arms**" - [AND] HAVING EMBRACED, TAKEN INTO ARMS [HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "he said"; "he took the child in his arms and said". Decker suggests it is adverbial, temporal; "and giving him a hug he said."

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [HE SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

v37

ὅς αν + subj. "**whoever**" - IF WHO = WHOEVER. Introducing an indefinite relative conditional clause 3rd. class, the first of two such clauses where the condition is hypothetical; "whoever, *as may be the case, ... then ...*"

των τοιουτων gen. adj. "**of these**" - [RECEIVES, WELCOMES, ACCEPTS ONE] OF SUCH AS THESE [CHILDREN]. The articular adjective serves as a substantive in apposition with "children", the genitive being partitive limiting "one".

επι + dat. "**in**" - UPON, OVER, ON. Probably parallel to εν, "in my name", taking a causal sense, "on the basis of" = "on account of / because of (the person I am)" ; "because of me", CEV.

τω ονοματι μου "**my name**" - THE NAME OF ME [RECEIVES ME]. The phrase, "in my name" is idiomatic. The "name" represents the person, so "the name of Jesus" = the person of Jesus himself, his personal character and being, cf., Danker. Thus, invoking the name as the authority for the action. So "whoever receives one of these παιδιον out of respect for me", cf., Zerwick, ie. "on the basis of / out of respect for the person I am, my authority, etc. receives me". "Because this action is something I desire", Cranfield.

ουκ αλλα "**not, but ...**" - [AND WHOEVER RECEIVES ME] NOT [RECEIVES ME] BUT *also receives*. Counterpoint construction. "Not so much as", Zerwick.

τον αποστειλαντα [αποστελλω] aor. part. "**the one who sent [me]**" - THE ONE HAVING SENT [ME]. The participle serves as a substantive. "The one who sent me forth", Cassirer.

9:38-50

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

vij Partners in discipleship

Synopsis

The disciples' meeting with an unofficial exorcist prompts a series of sayings on reward, stumbling blocks and salt.

Teaching

The way of Christ involves including / accepting / welcoming a fellow believer.

Issues

i] Context: See 9:30-37. Many commentators link v38-50 to Jesus' prediction of his death, the question of precedence in the kingdom and its associated sayings, v30-37. Yet, we are best to follow those who see these sayings as related to the incident of the unofficial exorcist, v38-40, sayings which cover the subject of inclusion / acceptance within the Christian community.

ii] Structure: *Inclusion*:

Pronouncement story - the unofficial exorcist, v38-39:

One saying on inclusion, acceptance, v40.

Two sayings on endangering the faith of others, v41-42;

A three-part saying on endangering our own faith, v43-48;

Three sayings about salt, v49-50.

iii] Interpretation:

In 9:38-50 Mark crafts a narrative with linked independent sayings. Jesus has just made the point that "greatness", rank / precedence in the kingdom of God, is assessed on the ground of service, not on a disciple's service, but the service of the servant *par excellence*, "the servant of all." True greatness is found only in Christ.

The unofficial exorcist, unlike the disciples, evidences a discipleship which seems to outshine the disciples; the exorcist successfully casts out demons in Jesus' name, while they argue about precedence. Jesus' disciples need to open their eyes before they lead themselves and others into the fire that is never quenched. The collection of sayings on Christian living will give some guidance to this end.

Of course, as to the exact intent of each saying, there is some dispute; see below, eg.: The sin of partiality has taken root within the disciples,

possessing them and damning them, v43-48; "To avoid causing sin, be at peace in your own circles, with him, and with all who make up the body politic of God's kingdom", Gundry, v49-50.

iv] Synoptics:

The unofficial exorcist: Lk.9:49-50.

Occasions for sin: Matt.18:6-9, Lk.17:1-2:

Saying #1, v40. Matt.12:30, Lk.9:50;

Saying #2, v41. Matt.10:42, 12:30, Lk.9:50, 11:23;

Saying #3, v42. Matt.18:6, Lk.17:2;

Saying #4, v43-48. Matt.5:29-30, 18:8-9. Not all parts of this three-part saying are found in Matthew and Luke.

Saying #5, v49 "Everyone will be salted with fire";

Saying #6, v50a. Matt.5:13, Lk.34:35-36. Mark shortens this saying.

Saying #7, v50b. "Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another."

Arguments abound as to whether the sayings are independent sayings of Jesus brought together by Mark, whether they are an existing thematic collection of Jesus' sayings, or whether they represent a whole unit of teaching by Jesus. They do seem to represent Mark's theological construct, but either way it doesn't matter as we are bound to interpret them contextually, ie., God's word to us is the gospel as conveyed to us by Mark.

v] Homiletics: *The ethic of inclusion*

Jesus' ethical teaching comes in two forms. There's a public ethic which idealises the Torah (the law of Moses). So, for example, God's law demands that we do no murder, but Jesus adds, that means not hating someone, not even getting angry with someone. When Jesus teaches like this he fulfils the ultimate purpose of the law, to expose our human condition, and so drive us to God for forgiveness and the gift of a righteousness that is by grace through faith.

Then there is a private ethic given to the disciples and covered by the exhortation, "love one another." In our reading today we see the practical outworking of love expressed in the terms of inclusion. A disciple is to include a brother, or sister, by accepting them, welcoming them, forgiving them. The rationale for this ethic lies in the way God in Christ treats lost and broken humanity. As God wholly forgives and accepts us, so we must wholly forgive and accept the one who bears the image of Christ. These "little ones" possess the image of Jesus through their relationship with him, and to disregard them is to disregard Jesus.

A failure to include carries serious consequences. A failure to accept a brother, or sister, may well undermine their confidence in God's free forgiveness and acceptance in Christ, an acceptance which is a gift of grace appropriated through faith. Such a refusal may also undermine our own reliance on grace. Once we lose sight of grace, we are lost. So, take care!

Text - 9:38

Partners in discipleship: i] The pronouncement story, *the strange exorcist*, with its attached saying in v40, v38-40. Usually taken as a lesson on accepting a forgiven sinner, "anyone who would be a follower of Jesus must be received", Hurtado, but it is probably wider than that. The response of the disciples to the ministry of the unofficial exorcist is revealing in that they had only just shown themselves to be less than adequate when it comes to the ministry of exorcism, and seem more focused on determining precedence in the fellowship.

εν + dat. "**in [your name]**" - [JOHN SAID TO HIM, TEACHER, WE SAW SOMEONE] IN [THE NAME OF YOU]. Instrumental, expressing means, "by, with your authority"; see 9:37. "John" here is obviously the apostle John, son of Zebedee, brother of James.

εκβαλλοντα [εκβαλλω] pres. part. "**driving out**" - CASTING OUT [DEMONS]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting **τινα**, "a certain / someone = a man"; "a man who was casting out demons."

εκωλυομεν [κωλυω] imperf. "**we told [him] to stop**" - [AND] WE WERE HINDERING, PREVENTING, FORBIDDING [HIM]. The imperfect is obviously tendential / conative, ie. attempted action that is not completed; "we tried to stop him", Barclay. It should though be noted that the imperfect is often used in verbs of speaking, cf., Zerwick # 272.

οτι "because" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the disciples sought to stop the exorcist from casting out demons in Jesus' name. Cranfield suggests that this causal clause, omitted in some texts (esp. Western), is an assimilation to Luke.

ημιν dat. pro. "**us**" - [HE WAS NOT FOLLOWING] US. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow." "He is not of our company", Cassirer.

v39

Disciples are to welcome partners in the cosmic battle against the powers of darkness, not "stop" (forbid) them. In this battle there are only two sides, "for" Christ, or "against" Christ. The combatant "for" Christ will not speak against Christ, since it is unlikely that a person who is outperforming the disciples in Satan-busting would then speak against Jesus. The pronouncement, "no one who says anything bad about me", may be sarcastic.

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a step in the dialogue, a change in subject from the disciples to Jesus.

μη κωλυετε [κωλυω] pres. imp. "**do not stop [him]**" - [JESUS SAID] DO NOT HINDER [HIM]. With this negation, the command possibly entails the cessation of action already in progress. "Him" = "the unaffiliated sympathiser", France.

γαρ "-" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the disciples should not stop him; "because" Because such is evidence "that he will not immediately bitterly revile Jesus [but is rather] a pointer to a certain openness toward Jesus [and thus he] is not to be despised", Cranfield.

ουδεις ... εστιν ος "**no one who**" - THERE IS NO ONE WHO [WHO WILL DO A MIGHTY WORK]. The presence of the verb to-be and the personal pronoun strengthens the negation. Doing miracles in Jesus' name, and slandering Jesus at the same time, do not go together - the one rules out the other; "each excludes the middle ground", France.

επι "**in [my name]**" - IN [THE NAME OF ME]. As in v37, referred to above, this preposition here is most likely used instead of εν, "by / with the authority of my name", i.e., instrumental, expressing means.

ταχυ adv. "**in the next moment**" - [AND WILL BE ABLE] QUICKLY, SUDDENLY. Adverb of manner / time; "in the same breath", Mason.

κακολογησαι [κακολογω] aor. inf. "**say anything evil**" - TO SPEAK EVIL OF [ME]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "will be able".

v40

Saying #1, a saying on inclusion, acceptance; "Whoever is not against us is for us", v40. It is likely that this saying is an attached independent saying in support of the pronouncement, v39, with γαρ serving as a stitching device (commonly found linking sayings). On the other hand, it may be integrally linked to the pronouncement in v39b. The saying was used in secular circles; "He who is not against you is for you. He who today is far from you may tomorrow be near you", Cicero, in his defence of the Pompeiani before Caesar. At any rate, the saying reinforces the point made in v39; "If anyone is working for the cause to which Jesus and the Twelve are committed, he cannot work against it at the same time", Lane. The struggle against the powers of darkness, cause a clear division in the combatants and the disciples need to be with those who stand with Jesus in the fight, whether they are in their immediate team (church) or not.

καθ + gen. "**against**" - [FOR WHO IS NOT] AGAINST [US]. Here expressing opposition.

υπερ + gen. "**for**" - [IS] FOR [US]. Here expressing advantage; "for the benefit of". "Is on our side", Phillips.

v41

ii] Saying #2: Whoever gives a mere drink in Jesus' name will be rewarded, v41. Given that the sayings here are only loosely attached, commentators divide on whether this saying is linked to v38-40 (so France, Evans, Edwards, Taylor), or part of the unit v38-42 (so Lane), or part of a more general collection, v41-50 (so Cranfield, Marcus, Swete), or whether Mark intends all the sayings to exegete the narrative, v38-39 (so Boring, Gundry), and this under the general theme of the acceptance of a forgiven sinner. Although this saying is used by Matthew in Christ's evangelistic charge to the disciples, Matt.10:42, here in Mark's context, the evangelistic setting is replaced by a setting of inclusion, and therefore welcoming, showing hospitality, as someone who belongs to Christ. "Why, anyone by just giving you a cup of water in my name is on our side", Peterson. So here, the saying reinforces the idea of inclusion; "a third reason for openness to other Christians who work outside the purview of the authority claimed by the Twelve", Boring.

γάρ "-" - FOR. Here, a transitional stitching device, untranslated.

αμην λεγω υμιν "I tell you the truth" - TRULY I SAY TO YOU. A phrase which serves to underline what follows; in the Gk. what follows is "he will in no way lose his reward".

ος ... αν + subj. "anyone who" - IF WHO, SOMEONE = WHOEVER. This construction introduces an indefinite relative clause, which in this verse is conditional, "whoever, *as may be the case*, gives you to drink a cup of water ... then truly I say to you that"

ποτηριον [ον] "a cup" - [MAY GIVE YOU] A CUP. Accusative complement of the direct object "you", standing in a double accusative construction.

υδατος [ωρ ατος] gen. "of water" - OF WATER The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / of content; "full of water / containing water."

εν οναματι οτι "in my name" - IN NAME. As Cranfield notes, this is a strange construction and has produced a number of variants, eg. εν τω ονοματι μου, "in the name of me" = "in my name". He suggests "on the ground that you belong to Christ", cf., Moule IB p79, with "name" here meaning "title / category" BAGD. Yet, just because there is no article (although there is a variant with one) doesn't mean it wasn't intended, since an article "is not required when the noun is the object of a preposition", Marcus. So, "in the name" is intended, but whose name? Probably "in the name of Christ". The "because you belong to Christ" is possibly a gloss to explain "in the name", so Marcus. Cassirer transposes the causal οτι "because of the name you bear ..." In unusual "dynamic equivalent" mode the NRSV opts for "because you bear the name of Christ." Still, the sense is clear enough.

ὅτι gen. "**because [you belong to Christ]**" - THAT [YOU ARE OF CHRIST]. Possibly causal, "because", but as noted above, it may well introduce a nominal clause standing in apposition to "in my name", so Decker. Manson argues that this is an unusual use (late? = "because you are a Christian ...") and has probably replaced the personal pronoun, "you are mine". The genitive is adjectival, possessive; "being followers of God's anointed", Cassirer.

ὅτι "- " - [TRULY I SAY TO YOU] THAT. This second use of the conjunction introduces an object clause / dependent statement, expressing what Christ emphatically states; "truly I say to you that"

οὐ μὴ + subj. "**certainly not**" - NOT NOT [WILL HE LOSE]. Subjunctive of emphatic negation; "he will definitely not."

τον μισθον [ος] "**reward**" - THE WAGES, REWARD [OF HIM]. Accusative direct object of "will not lose." Certainly not "reward" in the terms of "reward on the basis of merit", but rather reward in the terms of the promised eschatological blessings appropriated *now / not yet* on the basis of divine mercy / grace through the instrument of faith. The notion of reward as merit has no place in the NT since all rests on the grace of God, cf., Matt.20:1-16, Lk.17:7-10. The faith that accesses the grace of God by its very nature prompts love. Hospitality toward a brother evidences the sure possession of that grace and thus the sure reward of the promised eschatological blessings.

v42

Saying #3; Causing another to stumble, v42. Again, this is another independent saying of Jesus and is used by Mark to further reinforce the idea of acceptance, inclusion, as opposed to partiality. Most translations link this verse to the following passage, although v43-48 is probably itself an independent saying. Undermining the faith of a brother is the most serious of sins, particularly someone outside the established discipleship community, someone who is now functioning in Christ's name. The rejection of such a brother may well undermine their faith, so we are reminded to beware; to destroy someone's faith is serious. The warning carries its own power; it forces us to consider our actions toward this other one - the outsider, seeker "little one."

ὅς αὐ + subj. "**if anyone**" - [AND] IF SOMEONE = WHOEVER. Introducing an indefinite relative clause, which in this sentence is conditional, "whoever, *as may be the case*, causes one of these little ones *then* it would be better for them if" The apodosis, "it would be", is itself a conditional.

σκανδαλιση [σκανδαλιζω] aor. subj. "**causes to sin**" - CAUSES TO STUMBLE. As of setting a trap for someone, so trip up. Given the context of acceptance, inclusion, we trip up a fellow believer if we do not accept them / welcome them, if we ostracise them, fail to offer the acceptance that Christ offers

them. The "sin", "stumble / entrapment" presumably entails undermining their faith such that they no longer believe; "to destroy someone's faith, to cause to fall away from God", Cranfield. This verse is often wrongly used to support warnings against a wide range of entrapments. Even Paul's warnings about leading a weaker brother astray are in the terms of undermining their faith, and more often than not, the entrapment is nomism (the use of the law in the Christian life for blessing - a behaviour trait which prompts "speck removal" / guilt dissipation and thus prejudice and partiality) rather than secularism. "To fall away", TNT.

των μικρων gen. adj. "**little ones**" - [ONE] OF [THESE LITTLE] ONES. The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. Probably not children as such, possibly believers in general, but given the context, the child probably represents the believer on the edge, or even outside, the Christian community - someone like the unofficial exorcist.

των πιστευοντων [πιστευω] pres. part. "**who believe**" - THE ONES BELIEVING. The participle is adjectival limiting "little ones", as NIV.

εις + acc. "**in [me]**" - INTO [ME]. Expressing the direction of the action and arrival at. Variant omitted in most translations. Note the preposition "into" used for **εν**, "in".

καλον "**better**" - [IT IS] BETTER, GOOD. Predicate adjective. An example of an absolute use for the comparative.

αυτω dat. pro. "**for them**" - TO = FOR THEM. Dative of interest, advantage.

ει + ind. "-" - IF. Introducing a conditional clause 1st class where the proposed condition is assumed to be true for arguments' sake; "if, *as is the case*, a millstone is tied around his neck and he has been cast into the sea, *then* it is better for him." As noted above, this conditional clause serves as the apodosis of the opening conditional clause, so "..... then, if a milestone"

μυλος ονικος "**a large millstone**" - A MILLSTONE FOR A DONKEY. Nominative subject of the verb "to hang around." "Not the stone from a small hand-mill worked by a human being, but a large, heavy one turned by donkey power", Marcus.

περι + acc. "**around**" - [IS HUNG] AROUND [THE NECK OF HIM AND HE IS CAST INTO THE LAKE, SEA]. Spatial; the repetition of the preposition from the verb **περικειται** is stylistic. The translation of this verb as a perfect tense, "to have been placed", Souter, although a present tense, expresses vividness.

v43

iii] A saying in three parts #4; endangering our own faith, v43-48. This saying unit consists of a three-part saying, each part beginning with **και εαν** with the linking verb from v42, **σκανδαλιζη**, "causes you to sin / stumble." Of course, they may be three separate sayings which Mark has brought together; see

Synoptics above. "These verses shift the focus from jeopardising others to endangering self", Edwards. Contextually, believers are being warned of the "seriousness of making others fall away from the faith", Boring. Mark is warning us of the seriousness of undermining the faith of a believer / seeker who is outside the discipleship community, by ostracising them / failing to include them / failing to welcome them, accept them, and thus Mark encourages us to undertake remedial action for the sake of our own standing before Christ. Of course, Mark may not intend the context to so tightly dictate application. Mark may reasonably expect that these sayings of Jesus will be used to address sin / evil in general, rather than the particular sin of partiality. Note how Matthew uses the sayings to address adultery and lust, Matt.5:27-30, and later communal discord, Matt.18:6-35, indicating that the sayings, in their own right, have a general application. Of course, such doesn't overrule the intention of our author. Anyway, the point is that sin (here particularly the sin of partiality) is actualised by the hand, the foot and the eye and must be addressed before it eats away, not only the faith of other believers, but our own faith, cf. Marcus p696-7.

εαν + subj. "**if**" - [AND] IF. Introducing a conditional clause 3rd class, where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true; "if, *as may be the case*, *then*"

αποκοψον [αποκοπτω] aor. imp. "**cut [it] off**" - [THE HAND OF YOU CAUSES YOU TO STUMBLE] CUT OFF [IT]. The aorist expressing punctiliar action. The point of the saying is that it is better to ruthlessly excise an advantage that we have which undermines the faith of others, than to go to hades with all our advantages. Of course, pragmatic perimeters exist, eg., Jesus is not suggesting castration as an appropriate means of addressing sexual thoughts!!!

εισελθειν [ερχομαι] aor. inf. "**to enter**" - [for YOU] TO ENTER [INTO LIFE CRIPPLED IS BETTER]. The infinitive serves as the subject of the verb to-be, with the accusative **σε** "you" functioning as the subject of the infinitive, although possibly expegetic, ie., explaining what is "better", so Rogers; "it is better that you should enter into life maimed", Barclay.

κυλλον adj. "**maimed**" - CRIPPLED. Here as an adverbial accusative.

η "**than**" - THAN. Establishing a comparison.

εχοντα [εχω] pres. part "**with**" - HAVING [TWO HANDS]. Adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the action "to go away", but possibly just an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the infinitive "to go away"; "keep your two hands and go to Gehenna", Moffatt.

εισελθειν [ερχομαι] aor. inf. "**to go**" - TO DEPART. This second infinitive is still probably functioning as the subject of the verb to-be **εστιν**, "to enter than to depart is better."

γεενναν "hell" - [INTO] GEHENNA. The ever-burning rubbish tip outside Jerusalem used to image the horror of being cut off from the divine. The only sin that can separate us from the living God is the rejection of the way of salvation in Christ (probably what is meant by "sin against the Holy Spirit"). Yet, if we are blind to behaviour which undermines the faith of others, we are most likely blind to the state of our own faith, and may well find ourselves **βληθηναι εις την γεενναν** "cast out into Gehenna" = a divine passive, v45.

αβεστον adj. "never goes out" - [INTO THE FIRE] UNQUENCHABLE, INEXTINGUISHABLE, UNSTOPPABLE. The phrase is possibly an explanation by Mark for his Gentile readers, so Taylor.

v44

"Where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched". Also v46, obviously additions and so left out of most translations, cf. v48.

v45

Parallel Gk. to v43, "foot" replacing "hand".

v47

Parallel Gk. to v43, "eye" replacing "hand". Throw out the eye rather than be thrown into hell. "If your eye falls victim to a trap of Satan, by comparison, it would be better for you to gouge out the offending eye and enter the Kingdom of God as a one-eyed man, than to be forever sentenced to an eternal fire that burns on and on forever", Junkins. For "the kingdom of God" see Mk.1:15. Referencing the domain and dominion of God, but importantly here, the phrase parallels **την ζωην** "life" in v43, 45, the term favoured by John, "eternal life".

v48

A free quotation from Isa.66:24, referring to the eternal punishment facing a person who has rebelled against God. The image of ongoing punishment, the constant feeding worm, the unquenched fire, may express the eternal nature of punishment, but it probably only serves to heighten the extent of loss. The NT constantly offsets the horror of eschatological judgment with the wonder of new life in the kingdom. The fact that this reality is a *now*, as well as a *not yet* reality, serves to indicate that a loss / gain comparison is at least central to the image.

όπου "where" - WHERE. Introducing a local clause.

ατων gen. "[the worms] that eat them" - [THE WORM] OF THEM [DOES NOT DIE AND THE FIRE IS NOT EXTINGUISHED]. The genitive is adjectival, attributive / idiomatic, in the sense "the worm *that feeds upon* them", TH.

v49

iv] Saying #5; Salted by fire, v49. Here we have another attached independent saying, cf., Lev.2:13. There are a number of variants, but this, the shortest of the variants, is usually read, cf., Metzger. As is often the case with conjoined sayings, the saying is stitched to the previous saying with a conjunction, here **γάρ**, "for", untranslated, and a link word, here **πυρι**, "fire". As Cranfield notes, a Jewish sacrifice is accompanied by salt giving the idea that "a disciple is to be a sacrifice to God", salted (purified!) for God. This sacrifice is accompanied by "fire", possibly "the fires of trials and persecutions", but more likely the struggle of resisting sin. Certainly, in the narrow contextual sense of resisting the sin of partiality, but also the wider struggle against sin in general. Of course, the reason for the many textual variants is that copyists tried to give some sense to the saying in the terms of Christian self-sacrifice. Given that both Luke and Matthew avoid both this and the next saying, Boring may be right when he notes that "here we have one of the New Testament passages that defy interpretation." As is often the case with thematic collections of sayings (eg., James), the thematic association is not always overtly obvious! This saying and the next may do little to advance Mark's theme, but they do demonstrate the respect he has for his sources.

"And indeed, fire will be everyone's seasoning", Cassirer - here or there, which one do you choose?

γάρ "-" - FOR. Transitional use of the conjunction used as a stitching device - not translated.

πας adj. "**everyone**" - ALL, EVERY = EVERYONE. The adjective serves as a substantive, nominative subject of "to salt." Obviously "all believers" is intended.

αλισθησεται [**αλιζω**] fut. pas. "**will be salted**" - WILL BE SALTED. "A causative derivative of 'salt'", LN. "Everyone has to be consecrated by the fire of discipline", cf., Moffatt.

πυρι [**πυρ ος**] dat. "**with fire**" - WITH FIRE. The dative is instrumental, "with / by fire", although Decker suggests a dative of material.

v50

Saying #6; It is not easy for saltless believer to become salty again, v50a. This independent saying is linked to the previous one by the key word "salt". A salty believer is presumably a believer who is at peace with their brothers and sisters. Mark's thematic context serves to define this peace in the sense of being accepting / welcoming / including a brother and sister, as opposed to practising partiality. A believer who becomes saltless will not easily become salty again. Matthew adds "it is good for nothing but to be thrown away and trodden underfoot", Matt.5:13b. Mark doesn't push the image that far, rather, he leaves it

up in the air - how do we make a saltless believer salty again? Not easy! So, beware!

καλον adj. "**good**" - [SALT IS] BEAUTIFUL, GOOD. Predicate nominative adjective; "salt is indeed a useful thing", Cassirer.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point.

εαν + subj. "**if**" - IF [THE SALT]. Introducing a conditional clause 3rd. class where the condition has the possibility of coming true; "if, *as my be the case*, ... *then* ..."

αναλον adj. "**loses its saltiness**" - [BECOMES] SALTLESS, UNSALTED (leached salt leaving a useless chemical residue). Predicate adjective; "weak and tasteless", Junkins.

εν τινα "**How**" - BY WHAT [WILL YOU SEASON IT]? The preposition here is obviously instrumental, expressing means; "by what means will you season it?" = "how will you return it to its natural condition of being salt?" = "with what can you give it back its flavour?", Barclay.

Saying #7; Be a salty believer, v50b. This final saying is attached to the previous saying with the key word "salt"; "Avoid causing sin, be at peace in your own circle", Gundry. The actual function of the salt (savouring, preserving, or purifying) is unspecified, although many like to guess, eg. salt = "persecution", Edwards. The exhortation "have salt" probably encourages the fostering of attributes such as wisdom, purity, graciousness, which promote peace ("good relationships", France) in the brotherhood, so Evans. Beyond the exhortation "be at peace with each other" little more can be gleaned, although speculation is rife, eg., "take care to maintain in yourselves that which is the saltness of the salt, namely the gospel, the word of God", Cranfield.

ειρηνευετε [**ειρηνευω**] pres. imp. "**be at peace**" - [HAVE SALT IN YOURSELVES AND] BE AT PEACE. "Be at peace" is probably consequential to "be salty" and so "preserve the peace", Peterson.

εν + dat. "**with**" - IN = WITH [ONE ANOTHER]. Here expressing association; "in relationship with one another." We are to have salt with ourselves and be at peace with each other, ie., Jesus "implies a profound connection between internal substance (what the Bible calls "wisdom") and external harmony", Marcus. "Within the brotherhood".

10:1-16

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

vii] Ideals and principles, 10:1-16

Synopsis

Jesus is asked a question on divorce by some Pharisees and in reply, he points out that divorce is nothing more than a concession by God, and this because of the inviolable nature of the one flesh union of marriage. Later, Jesus explains to his disciples that divorce, by its very nature, is adulterous. Linked to the question on divorce is the blessing of children who come to Jesus, "for to such belongs the kingdom of God."

Teaching

Full participation in God's righteous reign is by grace through faith and not by works of the law.

Issues

i] Context: See 8:22-30. Mark presents us with a new *Markan Sandwich*, this time with a Law - Grace - Law contextual relationship, 10:1-31. The teaching *sandwich* consists of three episodes: Law, the question on divorce; Grace, the visit of the little children, Law, the "rich young ruler."

The *Markan sandwich* is made up of three theologically powerful accounts. The first, in question / answer form, deals with the permanence of marriage, v1-12: The second, a teaching narrative, records Jesus' blessing of little children, v13-16. The third, a pronouncement story, deals with the impossible demands of the Law, v17-31. The punch line is found in the negative statement "whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."

ii] Structure: *Marriage and divorce, and the visit of little children:*

The permanence of marriage, v1-12:

Setting and opening dialogue, v1-4;

Jesus' response to the Pharisees' proposition, v5-9;

Jesus' explanation to the disciples, v10-12.

Jesus' welcomes little children, v13-16.

Pronouncement story, v13-14, 16;

Saying, "anyone who does not receive the kingdom", v15;

iii] Interpretation:

The question on divorce, the visit of the little children, and the rich man's question, "what shall I do to inherit eternal life?", are used by Mark

to establish the basis upon which a believer fully participates in the promised blessings of the covenant. The kingdom is not received by obedience to the Law. Who can fully obey the Law on divorce and marriage? Who can fully love their neighbour? The kingdom is received" in the same way that Jesus is received (welcomed / accepted = believed) young children who come to him for blessings. Participation in God's righteous reign is by grace through faith and not works of the law.

Having examined the issues of humility (dependence on Christ's cross-bearing), listening (hearing Christ), acquiescence (greatness is not found in privilege) and inclusion (welcoming a fellow believer), Mark now examines the issue of receiving (kingdom blessings are received as a gift rather than earned by doing / law-obedience). As Jesus so often does when dealing with an issue of the law, he "fulfils" the law by extending its requirements such that no one can claim innocence before the law, i.e., he uses the law to expose sin and thus the need for divine mercy / grace.

Given that marriages do break down, the law of Moses regulated separation to bring some order and fairness to a complicated social problem. Jesus, on the other hand, reveals the true nature of the divine will on divorce, an ideal that for many believers will be impossible to keep. In fact, Matthew records the disciples' startled reaction in the words: "if such is the case of a man and his wife, it is better not to marry", Matt.19:10, and this because marriages do fail. So, in this incident Jesus uses the law to establish that the full appropriation of the promised blessing of the Kingdom can never be realised by obedience to the Law. This face is reinforced by the episode of the rich man and its associated discourse.

Mark's placement of the visit of the little children serves to provide the way around this impasse. Participation in the righteous reign of God and thus the full participation in the Abrahamic promises, is attained by coming to Jesus for blessing, in the same way as these children came to Jesus for blessing. Salvation rests on covenant mercy, not on covenant obedience; it is a gift of God's grace appropriated through faith. Such was the case for Abraham, and such is the case for all who follow in his footsteps.

So then, when Jesus "fulfils" the law, in the sense of completing it, he is not just reinforcing its difficulty, but is moving from the intent of the Mosaic law to the ideals that lay behind it, to "the revolutionary values of the Kingdom of God", France. The proclamation of such absolute values, of a righteousness that exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees, witnesses that the kingdom of God is at hand. Participation in such a revolutionary reality is gifted, not earned.

Divorce: In the history of interpretation, Jesus' instructions on divorce have been applied literally in the Christian church. In the face of the inevitable failure of the marriages of believing church members, these instructions have spawned numerous pharisaic *get out of jail free* cards, eg. annulment. In my church, the Anglican church, we spend our time trying to determine who is the innocent party (is there such a person?), extending leniency to those who should know better, namely believers, while refusing remarriage to those who often don't know better, namely non-believers.

Jesus doesn't actually repeal the Mosaic regulations on divorce, he just reveals what lays behind them. In doing so, he confronts the Pharisees, as well as his disciples, with the reality that *all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*. Although the radical ethics of the kingdom expose our fallen state, they do also provide an ideal to aim at, an ideal that belongs to another age, to a brilliance that transcends this *shadow land*. We do well to aim at this ideal, for both its spiritual, as well as its pragmatic benefits. None-the-less, given that the hardness of our heart lives on, marriages do fail, and so the Church would do well to use the Mosaic law as its rule-of-thumb, while using Jesus' absolute law to remind all of us of the need for grace.

iv] Synoptics:

The Law on Divorce; Matt 19:1-12. Matthew and Mark arrange the tradition differently, but in both gospels, Jesus argues that the Mosaic law on divorce is an accommodation, and does so from the creation ordinance on marriage.

The saying on divorce, v11-12: Matt: 5:32, 19:9; Lk.16:18. The different versions of this saying exhibit the subtle differences that oral transmission would likely produce. Luke uses Jesus' radical interpretation of Mosaic divorce law to illustrate the realisation of the long-promised kingdom of God. It is easier for heaven and earth to come to an end than to change one dot of God's law, but that is exactly what's happening - a new age is dawning, the kingdom of God is at hand. Matthew, on the other hand, in 5:32, uses the saying to further his exposition of the impossible demands of the Law, in order to make the argument that the righteousness that exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees is gifted, not earned. Note, only Matthew has the concession "except on the grounds of fornication", which, given the context, seems completely out of place.

Blessing little children: Matt.19:13-15, Lk.18:15-17. Only Mark and Luke record the saying, "a person who does not accept the kingdom of God in the way a child would, will never enter it." Note that from 10:13 to 12:37, Mark and Matthew align.

Text - 10:1

Law and grace: i] Jesus' teaching on divorce, v1-12. a) Setting and opening dialogue, v1-4. Jesus continues his journey toward Jerusalem. Now again in Judea, he resumes his public ministry. The Pharisees "came and tested" (tried to entrap) Jesus over the issue of divorce. They were obviously trying to embroil Jesus in what was at the time a *hot issue*. The Pharisees understood that the Mosaic provision on divorce rested on the ground of "something shameful", Deut.24:1. Shammai argued that the "shame" was a moral fault, eg., adultery. Hillel widened the "shame", eg., embarrassing a husband.

The structure of this teaching unit is typically Markan. The pericope's form-critical classification is a scholastic dialogue, and indeed it is an example of a teaching dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees, v2-9, and Jesus and his disciples, v10-12. The setting is established in v1, question and counter question, v2-4, and teaching response, v5-9.

αναστας "Jesus then left" - [AND] HAVING ARISEN [FROM THERE HE WENT TO THE BORDER OF JUDEA ACROSS, BEYOND THE JORDAN]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV; "Then he left and went into the territory of Judea", Moffatt. Possibly **περαν**, "beyond", ie. he went into Peraea travelling from Galilee to Jerusalem skirting around Samaria; "on the far side of the Jordan", Cassirer.

προς + acc. "to [him]" - [AND AGAIN CROWDS COME TOGETHER] TOWARD [HIM]. Spatial, expressing movement toward. Possibly "crowds went along with him", but more likely "gathered around him", NJB.

ως "as" - [AND] AS, JUST AS, LIKE. Comparative.

ειωθει [**ειωθα**] pluperf. "was his custom" - HE WAS ACCUSTOMED [AGAIN HE WAS TEACHING THEM]. **ειοθα** is the perfect of **εθω** but it expresses the present tense "to be accustomed", while the pluperfect expresses the imperfect "as he was accustomed", TH.

v2

προσελθοντες [**προσερχομαι**] aor. part. "[some Pharisees] came" - [AND PHARISEES] HAVING COME, APPROACHED. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "they were asking"; "Some Pharisees came up and asked him", Moffatt.

πειραζοντες [**πειραζω**] pres. part. "tested" - [THEY WERE ASKING HIM] TESTING, TRYING, TEMPTING. The participle is adverbial, introducing a final clause expressing purpose, "in order to test"; "this was to tempt him", Moffatt. In simple terms, the Pharisees put a "test question" to him, Barclay.

ει "-" - IF. Here introducing an indirect question, although treated as direct by NIV, NRSV, ...; "asked him if a man was allowed to divorce his wife", Moffatt.

ανδρι [ανηρ ανδρος] dat. "**for a man**" - [IT IS PERMISSIBLE, RIGHT, PROPER] TO = FOR A MAN. Dative of interest, advantage.

απολυσαι [απολυω] aor. inf. "**to divorce**" - TO RELEASE = DIVORCE [*the WIFE of him*]. The infinitive forms a nominal phrase subject of the verb "is lawful"; "they were asking him if to divorce a wife is permissible for a man".

v3

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the dialogue, a change in subject from the Pharisees to Jesus; "highlighting the back-and-forth of the ensuing dialogue", vv3, 4, 5", Gundry.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "**[he] replied**" - HAVING ANSWERED [HE SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle virtually redundant.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

τι "**what**" - WHAT [DID MOSES COMMAND]. Interrogative. "Command" in the sense of giving definite orders, implying authority, or official sanction*; "what was the regulation which Moses prescribed for you?", Barclay.

υμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - YOU? Dative of direct object of the verb "to command."

v4

οι δε "-" - BUT/AND THEY [THEY SAID]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject / speaker. Often with a lead article serving as a pronoun, subject of the verb "to say."

επετρεψεν [επιτριπω] aor. "**permitted**" - [MOSES] PERMITTED, ALLOWED. Mosaic law regulated divorce, but by his choice of the word "permitted" Jesus indicates that divorce is nothing more than a divine concession.

γραψαι [γραφω] aor. inf. "**a man to write**" - This infinitive (assumed accusative subject, "a man = a husband"), as with *απολυσαι*, "send away / release / divorce" (assumed object, "a wife"), forms a nominal clause, direct object of the verb "to allow, permit"; "Moses permitted *a husband* to write a certificate of divorce and *a husband* to divorce *his wife*." Both infinitives introduce dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing what Moses commanded / allowed.

απαστασιου [ον] gen. "**of divorce**" - [A SCROLL / LETTER (= certificate)] OF DEPARTURE, SEPARATION [AND TO DIVORCE]. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "certificate". The document, or certificate of divorce, "provides some protection for the woman", Cranfield, cf., Deut.24:1-4.

v5

b) Jesus' response to the Pharisees, v5-9: Jesus adopts his usual stance with law-righteous legalists, he heads for the high moral ground. He tells them that there are no grounds for divorce. The Mosaic provision serves only as a rule of thumb for a people entrapped in sin, a rule which even then, most are unable to keep because their hearts are hard, their conscience calloused by sin. By quoting scripture, Jesus defines God's ideal for marriage. A man and a woman bonded socially, physically and psychologically, are in a one-flesh union - the two have become one. As this union is God designed, it is inappropriate for it to be severed for any reason; "What God has united, man must not separate", Barclay.

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, again indicating a change in subject / speaker.

προς + acc. "**it was because**" - [JESUS SAID TO THEM] TOWARD = BECAUSE OF. The sense of "to / toward", present in this preposition, sometimes expresses reference, "with reference to / with respect to", and on rare occasions slips further toward a causal sense, as here; "because of / on account of", BAGD. Note Gundry who suggests that here it expresses purpose, to incite them to disobey.

την σκληροκαρδιαν [α] "**[your] hearts were hard**" - THE STUBBORNESS, OBSTINACY, HARDHEARTEDNESS [OF YOU]. The genitive "your / of you" is possessive. Probably "hard-heartedness", expressing an unwillingness (yes always, but inability is probably closer to the truth) to obey God's absolute will, which situation necessitates laws which "take account of men's actual sinfulness and are designed to limit and control its consequences", Cranfield.

ὑμιν dat. "**[wrote] you [this law]**" - [HE WROTE] TO YOU [THIS COMMANDMENT]. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage.

v6

Jesus supports his argument from two texts, Gen.1:27, and Gen.2:24, and then draws a conclusion, v6-9. The argument being "if the intention of the creation of male and female is for them to be united into "one flesh" so that they are no longer two, but one, then God's will simply cannot be that they divorce. "Divorce is tantamount to an undoing of the created order", Evans.

απο + gen. "**at**" - [BUT/AND] FROM. Temporal use of the preposition.

κτισεως [ις εως] gen. "**of creation**" - [BEGINNING] OF CREATION. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. The creation is "the sum total of everything created", BAGD. Not "at the beginning of Genesis", but "from the beginning of the creation"; "when we go back to the foundation of all created things it has been thus", "therefore"

αρσεν και θηλυ "**male and female**" - [HE MADE THEM] MALE AND FEMALE. Accusative complements of the direct object "them", standing in a double accusative construction and stating a fact about the object "them".

v7

ενεκεν "**for [this] reason**" - BECAUSE OF, FOR THE SAKE OF, ON BEHALF OF [THIS]. Causal. The antecedent of τουτου, "this", being the search for the missing rib!!!

καταλειπει [καταλειπω] fut. "**will leave**" - [A MAN] WILL LEAVE BEHIND [THE FATHER OF HIM AND THE MOTHER]. The future tense is imperatival here, reflecting the OT quote.

προς + acc. "**to [his wife]**" - [AND HE WILL BE JOINED] TOWARD [THE WIFE OF HIM]. Here expressing association; a stylistic repetition of the προς prefix of the verb "to be joined together." The variant "**and be untied to his wife**" is possibly assimilated to Mt.19:5, so Metzger.

v8

εσονται εις "**will become**" - [AND THE TWO] WILL BE INTO [ONE FLESH]. This unusual use of the verb to-be with the preposition "into" derives from a literal translation in the LXX of the Hebrew, TH. The prepositional phrase introduces by εις serves as the predicate of the verb to-be.

ωστε "**so**" - SO THAT. Introducing a consecutive clause expressing result, "with the result that ..." "And the two will become so completely one that they will no longer be two persons but one", Barclay.

αλλα "**but**" - [THEY ARE NO LONGER TWO] BUT [ONE FLESH]. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction.

v9

Given the divine will for the integral unity of marriage, a will evident in the creation ordinances, Jesus issues an absolute decree on the matter of divorce.

ουν "**therefore**" - THEREFORE, THUS, SO THEN. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion.

ο̅ pro. "**what**" - WHAT [GOD HAS YOKED TOGETHER]. Neuter relative pronoun, accusative direct object of the verb "to be yoked together."

μη + pres. imp. "**[let man] not**" - [DO] NOT [LET MAN SEPARATE]. This construction may command the cessation of an action already in progress; "man (husbands) must stop continuing removing /separating from = divorcing [their wife/wives].

v10

c) Jesus now instructs the disciples on the issue of divorce, v10-12. The disciples now ask Jesus to explain what he has just told the Pharisees. Jesus explains how divorce makes a person guilty of adultery. Based on the creation ordinance of the "one flesh", a husband commits adultery in divorce and remarriage, and is also technically responsible for his wife's adultery when / if she remarries. Matthew records the disciples' exclamation, "it is better not to marry." The ideal of a divorce-free marriage for the children of the kingdom is an impossible one; who can guarantee that their marriage won't fail? Of course, Jesus' argument aims at this conclusion. Perfect righteousness is *a bridge too far* for flawed humanity. If law-obedience can't save us, what can?

εις την οικιαν "when they were in the house" - [AND] INTO THE HOUSE [AGAIN]. Taken by NIV as an independent temporal verbless clause, or just "back home again", Manson.

επηρωτων [επερωτω] imperf. "asked" - [THE DISCIPLES] WERE ASKING [HIM]. The imperfect is possibly inceptive, "the disciples began asking him"; "the disciples began to ask him a question about this matter."

περι + gen. "about" - ABOUT [THIS]. Reference; "concerning this, with reference to this."

v11

Jesus' declaration of the divine will is unequivocal - divorce is adulterous in that it leads the husband to form another one-flesh union, and will most likely force the wife into another one-flesh union. Mark's "against her" is particularly interesting. The phrase is virtually explanatory, "highlighting the explosive force of Jesus' pronouncement", Gundry. Under rabbinic law, a man may commit adultery against another man by bedding that man's wife, and a wife may commit adultery against her husband by bedding another man, but it was inconceivable that a man, by bedding another woman, has in this act committed adultery against his wife.

The lack of the exceptive clause on divorce, "except for adultery / fornication / unchastity", Matt.19:9, expresses the absolute nature of this kingdom law. In fact, the presence of this clause in Matthew is rather difficult to explain. Why, when outlining a divine ideal, would Jesus offer an exception?

αυτοις dat. pro. "[he] answered" - [AND HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ος αν + subj. "anyone who" - IF SOMEONE = WHOEVER. Introducing an indefinite relative clause which in this verse establishes a hypothetical condition, 3rd class, where the condition has only the possibility of coming true; "whoever, *as may be the case, ... then* [he commits adultery against her]".

μοιχαται [**μοιχαω**] pres. mid./pas. "**commits adultery**" - [DIVORCES THE WIFE OF HIM AND MARRIES ANOTHER *then*] HE COMMITS ADULTERY. Decker notes that "to insist that the present tense means that the new marriage is one of continual adultery, is to press grammar beyond what it can bear."

επ [**επι**] + acc. "**against [her]**" - UPON. Probably the spatial sense of "up against / against", as NIV, NRSV, NJB, NAB, REB, ..., but also possibly reference, "with regard / with respect", with respect to the wife's right to not have a third party intrude on the "one flesh" relationship she has with her husband. Although rather tenuous, it is possible that "upon" is intended, in that a husband forces adultery upon his wife by divorcing her, because to survive she will have to marry, or be partnered with, another man.

αυτην "**her**" - HER. Presumably the wife, but the personal pronoun may refer to the other woman, so "commits adultery with her (the second woman)". Turner argues this case by noting that in Pss. Sol. 8:10 **μοιχασθαι** + acc. = "to commit adultery with" and so he suggests that **μοιχαται επ** means much the same. Marcus, following most commentators, argues that the wife is intended since **επι** is used frequently to express "against" and that this sense is supported by Matt.5:32 "which says that the divorcing man commits an offence against his first wife."

v12

Given that a Jewish wife could not divorce her husband it is argued that this is an explanatory inclusion for Gentile readers, given that under Roman law a wife could divorce her husband, cf., Schweizer. There is though some second century documentary evidence that in some Jewish circles, a woman did have the right to divorce her husband. Either way, the statement reinforces the absolute nature of the divine will on the issue of divorce.

εαν + subj. "**if**" - [AND] IF. Introducing a conditional clause 3rd class, where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true; "if, *as may be the case*, *then*"

απολυσασα [**απολυω**] "**divorces [her husband]**" - [SHE] HAVING PUT AWAY, HAVING DIVORCED [THE HUSBAND OF HER *and* MARRIES ANOTHER *then* SHE COMMITS ADULTERY]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "marries"; "divorces and marries". Manson suggests that this active participle is the consequence of wrongly reading an Aramaic passive participle giving a translation in agreement with Luke 16:18b; "and if she who has been divorced by her husband marries another, he commits adultery", Torrey.

v13

ii] Jesus welcomes little children, v13-16. Children are brought to Jesus to secure a blessing for their future life. The disciples, acting outside their authority, seek to "forbid them." Jesus responds sharply with both a positive and negative command. The disciples need to understand that the children's coming to Jesus, and Jesus receiving them, fully expresses how a person enters the kingdom of God. The kingdom can only be entered by someone who rests on God's mercy in Jesus, and not on any claim of merit before God. Jesus then takes the children and blesses them indicating that the blessings of the kingdom are freely bestowed on those who seek them.

Mark's linking of this pronouncement story with the question-answer story and the following question-answer story + discourse, is a highly theological move on his part. Confronting the reader with the absolute demands of the law, as they relate to divorce and the love of neighbour, reminds the believer that the promised blessing of the covenant can never be earned, but only gifted. *Jesus blesses little children* says everything about the gifting.

προσφερον [προσφερω] imperf. "**people were bringing**" - [AND] THEY WERE BRINGING [LITTLE CHILDREN]. Indefinite plural, the "they" not being identified. The imperfect may be iterative, expressing repeated action. The children are infants up to 12 years old, so Lagrange.

αυτω dat. pro. "**to Jesus**" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ινα + subj. "**to [have him]**" - THAT]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that he might touch them"

αυτων gen. "**them**" - [HE MIGHT TOUCH] THEM. Genitive of direct object after a verb of touching. "Touching", obviously in the sense of laying hands upon for the conferring of a blessing, BAGD.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from the "they" to the disciples.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - [THE DISCIPLES REBUKED] THEM. Dative of direct object after the επι prefix verb "to rebuke." "But the disciples told the people to stop bothering him", CEV.

v14

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from the disciples to Jesus; "but when Jesus saw"

ιδων [ειδον] aor. part. "**when [Jesus] saw this**" - [JESUS] HAVING SEEN *the disciples blocking the children*. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [HE BECAME ANGRY, INDIGNANT, AND SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ερχεσθαι [**ερχομαι**] aor. inf. "**come**" - [(you) ALLOW, PERMIT, THE CHILDREN] TO COME [TO ME]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of cause expressing what Jesus allows, namely, that the children should be allowed to come to him. The accusative subject of the infinitive is "the children."

μη + pres. "**not**" - [HINDER] NOT. It is often held that this negation with the pres. imp. commands the secession of action in progress; "stop forbidding them." This syntactical key is not as widely held today as it once was.

γαρ "**for**" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the disciples should allow the children to come to him.

του θεου [**ος**] gen. "**[the kingdom] of God**" - [THE KINGDOM] OF GOD. Does the kingdom belong to God (possessive), proceed from God (idiomatic / source), is enacted by God (verbal, subjective), or simply, in general terms, God-like (adjectival, descriptive)? So the mystery of the genitive rolls on!!!! Possibly "the dominion of God", but probably better, "the righteous reign of God." For "the kingdom of God" see Mk.1:15.

των .. τριουτων gen. "**[belongs to] such as these**" - [IS] OF THESE ONES. "The proper force of the correlative demonstrative pronoun of quality should be observed", TH, ie. "such ones", not "these ones". Turner suggests that the genitive is expegetic (Cranfield, Gundry, Taylor, Edwards, Evans, "belongs to such people as children", France, "not so much exclusive ownership, but having a rightful share in", all argue for a possessive genitive). "Children are the very nature of the kingdom", Turner, so "of such as these", rather than "belongs to such as these." Probably "is of such as these" in their child-like coming to, and accepting of, Jesus, cf., v15. "The statement is not an item in a doctrinal discussion on the innocence of children and the age of accountability, but a proclamation on the nature of the kingdom - being included is a matter of God's sovereign grace", Boring.

v15

This verse may be an integral part of the pronouncement story, but given that Matthew doesn't use it, then it may be an independent attached saying of Jesus. Either way, it reinforces the point Mark is making. "The coming reign of God is a gift, which must be received as a child receives a gift - simply, and without any sense of having earned the gift", Mann. The sense is not that we must receive the kingdom as we would receive an innocent child. Rather, as Hunter puts it, "this is a parable of pure grace." "Unless we are prepared to receive God's kingdom

(salvation) as a child receives a gift at his father's hand, we shall not have it", cf., Matt.11:25, Jn.3:5.

αμην λεω υμιν **"truly I tell you"** - Affirming / underlining the following words.

ος αν + subj. **"anyone"** - IF WHOM = WHOEVER. Introducing an indefinite relative conditional clause, as above; "whoever, *as may be the case*, does not receive the kingdom of God as a child (would receive a gift), *then* they will never even enter into it."

μη δεξεται [δεχομαι] aor. subj. **"does not receive"** - DOES NOT RECEIVE, WELCOME, ACCEPT. Children, in their "coming" and their "receiving" of Jesus, exegetes the nature of a person's coming and receiving the kingdom, God's reign in Christ, salvation. Those who do not come and happily receive God's blessing in Christ, as these children came and received Christ's blessings, will have no part in God's righteous reign.

ως **"as [a child]"** - AS, LIKE. Establishing a comparison. "To receive the kingdom as a child is to allow oneself to be given it", Cranfield.

ου μη + subj. **"[will] never [enter it]"** - [MAY] NO NO = NEVER, BY NO MEANS [ENTER INTO IT]. Subjunctive of emphatic negation. "He will certainly not get into it", Barclay.

v16

εναγκαλισαμενος [εναγκαλιζομαι] aor. part. **"he took [the children] into his arms"** - [AND] HAVING TAKEN INTO HIS ARMS [THEM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "he blesses"; "he took them in his arms and blessed them".

τιθεις [τιθημι] pres. part. **"put"** - PLACING [THE HANDS]. The participle is adverbial, probably modal expressing the manner of blessing, or possibly instrumental expressing the means, "by laying ..." The use of hands in a blessing has OT precedence, cf. Gen.48:14-18.

επι + acc. **"on"** - UPON [THEM]. Spatial.

κατευλογει [κατευλογεω] imperf. **"and blessed them"** - HE BLESSES. Hapax legomenon, only use in NT. The imperfect may be expressing durative action while the prefix is probably intensifying, "he kept on fervently blessing them", Wuest. "Tenderly / warmly / lovingly", TH, are other possible intensifiers. France suggests "a thorough blessing", but muses that it may be over exegesis.

10:17-31

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

v] The rich young ruler

Synopsis

A rich man comes to Jesus and asks the way of salvation. Jesus responds by outlining the social demands of the law, to which the rich man asserts his compliance. Jesus then calls on him to give his wealth to the poor and follow him, but he turns and leaves, for he is a wealthy man. Jesus then discusses the impossibility of possessing both this age and the age to come, although what is impossible for a mere human is not impossible for God. Peter goes on to foolishly claim the impossible and is warned accordingly.

Teaching

None are righteous, no not one.

Issues

i] Context: See 10:1-16. This passage serves as the third part of the Law-Grace-Law Markan sandwich - the question on divorce, the visit of the little children, and the "rich young ruler." The contextual relationship between these three episodes is easily missed.

ii] Structure: *The rich man*:

A dialogue between Jesus and the rich man, v17-22;

instructions to the disciples, 23-27;

Peter's response and Jesus' warning in reply, v28-31.

iii] Interpretation:

Mark carefully encases the question on divorce and the blessing of the children, with the question-and-answer story of the rich man and its attached discourse on the rewards of discipleship, v17-31. In the blessing of the children, we learn that the kingdom of God belongs to those who receive it as a child receives a gift. In the story of the rich man, we learn that the righteousness worthy of the kingdom is beyond any of us, and this because we are all "rich" in this world's things. In the disciples' response to the rich man's sad departure, we learn that the rich man's sorrow is far safer than the disciples' pride, for in the end, the kingdom is given to the humble who receive it as a gift, rather than the proud who think they can earn it.

The story of the rich man comes out of left field and is easily misunderstood. The story hinges on the question "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" In response to this question, Jesus proceeds to use the law to expose the man's sinful condition, and thus his state of loss. In fact, much of Jesus' ethical teaching serves this end. Note how Paul picks up on Jesus' handling of the law when he teaches that the prime purpose of the law is to expose sin and thus drive us to God for mercy, Gal.3:24. Only in a secondary sense does the law serve as a guide to the Christian life.

The rich man fails to recognise his state of sin under the law, and so Jesus takes "neighbourly" law to the level of impossible perfection. If the rich man would be perfect, standing right before God, and able to fully appropriate the promised blessings of the covenant / eternal life, then he needs to sell what he owns and give the money to the poor. Jesus' application of neighbourly law strips the rich man of any hope of self-justification before God. Rightly he went away *λυπουμενος*, "grieving". The rich man's response is the proper response for a person who has come to recognise their state of loss in the presence of God. When it comes to the business of possessing the kingdom, Jesus has left him with only one path, namely, divine mercy. He has made the first step, recognising his state of sin, hopefully he will make the next, repentance and faith.

The need to rely on divine mercy / grace is reinforced in Jesus saying on wealth, v23-27. It is simply not possible for a person who possesses this world's things (and we all do) to enter the kingdom of God. The crucial statement comes in v27 where we are reminded that "for God all things are possible." To participate in God's righteous reign (given our accumulated clutter) it is necessary to rest wholly on the cross-bearing messiah, on his death and his rising on our behalf.

Mark then compares the broken state of the rich man before God with the self-righteousness of the disciples. Peter is quick to remind Jesus that the disciples have left everything to follow him. Jesus then reminds Peter that the abundance of the promised blessings of the covenant transcend any sacrifice a believer may have made in following him. Peter and boys are on thin ice claiming status before God on the basis of their faithful cross-bearing. Beware! for the "first will be last and the last will be first". Humble receivers are gifted the kingdom, not doers.

It is worth comparing the story of *The Rich Young Man* with the parable of *The Good Samaritan*, Lk.10:25-37, a similar left-of-field piece of teaching with a similar introductory question on the Law. The point that Jesus makes is not "be good Sams", but rather, "you are not good Sams." For the "lawyer", doing "likewise" is not an option.

The parable of the *Good Samaritan*, as with the narrative of the *Rich Young Man*, serves to encourage the believer to see their Christian walk in the terms of receiving, rather than doing. The Christian walk proceeds as it began, as a gift of grace appropriated through faith in the faithfulness of Jesus.

The heresy of nomism. Nomism [sanctification by obedience] is the heresy which promotes the idea that law-obedience ["works of the law" - obedience to the law of Moses, covenant compliance] is essential to restrain sin and shape holiness [sanctify] for the full appropriation of God's promised blessings [the promised blessings of the Abrahamic covenant = life = the gift of the holy Spirit, etc.].

Pious Jews of the 1st. century, like the Pharisees, were infected by the heresy of nomism. Although they knew that their standing as a Jew rested on divine grace, they held the view that the full appropriation of the promised blessings of the covenant are by works of the law. A nomist believes that by law-obedience sin is restrained and holiness progressed for blessing. Jesus, on the other hand, taught that the promised blessings of the covenant are gifted, not earned. He constantly tried to expose the flaw in their thinking by revealing the idealistic demands of the Law. Although the Pharisees were proficient at tithing mint and cumin, Jesus made sure that they knew where they stood when it came to the weightier matters of the Law. The promised blessings of the covenant, of life in all its fullness, is possessed by grace alone through faith alone, apart from works of the law.

The heresy of nomism infiltrated the early church and became a major theological issue for believers in the first century as they sought to unite Jew and Gentile together in Christ. Clearly, Mark is aware of the heresy, and through his careful selection of the tradition available to him (the *Markan sandwich*, 10:1-31), he is able to place before the reader an insightful treatment of Jesus' teaching on the subject. The Christian life is about receiving, not doing.

Paul confronts this heresy in his letters to the Romans and Galatians. Serving as the exegete of Jesus, Paul expounds the heart of Jesus' teaching in the doctrine we know as justification. Paul's argument, based on the text "*The righteous out of faith will live*", Habakkuk 2:4, presents as follows:

In an act of divine grace
the righteous reign of God
 (his setting all things right)
in justification
 (in judging right / setting right, holy, perfect),

out of FAITH

(based on Christ's faith / faithfulness + our faith response),
establishes the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God's children

(covenant compliance),

facilitating God's promised covenant BLESSINGS

(full appropriation of promised new life through the Spirit),
and its fruit, the WORKS of the law

(the application of brotherly love).

cf., Rom.1:16-17

The Pauline argument can be illustrated as follows:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS = **BLESSINGS** = WORKS.

As opposed to the law-bound children of God (Pharisees / judaizers / pietists / members of the circumcision party, and in the present pericope, the disciples) who argue that:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS + **WORKS** = BLESSINGS.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.19:16-30; Lk.18:18-30. Mark's account of this extended pronouncement story is more detailed than Matthew and Luke, although he doesn't add any significant information. Matthew tells us that the rich man was young and Luke tells us that he was a ruler, so the title The Rich Young Ruler. Note the inclusion of the theologically significant eschatological saying in Matthew 19:28. Note also that Matthew and Luke do not record the words "along with persecutions" in the list of promised blessings, v29-30.

v] Homiletics: *The God of the impossible*

All things are possible with God.

We have all been reminded of this verse at some time or other. It often comes our way when we express doubt about some venture proposed by a keen believer. There is nothing more dangerous, in a church council meeting, than to question the wisdom of some proposed programme, because we are sure to receive the "all things are possible" line. It implies we have little faith, little faith in God's power that is, rather than little faith in the wisdom of the hair-brain scheme. There is this long-held belief that impossible dreams are made possible by the God of the impossible.

There is no doubt that all things are possible for God, Yet, we are bound to qualify this claim:

First, God doesn't act against his own will, but in accord with his own will.

Second, God has never promised to act on our intentions, impossible or otherwise, rather, he acts in accord with his own intentions.

So then, what do we take from our reading today? Is it about God underwriting our impossible dreams, or is it about God underwriting his own impossible promises? We read of a rich man humiliated and helpless, and of disciples confident and self-assured. What we learn is that the God of the impossible is willing and able to eternally save the broken and unworthy; people like that rich man long ago, people like you and me.

Text - 10:17

Wealth and discipleship: i] Jesus' meeting with a rich young man, v17-22. Jesus is approached by a man with an important question. This man of "great wealth" is someone with genuine respect for Jesus, even addressing him as "good", a description normally reserved for God. He asks Jesus a classic religious question, "what must I do to enter life?", a question usually answered in the terms of Ezekiel 33:15. For Jesus, salvation is not a matter of doing, but rather receiving, and those who receive are the helpless, not the righteous. Jesus rejects the characterisation "good", not to deny his sinlessness, nor to claim deity, but rather to remind the rich man that "none are righteous, no not one." Jesus then quotes the law as it relates to a neighbour. Do this and you will live, Deut.30:15f. The rich man genuinely believes that he has obeyed the law since becoming an adult, although his question to Jesus implies a lack of assurance.

In the ethic of Judaism, it was not proper to become destitute through sacrificial generosity to the poor. Yet, Jesus goes to the heart of true neighbourliness by illustrating how this rich man can love his neighbour as himself, ie., as the law demands. If he gives everything he has to the poor he will earn merit ("treasure in heaven"), but of course, Jesus knows that no person is capable of perfection. Clearly Jesus has made his point, for the rich man now knows he is a sinner - "he went away sad." He went away to join the lost and helpless, but it is the lost and helpless that Jesus has come to save.

εκπορευομενου [εκπορευομαι] gen. pres. part. "**As [Jesus] started**" - [AND HE] GOING. The genitive participle with its genitive subject "he" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

εις + acc. "on [his way]" - INTO [THE WAY]. Spatial, expressing the direction of the action, or possibly reference / respect, so Decker.

προσδραμων [προστρεχω] aor. part. "**ran up to [him]**" - [A ONE = A CERTAIN MAN] HAVING RUN TOWARD [AND HAVING KNELT *before* HIM, WAS ASKING HIM]. As with "having knelt before", both participles are probably attendant on the verb "asked / inquired", although this would be unusual with an imperfect verb, so

Decker. Possibly adverbial, temporal. The kneeling simple shows respect, so, "a certain man came up to him and asked him this question", Cassirer.

διδασκαλε αγαθε "good teacher" - GOOD TEACHER. Vocative noun qualified by a vocative adjective. There is nothing offensive in this statement, although Jesus uses it to remind the man that no person is good; "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God". It is this truth which the man must come to understand. It is unlikely that Jesus' response in v18 is a roundabout way of revealing his divinity. That Jesus is sinless is accepted, but humanity is not, and that's the point he is making.

ποιησω [ποιεω] aor. subj. "must I do" - [WHAT] MUST I DO. Deliberative subjunctive.

ινα + subj. "to" - THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "what must I do in order to inherit eternal life?"

ζωνη αιωνιον "eternal life" - [I MAY INHERIT] ETERNAL LIFE. Accusative direct object of the verb "to inherit." For a Jew, the phrase referred to the eschatological resurrection of the dead and of their ongoing participation in the life of the age to come. The phrase first appears in Daniel 12:2 and serves to move the promise of Israel's inheritance of the land, even the whole earth, into the transcendent realm, and this because of the failure of the historic kingdom of Israel. "What must I do to possess eternal life", TNT.

v18

There is a possible allusion here to the Shema, "The Lord our God, the Lord is one", Deut.6:4. Gundry disagrees, but Marcus suggests that if Mark / Jesus didn't have the Shema in mind, he could have expressed himself more smoothly, "no one is good except God". "The Shema implies the uniqueness of divine attributes as well as the divine existence", Marcus. Given the context, the inference that only God is good sets the ground for what follows, particularly the absurdity of the statement "I have kept all these since my youth."

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a new speaker / dialogue transition from the man to Jesus.

αγαθον adj. "[me] good" - [WHY DO YOU CALL ME] GOOD? Accusative complement of the direct object "me", standing in a double accusative construction.

αυτω dat. pro. "[Jesus answered]" - [JESUS SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ει μη "except" - [NO ONE IS GOOD] IF NOT = EXCEPT [GOD]. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception. All of humanity is affected by sin such that only God is good. The rich man needs to

recognise his own condition and seek "eternal life" by some other means than obedience. "God alone is good", TH.

v19

Jesus knows very well that covenant compliance can never be maintained by obedience to the law, but this is something the rich man is about to learn. The commandments "are the answer to the question about eternal life, not because a man can keep them and so earn eternal life, but because, if he honestly tries to keep them, he will be brought to recognise his bankruptcy and prepared to receive the kingdom of God as a little child", Cranfield. Jesus' use of the second table does not imply importance over the first, but is used to easily evidence compliance. Jesus quotes commands 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, but interestingly replaces 10, "do not covet", with "do not defraud". It is impossible to obey the command "do not covet", but it is possible not to defraud. So, all of the commands Jesus quotes can be done, but of course, never are.

τας εντολας [η] "the commandments" - [YOU KNOW] THE COMMANDMENTS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to know." This list of commandments stand in apposition to "the commandments."

μη απαστερησης [αποστερεω] aor. subj. "**do not defraud**" - DO NOT DEFAUD = DEPRIVE BY DECEPTION OR TRICKERY. As with the other commands, a subjunctive of prohibition, followed by an imperative "honour your father and mother" The command to honour parents is missing in some texts, obviously left out by copyists who thought it an inappropriate addition to a list from the Ten Commandments, cf., Metzger. Turner opts for the variant **μη πορνευσης** since a prohibition against "fornications" is properly part of the Ten Commandments. Of course, we would have expected **ουκ επιθυμησεις** "do not covet", commandment 10. Marcus suggests that "this paraphrase is in line with the interpretation of the tenth commandment in certain Jewish traditions, in which it forbids not only craving for the possessions of others, but also usurping them." Yet, it is more likely that "do not defraud" is a pragmatic exegesis of the tenth commandment which reflects the pharisaic tendency toward reductionism, ie., reshaping the law so that it can be obeyed. Jesus happily uses this common understanding of the commandment, since he is leading the rich man up to the high moral ground of self-righteousness where he can throw some water on its slippery slope. The command "do not covet" is directed against cravings which are impossible to deny, but its pragmatic alternative, "do no defraud", is capable of obedience.

v20

And the rich man takes the bait!

δε "- " - BUT/AND. Transition, indicating a step to a new speaker.

αυτω "- " - [TEACHER, HE SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

εφυλαξαμην [φυλασσω] aor. "**I have kept**" - [ALL THESE THINGS] I HAVE OBSERVED. Usually, "carefully kept", Phillips, "I have obeyed all these", Barclay, but since the verb is middle it means "I have avoided, kept myself from", ie. from the evil which the commandments denounce, so France, Gundry.

εκ "**since**" - FROM [YOUTH OF ME]. Temporal use of the preposition; from a point in time.

v21

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from the man to Jesus.

εμβλεψας [εμβλεπω] aor. part. "**looked at**" - [JESUS] HAVING LOOKED AT. The prefix serves to intensify the looking, so "looked at intently", "a penetrating look", Boring. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the aorist verb "loved", so "looked and loved", as NIV, but possibly adverbial, temporal; "Jesus fixed his gaze upon him, and then, being filled with love for him, he said", Cassirer. "He looked closely at him", CEV.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the εν prefix verb "looked at."

γαπησεν [αγαπαω] aor. "**loved [him]**" - LOVED [HIM AND SAID]. How do we explain this response? "With great admiration", Junkins; "liked him", CEV; "prized him dearly", Berkeley; "his heart warmed towards him", Phillips / REB. All these express an emotional response of attraction, possibly expressed outwardly in Jesus putting his arms around the man, so Gundry, Field, ie. "the verb refers to overt action, not simply to an inner emotion", Evans. Cranfield argues that the overt action is that of self-giving, ie., Jesus addresses the man's problem in the terms of "positive action on behalf of the neighbour", Boring.

σε acc. pro. "**you**" - [ONE THING] YOU [COME SHORT OF]. The verb usually takes a genitive with the sense "one thing is lacking of you". This has prompted the variant σοι. Of course, accusative, as here, may be purposely intended expressing the idea that "you" is the one affected by the lack, so "one thing lets you down", France. "One thing is missing in your life", Barclay.

ὅσα pro. "**everything you have**" - [GO SELL] AS MUCH AS [YOU HAVE]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to have." Jesus' call to leave everything and follow him obviously causes interpretive difficulties. It is sometimes handled as illustrative of receiving Jesus, eg., Jesus calls on us to become vulnerable, as a child, to gain everything; Jesus calls on us to substitute what we love for a love of Jesus. It is sometimes handled with a reductionist approach, eg., Jesus calls on us to transfer our reserves to the poor of the earth who have little of this-worldly reserves. It is sometimes handled literally, although there are few who stand with Francis of Assisi. None-the-less, Jesus is indeed stating the substance of

neighbourly law, and is doing so in the terms of an absolute. This he does, not to define the nature of discipleship, or make poverty a requirement for entrance into the kingdom, but to underline the fact that "eternal life" cannot be inherited by doing. This man, although clearly a kind and godly man, is not covenant compliant and stands condemned with the rest of humanity. To love his neighbour with such love is beyond him, as it is beyond us all. The choice of aorist verbs emphasis this point; "complete disinvestment and donation", France.

τοις πτωχοις dat. adj. "**to the poor**" - [AND GIVE] TO THE POOR. The adjective serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object / interest.

εν + dat. "**in**" - [AND YOU WILL HAVE TREASURE] IN [HEAVEN]. Local, expressing space. What is the treasure? Possibly "Jesus", Edwards, but as a common Jewish expression, it is used to describe the (merited) eschatological blessings of God in general.

ακολουθει [αλοκουθεω] pres. imp. "**follow**" - [AND COME] FOLLOW [ME]. The present tense is durative, expressing ongoing action, "a process", Decker. "Follow me" serves as a call to discipleship. This may be contextualised in the call to "sell everything and give to the poor", i.e., "follow me" "identifies placing one's property at the disposal of others as the meaning of discipleship", Boring. Yet, it is more likely that Jesus' call to discipleship is a call to ongoing faith, not a call to obedience, such that receiving Christ ("follow me" = "accept me") is the way to eternal life, so Cranfield.

v22

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject again.

επι + dat. "**at [this]**" - UPON, ON [THE WORD]. Causal, "on understanding what Jesus had said", but possibly temporal, "when he heard Jesus saying this, a look of the deepest gloom came over the man's face", Barclay.

στυγησας [στυγναζω] aor. part. "**[the man's] face fell**" - HAVING BECOME SAD, GLOOMY, SHOCKED, APPALLED. Taking **ὁ**, "he", as the nominative subject of the verb "went away", the participle is attendant on the verb; "he was appalled at what was said and went away sad", LN, but it can also be treated as modal, expressing manner.

λυπουμενος [λυπεω] pres. pas. part. "**[he went away] sad**" - [HE LEFT] SORRY, GRIEVING, IN PAIN, DISTRESSED. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his departing; "he went sadly away", Moffatt. Although this response is often regarded as one of rejection, of walking away from Jesus, it is actually the correct response for a person who has come to recognise their state of loss before God. Like the scribe in 12:28-34, the words "you are not far from the kingdom of God" properly applies to this man for he has recognised the perfection demanded of him, is broken before it, and so is now faced with the

only possible solution to his dilemma, namely, God's covenant mercy now realised in Christ. In fact, the man's response is on far safer ground than Peter's self-righteous response in v28.

γάρ "because" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the man was sad.

ἦν .. εχων "he had" - HE WAS HAVING [MANY POSSESSIONS]. A periphrastic imperfect construction. Possibly used to emphasise durative aspect, i.e., it was not that he had great wealth, but that his wealth was every growing because of his earning capacity - he was in the wealth-creating business. Of course, the periphrastic construction may just reflect Aramaic influence, cf., Zerwick #361. "He was holding on tight to a lot of things and was not about to let go", Peterson.

v23

ii] Jesus gives instruction on the impossibility of a rich person entering the kingdom of God (of course, what might be impossible for the rich person [and we are all rich by degree] is not impossible for God), v23-27. Jesus' claim that it is hard for a person who possesses this world's things to enter the kingdom of heaven, astonishes the disciples because, in the ethic of Judaism, wealth is a sign of God's blessing and its wise use a means of merit. Jesus then redefines his claim to include everyone, such that what was hard now becomes impossible. If entering the kingdom (gaining "eternal life") is next to impossible, what hope does anyone have? On the basis of human merit, it is impossible, but there is another way; God can save out of kindness / mercy / grace.

περιβλεψαμενος [περιβλεπω] aor. part. "[Jesus] looked around" - [AND] HAVING LOOKED AROUND. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the historic present verb "says". A nice personal stage direction recorded by Mark. It's as if we were there as Jesus watched the man depart and then turned to his disciples to comment on the incident.

τοις μαθηταις [ης ου] dat. "to [his] disciples" - [JESUS SAYS] TO THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object.

πως "how [hard]" - HOW [WITH DIFFICULTY]. Interrogative particle, often treated here as exclamatory; "with what difficulty will a person of means enter the kingdom of God?"; the answer is given in v25. The adverb **δυσκολως**, "with difficulty" is rare in the NT. The comment does not necessarily reflect "pity", as suggested by Cranfield.

οί εχοντες [εχω] "the rich" - THE ONES HAVING [MEANS = THE MEANS TO CREATE WEALTH]. The participle serves as a substantive. "How hard it will be for a person of means ..."

εισελευσονται [εισερχομαι] fut. "to enter" - THEY WILL ENTER [INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD]. The future tense is not necessarily pushing out entry into the

kingdom of God to the eschaton. "Enter the kingdom of God" = "gain eternal life". "A person of means will find it difficult to gain eternal life." For "the kingdom of God" see Mk.1:15.

v24

There may be some significance in the fact that Jesus drops the reference to "the man of means" giving a more general coverage for the saying, although he does pick up on "the rich" again in v25. Variant additions after **εστιν** exist which evidence attempts to soften the statement, eg. "for those who trust in riches", or "a rich man", "those who have possessions", cf., Metzger. Taylor argues for a Western transposition where v24 follows v25. His point is that the disciples' amazement is more likely to follow Jesus' comparison in v25.

εθαμβουντο [θαμβεω] imperf. mid./pas. "**were amazed**" - [AND THE DISCIPLES] WERE AMAZED. The middle voice is used for emotion. A key word used by Mark to indicate a pre-faith response to Jesus' words or actions. Such could well be the prompt for Jesus to broaden the statement to the disciples, making the point that since we all possess, then the difficulty faces us all.

επι + dat. "**at**" - BECAUSE OF. Causal use of the preposition.

αυτου gen. pro. "**his [words]**" - [THE WORDS] OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, best viewed as possessive.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step again in the subject, from the disciples to Jesus.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "-" - [JESUS] ANSWERING. Attendant circumstance participle, expressing action accompanying the verb "said", redundant; "Jesus answered and said."

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [SAID AGAIN] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

τεκνα [ον] "**children**" - CHILDREN. Vocative. Referring to the disciples using an "affectionate form of address", Cranfield. "Lads", France.

εισελθειν [ερχομαι] aor. inf. "**to enter**" - [HOW DIFFICULT IT IS] TO ENTER [THE KINGDOM OF GOD]. The infinitive introduces a nominal clause subject of the verb **εστιν**, "it is" = "to enter is difficult". The verb to-be is in the present tense transforming the words into a "maxim", Gundry. "How", **πως**, is most likely exclamatory here, rather than serving as an interrogative.

v25

The point of the comparison is that just as it is impossible for the largest animal in Palestine to pass through the eye of a needle, so it is even more impossible for "a rich man" to possess eternal life. The proverbial saying was probably in common use. There is even an Arab proverb using the image of an elephant passing through the eye of a needle. Given the absolute nature of this

statement, attempts have been made to soften it, eg., the eye of the needle was a gate in the wall of Jerusalem where a person riding a camel would have to bow down to pass through it. So, rich people are able to enter the kingdom of heaven if they give due deference to Jesus. Obviously the person who thought this up was rich!!

ευκοπωτερον comp. adj. "**easier**" - [IT IS] EASIER *for*. Comparative adjective, predicate of the verb to-be.

διελθειν [διερχομαι] "**to go through**" - [A CAMEL] TO PASS, GO THROUGH. The infinitive again introduces a nominal clause, subject of the verb to-be **εστιν**; "to pass through the eye of a needle is easier for a camel."

δια + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH. Spatial use of the preposition; a stylistic repetition of the prefix of the main verb.

της ραφιδος [ις ιδος] gen. "**of a needle**" - [THE EYE] OF THE NEEDLE. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

η "**than**" - THAN *for*. Serving here as a comparative. Again the "wealthy / well-to-do / rich ... man" shapes the comparison.

εισελθειν [εισερχομαι] aor. inf. "**to enter**" - [A RICH PERSON] TO PASS THROUGH, ENTER [INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD]. The infinitive introduces a nominal clause standing as the subject of an assumed verb to-be **εστιν**, with a second **ευκπωτερον** also assumed, "than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God *is easier*." "The rich man", as the subject of the infinitive, is accusative.

v26

The possession of this world's things is relative and it is probably this fact which prompts the disciples' reaction.

οι δε "**the disciples**" - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, a change in subject, back to the disciples.

περισσως adv. "**even more**" - [WERE AMAZED] MORE. Comparative adverb; "all the more." The imperfect verb "were amazed" is probably descriptive, but possibly durative, expressing ongoing amazement. Certainly, an intensified amazement, so "bewilderment", Gundry.

λεγοντες [λεω] pres. part. "**said**" - SAYING [TO THEMSELVES = TO ONE ANOTHER (variant "to him")]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "were amazed"; "were amazed and said".

και "-" - AND. Possibly taking the meaning of **αρα**, "therefore", TH, cf., Lagrange.

τις pro. "**who**" - WHO. Interrogative pronoun. The move is to "anyone who", rather than specifically the rich.

σωθηναι [σωζω] aor. pas. inf. "**[can] be saved**" - [IS ABLE] TO BE SAVED. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "is able".

"Saved" in the sense of entering the kingdom of God / possessing eternal life. "If this is the position, then can anyone be saved", Cranfield. Possibly the reaction is driven, not so much by a general understanding of the difficulty of entering the kingdom, but rather that wealth would have normally indicated that a person was under God's favour and therefore saved, so Gundry; "if this man, with every advantage and indication of being near the kingdom, cannot be saved, then who can?", Boring; a "scandalous" idea, France. Yet, it is more likely that the disciples are reacting to "the general difficulty of entering the kingdom (implying) that the number of people who will finally squeeze into God's dominion is limited indeed", Marcus.

v27

The text, "all things are possible with God", is often used out of context to support wishful thinking (misrepresented as "faith"). Jesus has widened the impossibility of entering the kingdom of heaven from the rich to everyone. The disciples have picked up on this general application, and this has prompted their response in v26. Now Jesus clearly states that eternal life may be beyond human ability, "for the poor and rich alike, but God can bring about the impossible!", Cranfield.

εμβλεψας [εμβλεπω] aor. part. "**looked at**" - HAVING LOOKED AT. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "says", "looked and said", or adverbial, temporal, "Then Jesus looked at them and said ..." Another personal stage direction by Mark.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - THEM [JESUS SAYS]. Dative of direct object / complement of the participle "looking at/upon."

παρα + dat. "**with**" - BESIDE [MEN]. Here expressing association, "with", but possibly or sphere.

αδυνατον "**impossible**" - *this thing is IMPOSSIBLE*. Predicate adjective. "Such a thing is indeed impossible for men", Cassirer.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT. Adversative standing in a counterpoint construction.

γαρ "**for**" - [NOT WITH GOD] FOR [ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why such is not impossible with God; "for everything is possible with God", Barclay.

παρα + gen. "with [God]" - BESIDE [GOD]. Here expressing sphere, "in the sight of, before", but possibly as above, expressing association, "with".

v28

iii] Peter's response prompts a teaching saying on reward, along with a warning, v28-31. In the context of grace, where God does the impossible on our behalf, Peter forgoes the proper response of a thankful reliance on divine mercy, and asserts his good works. He obviously assumes that his good works will

further his attainment of the promised covenant blessings. Mark contrasts Peter's **αφιημι**, *leaving* with the **απερχομαι**, *leaving* of the rich man, yet, as already indicated, the rich man's *leaving* is not necessarily negative, as is Peter's *leaving* not necessarily positive. A believer will leave their this-worlds-things, but it will be tentative and compromised and rest wholly on Christ's *leaving* (his death and resurrection) on their behalf.

It should be noted that most commentators do not take the line that "from the Markan viewpoint [Peter] is still among the blind ones who put what man can do before what God can give", Anderson. Boring, as does Marcus and Hurtado, reads Peter's words as validating a proper response to Christ, a response defined by Jesus which brings with it not only eschatological blessings, but the blessings of a "warm hearted ... Christian community" - leaving all is not loss, but gain. Most though, do detect something questionable about Peter's claimed "self-achievement" (Gundry) which at least "Jesus does not at once rebuke", Cranfield. Evans reads "a note of complaint" and the seeking out of a rightful "reward". Edwards reads a "plaintive statement, essentially a plea in the face of a standard that threatens to reduce not only Peter, but all disciples to insignificance." France notes "a touch of smugness" ("a characteristic touch of exaggeration", Taylor; "tactless frankness", Swete; "self-congratulation", Lane) in Peter's response, but feels, as do most commentators, that it does reveal a proper response to Christ, a sacrifice which will be rewarded. Anderson's approach is to be preferred.

ηρξατο [**αρχω**] aor. "-" - [PETER] BEGAN. Possibly just functioning here as an auxiliary verb, "a mere equivalent for the (inceptive) imperfect", Taylor, although its full force may well be intended; "Peter began to say to him", NRSV, but Jesus then interrupts before his self-congratulatory testimony is properly underway. Note, Peter is again functioning as a spokesman for the disciples.

λεγειν [**λεγω**] pres. inf. "**said / spoke up**" - TO SAY. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "began".

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ημεις "**we**" - WE [HAVE LEFT EVERYTHING]. Emphatic by use. The aorist verb "to leave" is punctiliar, expressing a definite act of leaving; "the decisive renunciation in Peter's mind stood out against the permanent following", Taylor. "Everything" is a rather bold claim, given that we know that the disciples continued to own property - houses, boats,!!! cf. 1:29, 3:9, 4:1, 36, Jn.21:3, Act.212:8, 1Cor.9:5, ...

σοι dat. pro. "**you**" - [AND HAVE FOLLOWED] YOU. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow after." The perfect verb "to follow" expresses a past act

with ongoing consequences, and serves to "describe the permanent role of discipleship", TH. "We followed and are following still", Swete.

v29

A disciple doesn't lose out in the *leaving*, both now and in eternity, v29-30. One suspects that Jesus' words at this point are somewhat tongue in cheek. The blessings in the here and now may look like gain, but only in "the less tangible rewards of discipleship, and of the extended family of the followers of Jesus" (France). For the rest, such *blessings* come with no end of trouble. Even the blessing of the "extended family of the followers of Jesus" comes with its pain, as the apostle Paul could well attest ("the care of all the churches"). As to the originality of this saying of Jesus, some feel a need to argue that this is an "interpretive comment of the church", Anderson, but such is unnecessary, so Cranfield.

ἀφη [ἀφημι] imperf. "[Jesus] replied" - [JESUS] SAID [TRULY I SAY TO YOU]. The imperfect is often used with speech and does not express aspect, but is simply descriptive, cf., Zerwick #272.

ἐνεκεν + gen. "for" - [THERE IS NO ONE WHO LEFT HOUSE OR BROTHERS OR SISTER OR MOTHER OR FATHER OR CHILDREN OR FIELDS] FOR THE SAKE OF, BECAUSE OF. Causal / "providing the reason for the previous action", Decker.

του ευαγγελιου "the gospel" - THE IMPORTANT MESSAGE. Note that Luke has "for the sake of the kingdom", 18:29, which, of course, makes the same point; "In response to me and the wonderful news of the Messiah", Junkins. It is possible that for Jesus and for the gospel is a hendiadys, in that "Jesus is the content of the gospel", Hengel.

v30

εαν μη + subj. "-" - IF, *as is the case* [HE SHALL] NOT [RECEIVE]. Introducing a 3rd. class conditional clause where the apodosis is found in v29, ουδεις εστιν ὁς, "then there is no one who", but the construction is awkward since ὁς ου, "who will not", would be expected, Zerwick, rather than a negated conditional construction. The construction is avoided by Matthew and corrected by Luke. "Without receiving, Swete.

νυν adv. "[in this present age]" - [A HUNDREDFOLD] NOW [IN THIS AGE HOUSES AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS AND MOTHERS AND CHILDREN AND FIELDS]. Temporal adverb, strengthened with a temporal εν, "in". Usually expressed in the gospels as ὁ αιων οὔτος with Marks construction here reflecting Pauline use, Rom.3:26, cf., Swete, Taylor. "In this present world", Barclay.

μετα + gen. "with" - WITH. Expressing association / accompaniment; "in company with."

διωγμων [ος] "**persecutions**" - SUFFERINGS, HARASSMENTS, PERSECUTIONS. "And persecutions besides", REB. Not found in Matthew and Luke's record. The statement reinforces the possibility that Jesus' words are tongue in cheek.

τω ερχομενω [ερχομαι] dat. pres. part. "**[in the age] to come**" - [AND IN] THE ONE COMING [AGE, LIFE ETERNAL]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, "the coming age / the age which is to come."

v31

This concluding independent saying is found in a number of different contexts, appearing "to be eschatological and to refer to the many surprises that the final judgment will bring", so reversing the values of this present age, so Cranfield. As Edwards comments, "the kingdom of God topples our cherished priorities and demands". Indeed, the rich man has just faced this truth, but, given Peter's self-congratulation, it seems that the disciples need reminding that "many who were last in line in this life (like the rich man who now recognises his state of loss before God), will find themselves to be among the first to receive the welcome of God in the next life", Junkins. And of course, those who think they are first in line, like Peter, could find themselves out in the cold; so beware!

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Possibly causal "for / because", Lagrange, although better treated as a transitional stitching device and so left untranslated.

εσχατοι adj. "**last**" - [MANY FIRST WILL BE] LAST [AND THE LAST FIRST]. Predicate adjective.

10:32-45

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. Growing faith, 8:22-10:52

ix] Jesus teaches suffering and true discipleship #3. Service

Synopsis

Mark now provides us with the third unit of teaching about the Son of Man's dying and rising. The prophecy concerning Christ's passion is again followed up with application, this time with reference to the disciples seeking status. James and John ask Jesus to place them in positions of honour, which request causes a strong reaction from the other disciples. Jesus goes on to point out that the first is the slave of all; to this end the Son of Man came "to give his life a ransom for many."

Teaching

Greatness in the kingdom is found in service to the servant of all who gave his life as a ransom for many.

Issues

i] Context: See 8:22-30.

ii] Structure: *The example of Jesus:*

Jesus' third passion prediction, 32-34;

A discussion on serving - the path to glory is service, v35-45;

The request of James and John, v35-37;

A saying on drinking the cup of Jesus, v38-39;

Jesus' rejection of their request, v40;

The reaction of the other disciples, v41;

Glory in service, v42-45:

Lording it over others, v42-44,

The Son of Man, a ransom for many, v45.

Note that v38-39, and 41-42b are regarded by some as redactional.

iii] Interpretation:

"The climax of the gospel story is approaching. Somewhere on the road to Jerusalem Jesus, for the third time, predicts his passion and resurrection", Hunter, v32-34. "After each of the three predictions of Jesus' death, there is a discussion between Jesus and his disciples in which he corrects their view of his work and of their role as disciples, and this passage serves as the final example. Having just predicted in some detail

the ignominious fate that awaits him in Jerusalem, Jesus is approached by two of the inner-ring of disciples, who have their eyes only on the glory they imagine for him and for themselves, v35-37. The thrust of Jesus' reply in v41-45 is very similar to his teaching in 9:33-37, emphasising the image of *the servant*", Hurtado.

Having examined the issues of humility (dependence on Christ's cross-bearing), listening (hearing Christ), acquiescence (greatness is not found in privilege) inclusion (welcoming a fellow believer), and receiving (kingdom blessings are received as a gift rather than earned by doing), Mark now examines the issue of serving. As with the other two passion predictions and their attached discourse on discipleship, we again learn that "the economy of the kingdom is not based on power and control, but on service and giving, for the latter are not only the ethics of the kingdom, but the means of redemption", Edwards.

On the one hand, we are asked to assimilate, imbibe, Jesus' leadership on our behalf. The Suffering Servant provides the way for the realisation of divine grace; his life-giving service brings with it new life for those who rely on his service. On the other hand, Jesus' leadership instructions provide a model of service for the church. "As cultural standards do not determine attitudes to marriage, divorce, children, and wealth for Jesus' followers, so they do not determine leadership style. Conventional models of status and self-esteem are reversed, with the Son of Man himself as the supreme role model", Boring.

The service of the Son of Man ransoms those who put their trust in him for salvation, which trust generates within them a disregard for status, and a regard for service. Like blind Bartimaeus, the disciples will soon find faith, and their faith will heal / save them.

iv] Synoptics:

The third passion prediction: Matt.20:17-19; Lk.18:31-34. Matthew aligns with Mark; Luke is somewhat reduced.

Service in the kingdom: Matt.20:20-28. Matthew again aligns with Mark, although it is interesting that in Matthew it is the mother of James and John who seeks precedence for her sons. Is this a development in the oral tradition where a woman is now blamed for the improper behaviour of men?

v] Homiletics: *Servants of one another*

"He laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren", 1John 3:16.

As a gift of grace appropriated through faith in Jesus, we are identified with his death and resurrection. In his death we are ransomed from the consequences of the old selfish self. In his life we are renewed and ultimately glorified. So, we experience the power of Christ's death and resurrection, a death to our cursed state, an enlivening to privilege, status and power.

The problem is, "we know not what we ask, when we ask for the glory of wearing the crown, but ask not for the grace to bear the cross in our way to it", Henry. The crown is ours as a gift, but in the getting, we sometimes join the disciples in self-seeking.

In the 1st century, the government of Rome was characterised by the exercise of authority and power; Rome ruled with an iron fist. The danger for the Christian fellowship is that we are often tempted to mimic the secular world, yet Babel has no place with Zion. The management of the Christian community should be inclusive, always driven by a desire to serve rather than rule.

Text - 10:32

Suffering and true discipleship, v32-45; i] Jesus' third prediction of his passion, v32-34: Mark tells us that Jesus, with steely determination, now sets his face toward Jerusalem. The disciples respond in amazement at his resolve, given the dangers that await them there. But first, Jesus takes them aside to explain the purpose of the journey. Jesus' prediction of his death is far more detailed than the previous predictions recorded in Mark. The prophetic predictions repeat: delivered over to the chief priests and scribes; sentenced to death; executed; and resurrected. The prediction adds: delivered to the Romans and mocked, spat on and scourged. The extra elements serve to emphasise suffering: "they will condemn him to death", "and will hand him over to the Gentiles", "and they will mock him", "and they will spit on him", "and they will flog him". The elements are the same as in the passion narrative, chapters 14-16, and serve to fulfil Ps.22:6-8, Isa.50:6. So, Jesus' humiliation is at hand.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional; indicating a step in the narrative.

εν + dat. "**ον**" - [THEY WERE] ON [THE WAY]. Local; expressing space, "on the road", ESV. "The way" may imply "the way of the cross", Edwards.

αναβαινοντες [**αναβαινω**] pres. part. "**up to**" - GOING UP [TO, INTO JERUSALEM]. The participle is adverbial, possibly final, expressing purpose, "in order to reach Jerusalem." The "going up" is expressive of a local view of things, here of going up in height. In Australia going up refers to going North.

ἦν προαγων [προαγω] pres. part. "**leading the way**" - [AND JESUS] WAS LEADING, PRECEDING [THEM]. Periphrastic imperfect construction, possibly serving to emphasise the imperfective aspect, ie. ongoing movement.

εθαμβουντο [θαμβεω] imperf. pas. "**the disciples were amazed**" - [AND] THEY WERE AMAZED, ASTONISHED. The "amazement" of the disciples (the assumed subject) is unexplained, but probably they are responding to Jesus, who, having set his face toward Jerusalem and the cross, now paces out in front of them as he heads toward his destiny. For Mark, "amazement" serves as a limited response to Jesus, a response that hopefully leads to "faith". "Jesus strides resolutely ahead, and others follow in amazement and fear", Boring.

οἱ ... ακολουθουντες [ακολουθεω] pres. part. "**while those who followed**" - [AND] THE ONES FOLLOWING [WERE AFRAID]. The participle probably serves as a substantive, although the presence of δε in the construction often indicates in Mark that it is adverbial, possibly temporal; "but some, while following, were afraid", Gundry.

παλιν adv. "**again**" - AGAIN. Presumably "again" Jesus separates the disciples from the following crowd.

παραλαβων [παραλαμβανω] aor. part. "**he took [the twelve] aside**" - HAVING TAKEN ASIDE [THE TWELVE]. The participle is adverbial, probably consecutive, expressing result; "so once again he took the twelve aside", Moffatt.

λεγειν [λεγω] pres. inf. "**told**" - [HE BEGAN] TO SAY [TO THEM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "began".

τα μελλοντα [μελλω] pres. part. "**what was going**" - THE THINGS ABOUT. The participle serves as a substantive, the accusative direct object of "he began to say." The "about to happen" is probably not just referring to a future possibility, but a future imperative, what is "going to happen."

συμβαίνειν [συμβαινω] pres. inf. "**to happen**" - TO HAPPEN, COME ABOUT. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the participle "the things about". "The things which would happen to him", Cassirer.

αυτω dat. pro. "to him" - TO HIM. Dative of reference / respect.

v33

ὅτι "- " - Here introducing direct speech.

τοις αρχιερευσιν [ευς εως] dat. "**to the chief priests**" - [BEHOLD, I GO UP TO, INTO, JERUSALEM AND THE SON OF MAN WILL BE DELIVERED UP] TO THE CHIEF PRIESTS [AND TO THE SCRIBES]. Dative of indirect object.

θανατω [ος] dat. "**[condemn him] to death**" - [AND THEY WILL CONDEMN HIM] TO DEATH. The dative is adverbial, reference, respect.

τοις εθνεσιν [ος] dat. "to the Gentiles" - [AND THEY WILL DELIVER HIM] TO THE NATIONS, GENTILES. Dative of indirect object. "They will hand him over to the Romans", Barclay.

v34

αυτω dat. pro. "him" - [AND THEY WILL MOCK, RIDICULE] HIM. Dative of direct object after the εν prefix verbs "to ridicule" and "to spit on."

μαστιγωσουσιν [μαστιγω] fut. "flog" - [AND SPIT ON HIM AND] THEY WILL FLOG, WHIP [HIM AND KILL *him*]. The word is primarily used to describe the whipping given to a criminal condemned to death, ie., "scourge".

μετα + acc. "later" - [AND] AFTER [THREE DAYS HE WILL RISE UP]. Temporal use of the preposition.

v35

iii] Jesus' teaching on the issue of service in the kingdom, v35-45. a) The request of James and John, v35-37: The disciples see in Jesus the eschatological messiah who will re-establish the throne of David in Jerusalem. There may be some hardship in the struggle ahead, but James and John want to sit next to Jesus in the place of honour at the messianic banquet on the day of his coronation.

It is unclear whether James and John are seeking precedence over the other disciples, although the reaction of the ten points in that direction. Maybe it's the ten who need to learn that "God's kingdom is not based on power and control but on service and giving", Edwards. If viewed positively, we may say that James and John were seeking to share in the reign of the Son of Man, to serve with him in the coming kingdom. Indeed, they will serve, they will drink the cup and be baptised in fire; they will serve the kingdom, and be humiliated in their service, yet they must also remember that participation in the kingdom is ultimately found in receiving the service of the Son of Man. The self-giving service of the Son of man both expedites redemption, and serves as a model for life in the Christian community.

αυτω dat. pro. "him" - [AND JAMES AND JOHN, THE SONS OF ZEBADEE, CAME] TO HIM. Dative of direct object after the προς prefix verb "to come to" / dative of destination. More commonly expressed by the preposition προς, "toward". Note variant "James and John, the two (δυσ) sons of Zebedee, came to him."

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "they said" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "approached"; "they approached and said."

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ἵνα + subj. "[you to do]" - [WE WISH] THAT [YOU MAY DO]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech / perception expressing what they want / wish.

ἡμῖν dat. pro. "for us" - TO = FOR US. Dative of interest, advantage.

ὅ **εἰ** + subj. "whatever [we ask]" - WHATEVER [WE MAY ASK]. Forming an indefinite relative clause, object of "we wish/will." The forward position in the Gk. highlights the humour of their request, "what we want", cf., Gundry. "Master, we want you to grant us a special request", Phillips.

v36

ὁ **δε** "-" - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional, indicating a change in subject, from James and John to Jesus.

με "me" - [AND HE SAID TO THEM, WHAT DO YOU WISH] ME. Variant omitted by most texts, so "what do you wish I do for you", but it is the more difficult reading because it is syntactically awkward. Decker suggests an ellipsis, with **θελετε**, "you will / wish", taking the complementary infinitive **ποιησαι**, "to do" and **με**, "me", serving as the accusative subject of the infinitive; "What do you want me to do? I will do it for you."

ποιησω aor. subj. "to do" - *that* I MAY DO. Here introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception, again stating what they want, namely "that I do *whatever we ask* for you", but without the usual conjunction **ἵνα**, "that". Gundry suggests that its omission "sharpens the question", although Plummer, via Taylor, argues that **ἵνα** is not used after **θελω** "when the first verb is in the second person, and the second verb is in the first person."

ὑμῖν "for you" - FOR YOU? Dative of interest, advantage.

v37

Clearly James and John recognise Jesus' messianic credentials, but still fail to understand that the kingdom is realised through suffering and that naked ambition does not sit well with kingdom values.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, again indicating a change in subject, here from Jesus to James and John, so also in v38 and 39.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [THEY SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ἡμῖν dat. pro. "-" - [GRANT, GIVE] TO US = ALLOW, LET. Dative of indirect object.

ἵνα + subj. "-" - THAT. Introducing another dependent statement of indirect speech, this time of requesting, "give to us that" The request reflects the tradition that the leading disciple of a Rabbi stands / sits at his right hand and the next in line at his left.

εκ **"at [your right]"** - [ONE] FROM [RIGHT OF YOU AND ONE FROM LEFT]. As with εξ, "one from your left", the preposition here expresses separation, "away from" = "at"; "at your right hand."

εν **"in"** - [MAY SIT] IN. Local; expressing space.

τη δόξη **"glory"** - [THE GLORY] OF YOU. "Glory" is associated with the coming of the Son of Man to the Ancient of days in order to reign. Mark does not specifically say that the disciples are looking to share the messiah's reign, although the idea is certainly present in the gospel tradition, cf., Matt.19:28.

v38

b) Drinking the cup of Jesus, v38-39: Jesus questions their capacity to undergo the suffering he is about to face. Jesus' "glory" involves the humiliation of Isaiah's Suffering Servant, with the "cup" symbolising the wrath of God's judgement upon sin, and "baptism" symbolising overwhelming suffering. James and John claim that they can go the distance, and Jesus predicts that they will indeed "drink the cup" and "be baptized", certainly in their identification with him, but also in the struggle of life - James was later martyred, Act.12:2, and John was to suffer in exile, Rev.1:9. First, Jesus addresses the disciples' failure to recognise that "glory" is via a cross, v38.

πιειν [πινω] aor. inf. **"[can] you drink"** - [BUT/AND HE JESUS SAID TO THEM, YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT YOU ASK, ARE YOU ABLE] TO DRINK. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to be able". "Are you able" seems to express "are you capable of drinking the cup that I drink"? Peterson, "have you the strength to drink of the cup that I am to drink of?" Knox. Although stretching the Gk. somewhat, it makes better sense to a modern reader if the question is framed as "are you willing to"

το ποτηριον **"the cup"** - THE CUP [WHICH I DRINK]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to drink." The figurative expression "cup of suffering", is drawn from the "bitter cup", the cup containing the dregs of the wine. This image is often applied to divine punishment, the cup of God's wrath; "the bitter experience through which I must pass", Barclay.

βαπτισθηναι [βαπτίζω] aor. pas. inf. **"be baptised"** - [OR *are you able*] TO BE BAPTIZED [*in* THE BAPTISM WHICH I AM BAPTIZED]? The infinitive is complementary, as above. This Gk. word has a number of figurative uses in the NT, uses which are often confused with the literal sense of "dunking in water", eg. as here, of suffering; other uses include instruction ("immersed in the name"), and the infilling / baptism / washing of God's Spirit. "Can you be submerged in the sea of troubles in which I must be submerged?", Barclay.

v39

Presumably James and John have understood "cup" and "baptism" in the terms of suffering (although some commentators read their response as smug and overconfident) and so show themselves willing and able to undergo this ordeal with Jesus, v39-40. Their ordeal will be persecution, but will not be comparable to the ordeal that Jesus is about to face (cf. Lk.12:50 = substitutionary sacrifice). It is possible, of course, that Mark's account here reflects a post-resurrection view of James and John who did indeed show themselves to be "the sons of thunder." Jesus is predicting the future persecution of James and John ("John the theologian and James his brother, were killed by the Jews", Papias), but it is likely that he also be making the point that the "cup" and "baptism" primarily belongs him, and that disciples vicariously share in them through identification with him.

αυτοις dat. pro. "[Jesus said] to them" - [AND THEY SAID TO HIM, WE ARE ABLE. BUT/AND HE JESUS SAID] TO THEM [THE CUP WHICH I DRINK YOU WILL DRINK AND THE BAPTISM WHICH I AM BAPTISED YOU WILL BE BAPTIZED]. Dative of indirect object.

v40

c) Jesus' rejection of their request, v40. Jesus makes the point that he is really not into assigning the seating order at the messianic banquet.

δε "but" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point.

το ... καθισαι [καθιζω] aor. inf. "to sit" - TO SIT. The articular infinitive forms a nominal phrase, subject of the verb to be. "But the right to sit on my right and left hand is not mine to give you", Barclay.

εκ "on" - FROM [MY RIGHT OR LEFT]. Denoting separation, best expressed in English as "at/on my right side".

δουναι [διδωμι] aor. inf. "to grant" - [IS NOT ME] TO GIVE. Forming a nominal phrase object of the verb to-be.

αλλα "-" - BUT, RATHER, ON THE CONTRARY. "Except for those it has been prepared", ie. **αλλα** stands in place of **ει μη**, so introducing an exceptive clause. This translation implies that Jesus is restricted in the allocation of positions in the kingdom of God, "I am not free to give to any but for those for whom it is already destined", Turner. Some commentators are uneasy with such a restriction, eg., Cranfield, but Jesus may not intend us to take his words too seriously, given that degrees of authority are not found in the kingdom. This is supported by his use of the word **ευωνυμων** for "left" = "on the well named side" = "lucky side", facetiously meaning "unlucky side". Jesus' words are probably nothing more than a gentle rebuke; "I'm not really into organising the seating arrangements in the kingdom." The other option is that we have an ellipsis (missing word) in the

clause, "[it is for those] for whom", Zerwick, or **δοθησεται** after **αλλα**, "[it will be given] [to those] for whom it has been prepared", making the point "that the allotting of the chief places does not appertain to Jesus, but to God", Cranfield. "Such places belong to those for whom they are intended", Phillips.

οἷς dat. pro. "**for whom**" - TO THE ONE. Dative of interest, advantage; "for those."

ἡτοιμασται [ετοιμαζω] perf. pas. "**they have been prepared**" - IT HAS BEEN PREPARED ("it" = the authority to sit on the left or right). The perfect tense expresses the fact that the positions have been prepared and are ready to be occupied, but see above.

v41

d) The other apostles are only too aware of what James and John are up to and react accordingly, v41.

ακουσαντες [ακουω] aor. part. "**when [the ten] heard**" - [AND] HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, best taken temporal, as NIV.

αγανακτειν [αγανακτεω] pres. inf. "**indignant**" - [THE TEN BEGIN] TO BE ANGRY, INDIGNANT. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "begin". The ESV properly translates the clause as "they began to be indignant", but the sense is surely as NIV.

περι + gen. "**with**" - ABOUT, CONCERNING [JAMES AND JOHN]. Reference; "with respect to."

v42

e) Glory in service, v42-45. Jesus gathers the disciples together and gives "a brief but masterly description of the new economy of service and sacrifice for others in action", Anderson.

Lording it over others, v42-44. Jesus explains to the disciples that self-seeking for status, honour, glory, authority... is common in secular management, but is not to be the style of leadership used in the church. Disciples must serve each other, not rule each other. The model of service is Jesus himself.

προσκαλεσαμενος [προσκαλεομαι] aor. part. "**[Jesus] called [them] together**" - [AND] HAVING SUMMONED [THEM, JESUS SAYS TO THEM]. The participle is adverbial, best taken as temporal; "then Jesus called them together", or consecutive, "so [as a result] Jesus called them and said", Moffatt.

οτι "that" - [YOU KNOW] THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception, expressing what they know, as NIV.

οι δοκουντες [δοκew] pres. part. "**those who are regarded as**" - THE ONES SEEMING = THE ONES HAVING THE REPUTATION. Participle serves as a substantive. Jesus is not implying that the secular authorities do not actually

possess the right to rule, since they do, under the will of God, rightly "carry great authority over those whom they rule", Junkins. "You know that those who are acknowledged as bearing authority over the Gentiles", Cassirer.

αρχειν [αρχω] pres. inf. "**rulers**" - TO RULE. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verbal aspect of the participle "seeming".

των εθνων gen. "**of the Gentiles**" - OF THE GENTILES. The genitive may be classified adjectival, idiomatic, of subordination, "over the Gentiles", or a genitive of direct object after the verb "to rule over."

αυτων gen. pro. "[**lord it**] **over them**" - [MASTER, EXERCISE POWER OVER] THEM [AND THE GREAT ONES OF THEM RULE OVER, EXERCISE AUTHORITY OVER] THEM. The genitive, as with the pronoun's final use in the verse, is a genitive of direct object after a **κατα** prefix verb; "Lord it over them, and their great ones act in a tyrannical way", Cassirer.

v43a

ουχ ... εστιν "**not**" - [BUT/AND] IT IS NOT. "It" = "exercising authority", v42. Functioning as a statement of fact, not a command, TH. "In the new Israel the worldly idea of greatness has no place", Cranfield. "But this is not your way", Berkeley.

ουτως adv. "**so**" - THUS, SO. Demonstrative adverb. Here referring to what precedes.

εν + dat. "**with [you]**" - IN = WITH [YOU]. Here expressing association, as NIV.

v43b

Saying #1: serving as a slave, v43b-44. This may be regarded as a stitched independent saying if v41-42a is treated as redactional. This saying is virtually a restatement of 9:35. In this saying Jesus "sums up the revolutionary ethics of the kingdom of God. The natural expectations of society are reversed, and leadership is characterised by service", France. The principle in God's new community is that the person who would "be first" must be the servant of all.

αλλ [αλλα] "**instead**" - BUT. Adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not, but ...".

ὅς αν + subj. "**whoever [wants]**" - WHO IF = WHOEVER. Introducing a indefinite relative 3rd class conditional clause where the condition has the possibility of coming true, "whoever, as may be the case, then" "If anyone among you should wish to rank high [then] he must be your servant", Cassirer.

γενεσθαι [γίνομαι] aor. inf. "**to be**" - [WISHES, WILLS] TO BECOME. The infinitive is usually classified as complementary, but it does technically serve to

introduce an object clause / dependent statement of perception, although not classified as such.

μεγας "great" - FIRST. Predicate adjective. "Rank high", but note the argument that, reflecting Semitic use, a superlative is intended = "greatest / rank the highest", so Rawlinson, Cranfield, but this is unlikely.

εν "among" - IN = AMONG [YOU]. Here expressing association, as NIV.

εσται [ειμι] fut. "he must be" - HE SHALL BE = MUST BE. The future tense of the verb to-be takes an imperatival sense here, ie., a volitive future, as NIV.

διακονος [ος] "[your] servant" - SERVANT, SLAVE [OF ALL]. Both here and in 9:35 **διακονος**, "servant", is used, a word which "emphasises the services rendered to the master", Marcus. In v44 **δουλος**, "slave" is used, a word which "emphasises the involuntary aspect of slavery in a legal term", Marcus.

v44

και "and" - Coordinate; tying in parallel to v43b.

ος αν + subj. "whoever" - IF WHO = WHOEVER. Syntax as in v43; Lit: "whoever, *as the case may be*, wills to be great among you, *then* he shall be / must be servant of all."

ειναι pres. inf. "[wants] to be" - [WISHES, WILLS] TO BE. Complementary infinitive; see above.

εν + dat. "-" - [FIRST] IN [YOU]. Expressing association; "first among you", ESV.

εσται [ειμι] fut. "must be" - HE SHALL BE = MUST BE. The future is read as an imperative, "must be", contra Gundry who says it is a prediction, so "will be."

δουλος [ος] "slave" - SLAVE. See above.

παντων gen. adj. "of all" - OF ALL *people*. The adjective serves as a substantive, "all people / everyone", the genitive being adjectival, possessive, "everyone's servant."

v45

Saying #2: the Son of Man, a ransom for many, v45. "This ransom saying, with which the passage concludes, is of central importance in Mark's narrative because it is the clearest Markan reflection on the saving purpose of Jesus' death. That death is to be a 'ransom', a payment price that the 'many' are unable to pay for themselves", Marcus. Yet, there is something even more substantial about this verse which often goes unnoticed. The Son of Man, the glorious coming Son of Man, **και**, "even", he (ascensive) comes not to be served, but to serve. Christ's service is indeed a modal for a disciple's service, but above all, a disciple's full appropriation of the promised blessings of the covenant are not gained in serving, they are not gained in doing, but in receiving the freely bestowed benefits of

Christ's faithful service on our behalf on the cross. It is this lesson the disciples must understand and believe, so that like blind Bartimaeus they will see and be made well.

και γαρ "for" - FOR. Possibly causal, even explanatory, "for indeed", so Mann, emphatic, "indeed", even ascensive, "even", but likely to be a stitching device and so left untranslated.

διακονηθηναι [διακονεω] aor. pas. inf. "to serve" - [THE SON OF MAN DID NOT COME] TO BE SERVED. The infinitive is probably adverbial, expressing purpose, "in order to serve." This word serves as the link word between this saying and the previous one. The service is most likely the cross, although Boring argues that it is "the Christ-event as a whole." For "Son of Man", see 2:10 δουναι [διδωμι] aor. inf. "to give" - [BUT TO SERVE AND] TO GIVE [THE LIFE OF HIM]. The infinitive again expresses purpose, "in order to give."

λυτρον [ον] "a ransom" - A RANSOM. Serving as the accusative complement of the direct object "life", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object; "give his life as a ransom." The sense of this word is in dispute:

a) The more conservative commentators understand it to mean a ransom-price paid for the release/ of someone, cf., Lev.25:26, 51-52, Ex.21:30, 30:12, Num.18, 35:31-32. With this approach, Jesus' death serves as the payment for the liberation of those in bondage, presumably the bondage of sin, with the death of "the righteous being accepted as compensation for the sins of the people", Nineham. The payment is made to God, through the vehicle of propitiation (the turning aside of God's divine justice / wrath onto the perfect sacrifice, ie., "a full satisfaction of God's justice", Edwards), although some have argued the payment was made to the Devil, eg., Origin.

b) The idea of a literal ransom-price is resisted by many commentators. Cranfield suggests that behind λυτρον lies the Hebrew word for "guilt-offering", and Isaiah uses this of the Suffering Servant, "thou shalt make his soul an *offering for sin*. With this approach, the word expresses substitution where Jesus, the Suffering Servant, takes the place of the many who cannot do for themselves; "he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors", Isa.53:12 (so also Lane, Hunter, Gundry, Marcus, France, Evans).

c) Anderson argues that λυτρον is formed from the same root (λυειν, "release") as λυτρωσις, "redemption", and that in the LXX and the NT, it is used of "God's deliverance of his people without any notion of a ransom-price paid." With this approach, the word describes a redemptive salvific

event where Christ, as the servant of all, gives his life to set God's people free (so also Hurtado, Boring, Taylor, Swete, Hooker, Wessel).

αντι "**for**" - FOR. Usually understood to mean "instead of / in place of" (applicable to a substitutionary sacrifice), but possibly the softer "for the sake of / on behalf of", may be intended (applicable to a redemptive salvific act). It is very interesting that there is so little theological reflection on the meaning of Jesus' death in the synoptic gospels, reflection in the terms of a sacrifice / ransom, this being the stand-out proposition, cf. Matt.20:28.

πολλων adj. "**many**" - MANY. The adjective serves as a substantive. A technical term referring to God's elect people, broken by sin, scattered and lost, who rest on the promise of an eternal inheritance, the kingdom of God, cf., Lane p384. The technical nature of the term is probably best avoided and so translated as "for all", Mann.

10:46-52

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

3. The new law, 9:14-10:52

vii] A blind man comes to see through faith and follows his master

Synopsis

The journey / way of the messiah is coming to an end. At Jericho, some fifteen miles from Jerusalem, Jesus is harassed by a blind beggar named Bartimaeus. Using the messianic title, "Son of David", Bartimaeus calls on Jesus to have mercy on him. Mercy is granted and Bartimaeus sees; his faith has made him whole / saved him.

Teaching

A persistent faith saves.

Issues

i] Context: See 8:22-30. Mark uses the two-part healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, 8:22-30, and the healing of blind Bartimaeus, as book-ends for three teaching units. Like the blind man at Bethsaida, the disciples don't quite see. They think Jesus is the messiah, but have yet to understand that following is primarily about receiving, rather than doing; they have yet to discover grace. Salvation, with the full appropriation of the promised blessings of the covenant, are theirs in Christ, in his faithfulness, his dying and rising on their behalf, his ransoming of them. All that is required of them is that they rely on this truth and live its fruit in loving service. It is then, like Bartimaeus, that their faith will save / heal them.

ii] Structure: *Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus*;

A scene-setting introducing, v46;

Interactive scenes between Jesus, Bartimaeus and the crowd:

v47-48;

v49-50;

v51;

v52, A concluding resolution.

iii] Interpretation:

Although the healing of Bartimaeus again reveals something of Jesus' messianic credentials, the story focuses on the response of Bartimaeus himself. He tenaciously cries out for mercy and ends up following Jesus. The persistent faith of the blind man is the focus of this story, a faith that "heals / saves" him and sets him on messiah's way.

For Mark, this miracle story climaxes the ministry of Jesus prior to his entry into Jerusalem. It reveals Jesus' messianic credentials (he is the "Son of David", the royal messiah) and how the promised blessings of the kingdom may be accessed (a faith that looks to God for mercy). Although some question the degree of the blind man's messianic comprehension, for Mark, the spiritual depth of his cry for mercy and the commitment-level of his "following on the way", is a pivotal confession and response. At the moment of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem there is at least one person who recognises who Jesus is, and seeks from him the only hope for fallen humanity, namely the mercy of God. Rather than sitting beside the way, this new disciple strikes out with Jesus along the way.

Mark would have the reader of his gospel come to this same recognition, response and commitment to "the way", and so, like blind Bartimaeus, move from darkness to light.

iv] Synoptics:

Blind Bartimaeus: Matt.20:29-34; Lk.18:35-43. The story presents as a healing / miracle narrative, although more rightly a pronouncement story, given that the pronouncement is of paramount importance. Both Matthew and Mark record the story immediately before Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

This pericope highlights *the synoptic problem*. Most hold that Mark has sourced this healing story from either oral tradition or a pre-Markan document. He has then adjusted the story to suit his ends. Mark's editorial additions may include the following: "they came to Jericho"; "along with his disciples and a large crowd"; "he followed him in the way." Most commentators hold that Luke then used Mark for the basis of his gospel and that Matthew follows either Mark or Luke, or both.

Both Matthew and Mark record this story in a similar contextual setting, with Luke's account closest to Mark, although it is rather strange that a historian like Luke would drop the name of the blind man. Matthew's account is interestingly different in that we have two blind men. It is also rather strange, given that the blind man had a name, that Matthew would also cut across such an established fact in this story, ignore the name and add an extra blind man, all this having already told a story of a two-blind-men healing, 9:27-31.

These types of random differences are more likely a consequence of oral transmission - the name got lost, the one became two,, so Schweizer, "obviously Matthew's knowledge of this brief episode is based on a special tradition." Such differences support the view that all three synoptic gospels worked independently on an established oral tradition, most likely conveyed in Aramaic, and that they were more respectful of

that tradition than they are often given credit for. The evident differences between the synoptic gospels is likely to reflect local differences in the oral tradition, along with some editorial tweaking. That is not to say that, for example, Matthew didn't have access to a copy of Mark / proto-Mark, but primarily he runs his own race.

v] Homiletics: *Persistent faith*

What makes for a good Christian? I was speaking with a family concerning the loss of their father. The son said of his father: "He was a good Christian. He never went to church, but he believed in God."

I learnt long ago to limit my presumptions about a person's standing in the sight of God, for it is between them and Jesus. Whether they attend church or not, whether they are a fine person, or badly flawed, their standing before God is between God and them alone. So, my answer to the son was quite straightforward: "If your dad has made his peace with God, then he is at peace with God." Yet, the question remains, "What makes for a good Christian?"

Of course, the question is loaded by the word "good". I mean, what did Jesus say, "no one is good except God alone"? Anyway, what makes of a good - with qualifications - Christian?

Our reading today serves as one of those crucial turning points in the gospel. By itself it seems little more than another story authenticating the messiahship of Jesus. Yet, it serves a quite different purpose. In concluding the central section of the gospel and pointing toward Jesus' passion, it unlocks the secret to membership in the kingdom of God.

Entrance into the kingdom of God had certainly eluded the religious leaders of Israel. It was still eluding the disciples who were busy seeking greatness through status. Yet, a blind man unlocked the secret. The promised blessings of the kingdom are for those who, in faith, persistent faith, cry out to God for mercy and who, having found that mercy, set out to follow Jesus.

Text - 10:46

The healing of blind Bartimaeus, v46-52. i] Setting: Jericho was some 30 Kms. northeast of Jerusalem, a rather dilapidated old town, but with a new section to the South housing Herod's winter palace. Jesus was journeying, with a large crowd, on the pilgrim's way to Jerusalem. Beggars were a common sight on the pilgrim-way. Mark actually names our particular beggar - Bartimaeus, son of Timai. The names of those healed rarely get mentioned in the gospels.

ἐρχονται [ἐρχομαι] pres. "**then they came to**" - [AND] THEY CAME TO [JERUSALEM]. Narrative / historic present, used to indicate narrative transition

(for the English reader, a new paragraph). Indicating that Jesus is moving closer to Jerusalem. The site is identified in all the records of this story.

εκπορευομενου [εκπορευομαι] gen. aor. part. "**As ... were leaving [the city]**" - [AND HE] GOING FORTH [FROM JERICHO AND THE DISCIPLES AND A LARGE CROWD]. The genitive participle and its genitive subject, **αυτου**, "he", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. Indicating that they were actually passing through Jericho, pressing on toward Jerusalem. The preposition **απο**, "from", expresses separation. The following crowd is large, in the sense of "significant", Cranfield.

Τιμαιου [ος] gen. "**the Son] of Timaeus**" - [THE SON OF TIMAEUS] BARTIMAEUS, [A BLIND BEGGAR. The genitive is adjectival, relational. Cranfield questions the placement of this explanatory phrase before the Aramaic "Bartimaeus", rather than after, and also the use of the Greek name "Timaeus", rather than "Timay". He suggests that it is a scribal gloss.

εκαθητο [καθημαι] imperf. "**was sitting**" - WAS SITTING DOWN. The imperfect is obviously iterative expressing repeated action, "it was his custom to sit", Robertson, but the imperfect is often simply used to express background information. "Was sitting in his usual place beside the road", Phillips.

παρα + acc. "**by [the roadside]**" - BESIDE [THE WAY, ROAD]. Spatial.

v47

ii] The interactive scenes: a) Bartimaeus and the crowd, v47-48. Once Bartimaeus gets wind of Jesus' presence, he starts shouting out for attention. His appeal, "have mercy on me", is the common appeal to God for help, eg., Ps.4:1, 6:2,..... He sees Jesus as God's servant, and therefore, the channel of God's mercy. The title, "Son of David", is a declaration of Jesus' messianic credentials. Jesus does not silence him, for he is now heading toward Jerusalem and is about to enter the city as the Messiah. Jesus no longer needs to hide his identity. The crowd, constantly pestered by crying beggars, tries to shut Bartimaeus up, but he cries out all the more.

ακουσας [ακουω] aor. part. "**when he heard**" - [AND] HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

οτι "that" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception, expressing what he heard.

ο Ναζαρηνος [ος] "**of Nazareth**" - [IT IS JESUS] THE NAZARENE. Standing in apposition to "Jesus". The original tense of the statement is being expressed, "it is Jesus of Nazareth."

κραζειν [κραζω] pres. inf. "**to shout**" - [HE BEGAN] TO CRY OUT [AND TO SAY]. The infinitive, as with "to say", is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "began".

Ἰησοῦ "Jesus" - [SON OF DAVID] JESUS. Vocative, not the genitive, "of Jesus." The title is messianic and thus demonstrates messianic recognition by the blind man. It is, of course, possible that the title is nothing more than a formal recognition of Jesus' family ties ("honorific", Gundry), although this seems unlikely. If the title does express messianic recognition, it is interesting that Jesus doesn't silence the blind man, although at this late stage in his ministry there would be little point. Boring argues that "son of David", for Mark, amounts to a misunderstanding of Jesus' true identity, but most other commentators take it as a genuine recognition of Jesus' messianic credentials, eg., Evans, Edwards, Marcus, France - "It is now time, as Jesus approaches Jerusalem, for the messianic aspect of his ministry to become more public".

ἐλεησον [ἐλεεω] aor. imp. "**have mercy on**" - HAVE MERCY ON [ME]. Very much an echo of the Psalter (6:2, 9:13, 122:3) and properly the cry of the faithful who recognise that the mercy of God is available to those who seek it.

v48

ἐπετιμων [ἐπιτιμαω] imperf. "**[many] rebuked**" - [AND MANY *people*] WERE TELLING SHARPLY, STERNLY. The imperfect is possibly expressing repeated action (iterative), or prolonged action (durative), although verbs of speech are often imperfect as a matter of form, ie., a series of words is not by nature punctiliar and therefore an aorist is an inappropriate tense. "Rebuked" may be a bit strong, better "a number of the people checked him", Moffatt.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to rebuke"; "they spoke sternly to him."

ινα + subj. "**to [be quiet]**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they commanded.

σιωπηση [σιωπαω] aor. subj. "**be quiet**" - HE MAY BE QUIET, SILENT. The aorist is ingressive, where the emphasis is placed at the beginning of the action, "shut your mouth", cf., Zerwick.

πολλω μαλλον "**all the more**" - [BUT] MUCH MORE [HE WAS CRYING OUT]. This adverbial construction modifying the verb "to cry out" consists of the adjective "much" taking the dative of measure and the comparative adverb "more" = "much more" = "even more loudly", BDAG.

ἐλεησον [ἐλεεω] aor. imp. "**have mercy on [me]**" - [SON OF DAVID] SHOW MERCY TO [ME]. The seeking of divine mercy is a very important element in this story.

v49

b) Bartimaeus and Jesus, v49-50. Finally, Bartimaeus gets the nod, jumps up, throws aside his outer garment (used to receive any coins) and comes unaided to Jesus.

στας [ἵστημι] aor. part. "**[Jesus] stopped [and said]**" - [AND] HAVING STOOD [JESUS SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said", as NIV, or it may be treated as adverbial, temporal.

λεγοντες "-" - [CALL HIM, AND THEY CALLED THE BLIND MAN] SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

θαρσει [θαρσεω] pres. imp. "**cheer up!**" - BE BRAVE, BE COURAGEOUS, BE CHEERFUL. "It's all right now, get up, he's calling you", Phillips.

v50

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject.

αποβαλων [απαβαλλω] aor. part. "**throwing [his cloak] aside**" - HAVING THROWN OFF, TOSSED ASIDE [THE GARMENT OF HIM, HAVING JUMPED UP]. This, and the following participle, "having jumped up", are adverbial, either temporal, or modal, expressing the manner of his coming; "throwing off his cloak and leaping to his feet, Bartimaeus went to Jesus."

προς + acc. "**to [Jesus]**" - [HE CAME] TOWARD [JESUS]. Spatial, expressing movement toward.

v51

c) Bartimaeus' request, v51: Jesus knows what he wants, but in typical fashion draws out the beggar's faith. The term "Master" is a title of dignity. "Let me receive my sight" ("I want to see") demonstrates the strong confidence Bartimaeus has in Jesus as the source of God's blessing.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "**[Jesus] asked**" - [AND] HAVING ANSWERED [JESUS SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle, virtually redundant, expressing action accompanying the main verb "said". "Jesus spoke to him and said", Moffatt.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - TO HIM. "Answering" does take a dative of persons, but here the pronoun is a dative of indirect object of the verb "said"; "and Jesus said to him", ESV.

ποιησω [ποιεω] aor. subj. "**to do**" - [WHAT DO YOU WISH] *that* I MAY DO. Although **ἵνα** is not present, we have here a dependent statement of perception expressing what is hoped for, ie., an object clause dependent on a verb of

thinking. Plummer argues that **ἴνα** is not used after **θελω** "when the first verb is in the second person, and the second verb is in the first."

σοι dat. pro. "**for you**" - TO YOU. Dative of interest, advantage, "for you."

ῥαββουνι "**Rabbi**" - [AND THE BLIND MAN SAID TO HIM] RABBONI = TEACHER. Marcus notes that the title is of early Palestinian Aramaic origin and may be properly translated "master / lord", rather than just "teacher". The term often has even more exalted uses, ref., "ribbon" to God, often used of God. See also Gundry. It is interesting that Mark does not translate the word for his readers. Obviously he knew that they were bilingual enough to understand it (a further hint as to the recipients of this gospel).

ἴνα + subj. "-" - THAT [I MAY SEE]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception, hoping, expressing what is hoped for, with an assumed **θελω**, "I want / wish"; "*I wish* that I may see". "I want to see again", Barclay.

v52

iii] Concluding resolution, v52. Bartimaeus, a man of faith, is immediately healed and joins the disciples on the way to the cross. At the gates of Jerusalem, the triumphant Messiah, the "Son of David", will encounter the blindness of Israel, but here, on the pilgrim's way, he encounters a man of faith, to whom he declares "your faith has saved you." This man comes to see through faith, and "followed him in the way". cf., 2Sam.5:6-8.

It is likely that Bartimaeus has genuinely responded to Jesus and now follows as a disciple, although there are those who think that he simply floats off into the crowd, having met his immediate physical needs, so Kingsbury (*Christology*). Mark clearly implies a climax of faith.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [AND JESUS SAID] TO HIM [GO]. Dative of indirect object. The instruction "go" is a common linguistic feature of Jesus = "you don't have to sit on the edge of the road begging any more", Gundry.

ἡ πιστις [ις εως] "**[your] faith**" - THE FAITH [OF YOU]. Here dependence on Christ the healer, but used by Mark to identify the key to unlocking a person's full participation in the promised blessings of the kingdom.

σεσωκεν [σωζω] perf. "**has healed**" - HAS SAVED, RESTORED, HEALED [YOU]. Of course, "made you well / healed you / cured you" is intended at the practical level, but in the choice of the word, with its instrument "faith", Mark indicates that he has a double meaning in mind. "Your faith has restored you", Berkeley, is heading in the right direction, although Mark would probably like us to use the stronger "saved" = saved from blindness and death.

ευθυς adv. "**immediately**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY [HE SAW AGAIN]. Here with a temporal sense; the immediacy of the healing, and thus its effectiveness, is being emphasised.

ἠκολούθει [ἀκολουθεῶ] imperf. "**followed**" - [AND] HE WAS FOLLOWING. The imperfect is possibly inceptive, "he began to follow", but a more durative sense is probably intended, ie., he willingly followed Christ on the uphill road to Calvary = the way of discipleship; for Mark, a proper faith-response.

αὐτῷ dat. pro. "-" - HIM. Dative of direct object after to verb "to follow after."

εἰς + dat. "**along [the road]**" - ON [THE WAY, ROAD]. Local, expressing space. Mark is possibly just saying that Bartimaeus simply follows Jesus along the road, but sometimes the preposition is adverbial, possibly temporal, "while on the way", or even modal, expressing manner, "he followed in the way of Christ", ie. as a disciple. It may well be that the blind man's name is remembered because he became a disciple and thus a member of the New Testament church.

11:1-11

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

1. Judgement in symbol and parable upon Israel, 11:1-12:12

i] Jesus' entry into Jerusalem

Synopsis

Mark now begins his record of the final days of Jesus' ministry before his arrest and crucifixion. The story begins with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as the long-awaited messiah. Borrowing or renting a colt, probably from someone in Bethany, Jesus rides the last four kilometres into Jerusalem. Jesus' disciples, and some of the pilgrims heading for Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, recognise the import of this symbolic act and so lay out pieces of clothing and tree branches in front of the coming messiah. Of course, it is likely that for most of the pilgrims it was just business as usual. On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus visits the temple and then heads out of the city to stay overnight with the twelve at Bethany.

Teaching

Jesus the messiah, claims his crown to the acclaim of his people, proclaiming "peace to the nations."

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-8. Under Joshua, the children of God marched into Canaan to execute God's judgement on an evil people, to overcome the enemies of God in preparation for the establishment of the kingdom. Jesus, the warrior king, Son of God, now enters Jerusalem with sword in hand, so introducing the final days of his ministry prior to his arrest and crucifixion.

In this final section of Mark's gospel, covering the ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem, we are first presented with a major teaching unit, 11:1-13:37. From Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, and particularly the cursing of the barren fig tree, 11:12-25, Mark sets out to reveal the hypocrisy of Israel's religious elite, the judgment they will soon face and Christ's "leaving" the temple, a leaving which images the final departure of the "glory of the Lord" from the centre of Israel's life, 13:1, cf. Ezk.10:18-19. Mark records Jesus' final assessment of Israel's flawed piety in 12:38-40 and then offsets their flawed religiosity with the image of the righteous poor, 12:41-44, and the kingdom they will soon inherit, 13:1-37. The major teaching unit covering 11:1-13:37 is followed by the passion of Christ, 14:1-15:39, and the empty tomb, 15:40-16:8.

1. Judgement in symbol and parable upon Israel, 11:1-12:12

The entry into Jerusalem, 11:1-11

The temple cleansed, 11:12-26

The controversy over Jesus' authority, 11:27-33
Parable of the defiant tenants - Judgement on Israel, 12:1-12.

2. The blindness of Israel exposed, 12:13-44

The question concerning paying taxes, 12:13-17
The question concerning the resurrection, 12:18-27
The question concerning the greatest commandment, 12:28-34
Jesus' question concerning David's son, 12:35-37
The religious poverty of Israel, 12:38-44.

3. Prophecies concerning the kingdom of Israel, 13:1-37

These prophecies focus on God's will for the historic kingdom of Israel, the present spiritual kingdom and the heavenly kingdom. Jesus' words are a word of warning. Israel, God's historic people, have been blinded and judged for their evil, their lack of faith. The nation will soon be destroyed. Therefore, we ourselves need to take the warning to heart. We must be faithful as we await the day of the Lord's coming, and don't be caught unaware as they were. "Watch!".

The beginning of the birth pangs, 13:1-13
The desolating sacrilege, 13:14-23
The coming of the Son of Man, 13:24-27
Jesus answers the disciples' question, 13:28-31
Be prepared for the coming day, 13:32-37

4. Victory, 14:1-16:8

As David overcame Goliath, so Jesus the Son of God overcomes the powers of darkness upon the cross of Calvary. With the enemy destroyed, the prisoners released from the bondage of sin and death, the king enters his rest. The new age has dawned, the kingdom has come with power.

The anointing, 14:1-11
The last supper, 14:12-25
Gethsemane, 14:26-52
Peter's denial, 14:53-72
The trial of Jesus before Pilate's tribunal, 15:1-20
The crucifixion of Jesus, 15:21-41

5. Epilogue, 15:40 - 16:8

The matter is now settled; the victory won. So, Mark follows up the climactic victory of Jesus on the cross, recognised in the messianic confession of the centurion, with the story of some women who visit the tomb, and the story of a godly man who is waiting expectantly for the realisation of the kingdom of God.

i] The burial of Jesus, 15:40-47
ii] The Resurrection of Jesus, 16:1-8

ii] Background: In this last section of the gospel, Mark describes Jesus teaching in Jerusalem during the day and retreating to Bethany in the evening. In tradition, certainly from the 4th century, Jesus spent a week in Jerusalem (Palm Sunday to Easter). The text does not demand this conclusion and so it is quite possible that Jesus spent weeks, even months, in Jerusalem. Some commentators have argued that Jesus came to Jerusalem for the feast of Tabernacles and was arrested and crucified at the feast of Passover.

iii] Structure: *Jesus enters Jerusalem:*

Preparing for the way of the Lord, v1-6:

The disciples enter a village, secure transport and return to Bethany.

Jesus enters Jerusalem, v7-11:

He enters, surveys the scene, and returns to Bethany.

iv] Interpretation:

In Luke's gospel, the entry is tied to Jesus' journey to the cross, in fact it's not even an entry as such. The journey motif is certainly present in Mark, yet for Mark, the entry is a further unveiling of Jesus' messianic credentials. Mark draws out the messianic significance of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with a number of pointed observations which reveal Jesus' royal status:

- The disciples' act of obeisance in placing their outer garments on the colt - "a kind of makeshift throne", Boring;
- The crowd's obeisance in laying out *the red carpet* by setting their garments on the road, along with leafy branches, cf. 2King.9:13, 1Mac.13:49-50;
- The crowd's shout of "Hosanna", meaning "save now", and their proclamation that Jesus is the one who comes in the name of the Lord, Psalm 118:16.

These events together seem to depict a moment of triumphant messianism, the coming of the king in terms of Zechariah 14 rather than the coming of a peaceable and humble messiah in terms of Zechariah 9.

Of interest is the miraculous element in Jesus' preparations for his entry into Jerusalem. Other than the cursed fig tree, Mark records no further messianic miracles in his gospel. He does though record Jesus' prophetic role and it is often thought that 11:1-6 serves this end, so Boring, ie., Mark relates the story "to demonstrate Jesus' precise knowledge and sovereignty over subsequent events", Edwards. On the other hand, the business of requisitioning a ride into Jerusalem appropriate for the coming king (Zech.14, Gen.49:11, 1King.1:38-40) may well be nothing more than the

playing out of prior arrangements. Note the arrangements for the last supper, 14:12-16, where the reader is again left wondering whether Jesus is *clairvoyant* or just into *micro-managing*!!!! Of course, it is possible that "Mark perhaps takes to be supernatural knowledge what was in fact the result of a well-laid plan", France.

v] Synoptics:

Matt.21:1-11, Lk.19:28-40, Jn.12:12-19. Note the interesting differences indicated below.

vi] Homiletics: *Journey's end*

T.S. Eliot may have said it's "the journey not the arrival that matters", but our reading today is about the arrival.

The acted-out parable of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is a public disclosure of his messiahship, yet it is a disclosure for those with eyes to see. Few, other than the disciples (and even then we are not sure that they read the signs), see the significance of the event. This event is recorded to draw the reader to faith. The reader is asked to respond in faith to Jesus the messiah, the king who rides toward his coronation, acclaimed by the pilgrim crowd. Even nature bends to his lordship, for he rides on an unbroken colt, just as the prophets once foretold.

The subtlety of Jesus' self-revelation is still with us today. For us he remains the "coming one", coming to the Ancient of Days to claim his throne along with us his saints. He is still coming, still journeying toward that day of his enthronement. Yet, in a sense, he is already there, he has arrived, and we are there with him. We can easily miss the signs, be transfixed by the energy of the moment, diverted by religious enthusiasm, or church business.

Life is a journey to glory, a glory even now before our eyes.

Text - 11:1

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, v1-11: i] Jesus prepares for his entry into Jerusalem, v1-6. Jesus is travelling on the pilgrim's road from Jericho, a road which climbs some 800 meters to Jerusalem. The road passes near to Bethany, over the Mount of Olives, down to the Kidron Valley and by the small village of Bethphage just outside of Jerusalem (more properly a suburb of Jerusalem). On the side road leading to Bethany, Jesus gets his disciples to go to the village and collect a colt. The fact that "no one has ever ridden" it, serves to highlight its sacred task, Num.19:2, Deut.21:3. The detailed recording of this, along with the other seemingly unimportant observations, serves to provide clues on how Jesus' entry into Jerusalem fulfils messianic prophecy, eg., Jesus is the king who comes

with a shout of acclamation, cf., The Oracle of Judah, Gen.49:8-12. So, by these *signs* Mark lets us into the secret that Jesus is the long-promised coming king. The disciples follow Jesus' instructions to the letter - they go, they untie, and they say

ὅτε "as" - [AND] WHEN. Temporal conjunction, introducing a temporal clause; "when they were nearing Jerusalem", Barclay.

εγγιζουσιν [**εγγιζω**] pres. "**they approached**" - THEY APPROACHED, DREW NEAR. Historic / narrative present, probably indicating narrative transition (ie., a paragraph marker); "they draw near."

εις + acc. "**and came to**" - TO, INTO. Spatial, expressing direction of action and/or arrival at; "to" rather than "into", so Zerwick.

Βηθφαγη [**η**] "**Bethphage**" - BETHPAGE. A village east of Bethany, although its exact site is not known for sure.

Βηθανιαν [**α**] "**Bethany**" - [AND] BETHANY. A village some two miles from Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, a ridge to the east of Jerusalem, facing the city across the Kidron valley.

των ελαιων [**α**] gen. "**[Mount] of Olives**" - [TOWARD THE MOUNT] OF OLIVES. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic, of location; "the hill *called* olives."

των μαθητων [**ης ου**] gen. "**disciples**" - [JESUS SENDS TWO] OF THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive; "two from among his disciples."

v2

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [AND HE SAYS] TO THEM [GO INTO THE VILLAGE]. Dative of indirect object.

την "-" - THE [OPPOSITE, BEFORE FACING YOU]. The article serves as an adjectivizer turning the prepositional phrase "opposite you" into an attributive modifier limiting "village"; "the village which is opposite you." The improper preposition **κατεναντι**, "opposite", takes a genitive, so the genitive **ὑμων**, "you". "Go to the village opposite you", Barclay.

ευθυς adv. "**just as**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. Temporal adverb, "immediately upon entering", although the use here seems local, of place, such that the colt is at the entrance of the village.

εισπορευομενοι [**εισπορευομαι**] pres. part. "**you enter**" - ENTERING, GOING, COMING [INTO IT]. The participle is adverbial, temporal; "on entering, at the entrance, you will find ..." Given that Bethphage was on the Roman road to Jerusalem, it is most likely Jesus has told his disciples to leave the road and go to Bethany on the side road where they will find the colt. "As soon as you reach there", Berkeley.

πωλον [ος] "a colt" - [YOU WILL FIND] A COLT (the young of any animal, although often a horse's foal). Accusative direct object of the verb "to find." Matthew and John say it is the foal of an ass. A Roman reader of the text would read it as a "young male horse", an appropriate animal for a king riding into his capital to claim a crown. Mark does not emphasise Jesus' humility. For Mark, Jesus is not the meek king of Zechariah 9:9.

δεδεμενον [δεω] perf. pas. part. "tied there" - HAVING BEEN TIED, BOUND. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "colt", "a tethered colt", Barclay. εφ + acc. "[which]" - UPON [WHICH]. Spatial.

ανθρωπων [ος] "[no one]" - [NO ONE] OF MEN. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative. "On which nobody has ever sat", Berkeley.

εκαθισεν [καθιζω] aor. "has [ever] ridden" - [NOT YET] SAT, PLACED, [UNTIE IT AND BRING]. Here of sitting upon the back of an animal and therefore "ridden".

v3

εαν + subj. "if" - [AND] IF. Conditional clause, 3rd class, where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true; "if, *as the case may be*, someone says to you *then say*"

υμιν dat. pro. "[asks] you" - [CERTAIN = SOMEONE MAY SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

τι "why" - WHY [ARE YOU DOING THIS]? As an interrogative adverb, "why are you doing this?", or possibly as a pronoun, "what is this that you are doing?", France.

ο κυριος [ος] "the Lord [needs it]" - [SAY] THE LORD [HAS NEED OF IT]. Nominative subject of the verb "to have." The "of it", αυτου (gen. pro. = possessive) goes with "has need" and not "Lord", otherwise we end up with "the master / owner has need." "The Lord", possibly in the sense of the divine Jesus, possibly "the Master", or even as a title for the "Lord God" (the article, as here, is often used for the divine title). If "Master", Jesus is the master of the animal, he is the Lord of it, which status he must have organised renting it sometime before, or whatever!! If "the Lord God" then the statement asserts that the animal is needed for divine service. If attaining the animal was prearranged then obviously the words are a kind of password authorising the disciples to take it.

αποστελλει [αποστελλω] pres. "will send [it] back" - [AND IMMEDIATELY] HE SENDS [IT]. Variant αποστελει fut. is followed by the NIV. The subject of "will send" is unclear. Usually translated as if "the Lord" is the subject, but the subject can be taken as τις, "someone", although the sense is somewhat obscure - the "someone" brings (present tense) the animal immediately here, ie., to the disciples who have come to collect it. So, the words the disciples are to say to

any person tending the animal, **τις**, "someone", are only "The Lord [God] has need of it." "And he will hand it over immediately."

ευθυς adv. "[here] **shortly**" - AGAIN [HERE]. Taken as temporal by NIV; "soon", Decker.

v4

Mark goes into some detail when setting the scene; "they went off, and they found a colt tethered at a door, outside on the open street", Barclay.

εξω επι in - [AND THEY WENT AWAY, LEFT, AND FOUND A COLT] OUT (adv.) ON (+ gen.) . Spatial construction.

του αμφοδου [ον] gen. "**the street**" - THE STREET. Usually of a village with a number of streets intersecting. The animal is tethered out in the street, "at the door", rather than in a stable or yard, ready to be picked up, as arranged.

δεδεμενον [δεω] perf. pas. part. "**tied**" - HAVING BEEN TIED. The participle adjectival, attributive, "found the colt which was tied to a door."

προς "at [a doorway]" - TOWARD [DOOR, GATE / DOORWAY, PORTAL, ENTRANCE]. Spatial, but here with the sense "beside / by / at."

λυουσιν [λυω] pres. "**As they untied [it]**" - [AND] THEY LOOSEN, UNTIE [IT]. The tense in this narrative is typically present expressing the action as it happened.

v5

των ... ἑστηκοτων [ιστημι] gen. perf. part. "**people standing**" - [AND CERTAIN] OF THE ONES HAVING BEEN STANDING [THERE]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting **τινες**, "some *people*", while the genitive is partitive; "some people who were standing there asked." The "anyone", singular, of v3 becomes "some", plural. They question the disciples' actions. Presumably the owner is not at home, and given Jesus' instructions, Jesus probably knew that the owner would not be home. This is why the owner has tethered the animal out the front. Presumably those standing out the front with the animal are privy to the arrangements. Note Luke has **οἱ κυριοι** "the owners / masters" question the disciples' action - surely Luke has got this wrong!

αυτοις dat. pro. "**asked**" - [WERE SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

λυοντες [λυω] pres. act. part. "**[what are you doing] untying**" - [WHAT ARE YOU DOING] UNTYING, RELEASING [THE COLT]? The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their doing, namely, "untying the colt", but possibly instrumental, expressing means. "What are you about, untying that colt", Cassirer.

v6

αυτοις dat. pro. "[**they answered**]" - [AND THEY SAID, SPOKE] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object. They, the disciples (plural), respond to the question of the bystanders.

καθως "as" - LIKE, JUST AS, AS [JESUS TOLD *them*]. Comparative, although possibly introducing a dependent statement expressing what Jesus had said; "and they told them what Jesus had said", ESV.

αφηκαν [**αφιημι**] aor. "**they let [them] go**" - [AND] THEY ALLOWED, LET GO, RELEASED, PERMITTED [THEM]. Better with the sense "gave permission." The answer of the disciples, "the lord / master has need of it", satisfies the bystanders. Presumably they are aware of the arrangements, although Mark is possibly making a point about Jesus' authority.

v7

ii] The triumphal entry, v7-10. In place of a saddle, the disciples place their outer garments on the colt - a kind of makeshift throne for the coming king. As Jesus rides toward the city, there is a spontaneous reaction by some of the pilgrims, demonstrating great respect toward Jesus. For similar expressions of respect see 2Kin.9:12f, 1Macc.13:51. Yet, their response is not necessarily a recognition of his messiahship. It could just be a salute to Jesus the prophet, entering Jerusalem to fulfil his prophetic mission. Of course, Mark writes with the eyes of faith, and so for those with eyes to see, this is indeed the coming of the Davidic king. The pilgrims sing / chant Psalm 118:25f, one of the Hallel Psalms used liturgically during Passover and Tabernacles, Psalms 113-118. The word "hosanna" originally meant "save us", but was by now an acclamation, something like Hallelujah. The "he who comes" can mean the pilgrims, since they are the blessed ones, yet Mark sees Jesus as the coming one, the blessed one.

εκβαλλουσιν [**εκβαλλω**] pres. "**threw [their cloaks] over**" - [AND THEY BRING THE COLT TOWARD JESUS AND] THEY THROW UPON, CAST UPON. They obviously did this in place of a saddle; "they put some of their clothes on its back", CEV.

αυτω dat. pro. "**it**" - IT [THE CLOTHS OF THEM]. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to throw upon."

επ [**επι**] + acc. "**on [it]**" - UPON [IT]. Spatial; "down upon."

v8

εστρωσαν [**στρωννιμι**] aor. "**spread**" - [AND MANY] SPREAD OUT, STREW (as for cushions on a bench or a bed). This seems to be a spontaneous action out of respect for Jesus.

στιβαδας [**αξ αδος**] "**branches**" - [THE GARMENTS OF THEM INTO THE ROAD, BUT OTHERS] BITS OF STRAW, RUSHES, LEAVES. The stuff of mattresses.

Here probably foliage, but as it is from the "fields", it may just be straw, or possibly olive branches. Palm fronds are very unlikely, although a nice thought, cf., John 12:13.

κοψαντες [κοπτω] aor. part. "**cut**" - HAVING CUT. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "branches"; "branches which they had cut." "Others put down straw they had cut from the fields", Phillips.

εκ + gen. "**in [the fields]**" - OUT OF, FROM [THE FIELDS, COUNTRYSIDE]. Expressing source / origin.

v9

οι προαγοντες [προαγω] pres. part. "**those who went ahead**" - [AND] THE ONES GOING BEFORE, LEADING THE WAY. This participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to cry out."

οι ακολουθουντες [ακολουθεω] pres. part. "**followed**" - [AND] THE ONES FOLLOWING. The participle as above. Some commentators suggest that there are two groups of people, those who came up with Jesus and those who came out from Jerusalem to meet him. Mark is probably saying that Jesus was surrounded by a large crowd. "The whole crowd, both those who were in front and those who were behind", Phillips.

ωσαννα "Hosanna" - [WERE CRYING OUT] SAVE US WE PRAY, SAVE US NOW. By this time the word is a common liturgical acclamation and so is not actually a prayer, although Mark is obviously well aware of its meaning as a prayer. By means of the acclamation and the pilgrims' blessing from Psalm 118:25-26, Jesus is acclaimed by the people. The quote is by no means messianic, so it is unclear in what sense Jesus is being acclaimed. "The entry was apparently regarded by the masses as a pilgrimage rather than a messianic triumph", Edwards. As a prayer, "God save the people", Barclay.

ευλογημενος [ευλογεω] perf. pas. part. "**blessed**" - HAVING BEEN BLESSED [THE ONE COMING]. The quotation from the Psalm is without a verb. The participle "having been blessed" obviously serves as a substantive, nominative predicate of an assumed verb to-be, with the substantive participle **ο ερχομενος**, "the one coming", serving as the subject; "the one coming is blessed", "a blessing rests on him who appears", Cassirer.

εν + dat. "**in [the name]**" - IN [NAME]. Local, expressing space, metaphorical; "in / under the authority of the Lord"; "name" = the person - to bear the name, their person, is to bear their authority.

κυριου [ος] "**of the Lord**" - OF LORD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, the possession of a derivative characteristic, "the name" = "the personal authority of"

v10

Mark presents this verse as a continuation of the crowd's acclamation, even though the words are not part of the pilgrim blessing, Ps. 118:25-26. It seems more than likely that the verse is editorial, since the phrase "the coming kingdom of our father David" is not something a first century Jew would say. A believer in the apostolic church happily spoke of "the coming kingdom" and of Jesus the messiah its Davidic king. Both Matthew and Luke take the messianic nature of the statement on board, but do not repeat it verbatim. So, for example, Luke adds **ὁ βασιλευς** to the pilgrim blessing, not "kingdom", but "king", probably serving to stand in apposition to **ὁ ερχομενος**; "blessed is the coming one, the king (who comes) in the name of the Lord", cf., Nolland. Variants abound, eg., anarthrous **βασιλευς** = "the coming king." Marcus argues that the statement reflects second Samuel chapter 7 which speaks of a son of David who will establish his father's dominion by building God a "house". Obviously for Mark, the statement gives messianic significance to the pilgrim blessing, which by itself is not messianic.

ευλογημενη [ευλογωω] perf. pas. part. "**blessed**" - HAVING BEEN BLESSED. The participle serves as a substantive, predicate nominative, as above.

ἡ ερχομενη [ερχομαι] pres. mid. part. "**the coming**" - THE COMING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "kingdom"; "the kingdom of our father David which is coming." The phrase "the coming kingdom" is an unusual expression for a Jew, although not for a believer in the apostolic church.

βασιλεια [α] "**kingdom**" - KINGDOM. The dynamic reign of God - both domain and dominion, cf., Wanamaker; "Blessed is the coming dominion of our father David!", Marcus.

του πατρος gen. "**father [David]**" - OF THE FATHER [OF US, DAVID]. The genitive "David" stands in apposition to "father". Possibly as a general term, "ancestor", but again a strange reference since the term "father" was normally reserved for the patriarchs.

ὠσαννα "**Hosanna**" - HOSANNA. "Hosanna" is again best taken as an acclamation of praise. Possibly the acclamation is made by the heavenly host, or by us toward the one who dwells in heaven, in which case, "praise be to God"; "hooray for God in heaven above", CEV. Possibly, but unlikely, this second "hosanna" may be intended as a prayer; "O send your salvation from the heights of heaven", Barclay.

εν + dat. "**in [the highest]**" - IN [THE MOST HIGH]. Local, expressing space; "in high heaven."

v11

iii] Jesus enters Jerusalem and surveys the temple complex, v11. If it were not for the fact that the Christ must suffer, Jesus could, at this point, be crowned the messianic king. Yet, what eventuates is an anticlimax - the crowd dissipates and Jesus, along with the twelve, depart for Bethany.

το ἱερον **"the temple"** - [AND HE ENTERED INTO JERUSALEM AND INTO] THE TEMPLE. Most likely the whole temple precinct.

περιβλεψαμενος [περιβλεπω] aor. mid. part. **"he looked around at"** - [AND] HAVING LOOKED AROUND [ALL = EVERY*where*]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "he went out", or possibly temporal, "and when he had looked around", AV. "He observed everything around and, as night was approaching, he went out to Bethany with the twelve", Berkeley.

ουσης [ειμι] gen. pres. part. **"since it was [late]"** - [THE HOUR NOW] BEING [LATE]. The genitive participle and its genitive subject, "the hour", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, or probably better, causal, "because", "as it was late", Moffatt. Obviously late afternoon, about sunset.

μετα + gen. **"with [the twelve]"** - [HE WENT OUT TO BETHANY] WITH [THE TWELVE]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

11:12-26

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

1. Judgement in symbol and parable upon Israel, 11:1-12:12

ii] The cursing of the fig tree and the temple

Synopsis

It is the day following Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Crowds of pilgrims had welcomed Jesus as he entered the city, he had then visited the temple, "looked around at everything" and returned to Bethany to spend the night. Now, heading back to Jerusalem, Jesus sees a fig tree and so looks to find some fruit on it, but finding none he curses it, even though it is some two or three months before fruiting season. Jesus then enters Jerusalem, heads for the temple and there, in the Court of the Gentiles, finds the dirt of a cattle market and the haggling of a money exchange, and so he sets about driving out the merchants - God's house is a house of prayer, but the temple officials have turned it into a "den of robbers." The next day, returning again to Jerusalem from Bethany, the disciples notice that the fig tree is withered away from its roots up. In response, Jesus addresses the subject of faith, prayer and forgiveness.

Teaching

Israel has failed as a channel God's grace to the nations, and so stands condemned; the new Israel, now has the opportunity to expedite that grace through faith.

Issues

i] Context: See 11:1-11.

ii] Structure: *The withered fig tree*:

The cursing of the fig tree, v12-14;

The cleansing of the temple, v15-19;

The withered fig tree, v20-22.

"Have faith in God"

Independent sayings on prayer, v23-26:

Saying #1; "If you say to this mountain ..., "

Saying #2; "Whatever you ask in prayer, believe"

Saying #3; "If you hold anything against anyone, forgive them"

iii] Interpretation:

The cursing of the fig tree has caused some difficulty. The question centres on Jesus use of his powers to destroy. As this miracle stands by

itself in the gospels, many have taken it as a myth developed by the early church, but this is very unlikely.

In the first known commentary on Mark's Gospel, Victor of Antioch said that the cursing of the fig tree was an acted-out parable in which Jesus "used the fig tree to set forth the judgment that was about to fall on Jerusalem." This view is still the most favoured interpretation of the passage, and given Mark's weaving of the story around the cleansing of the temple ("a sort of interpretive envelope", Marcus), a symbolic interpretation is obviously the approach he wants us to take.

The independent sayings of Jesus linked to this miracle have also caused some problems. Some commentators have taken the view that the early church used the cursing of the fig tree as an example of Jesus' power, and that Mark has added sayings on faith to support this approach. Yet, the cursing of the fig tree represents the cursing of Israel's religion, and so it is more than likely that the sayings serve as an overview for an alternate religious life, that of the new Israel, the church.

iv] Synoptics:

The cursing of the fig tree: Matt.21:18-20. A two-part pronouncement story. The *Markan sandwich*, v12-22, is stylistically impressive, and at the same time, is likely to be closer to the actual event than Matthew's amalgamation of the cursing.

Mark's attached independent sayings, v23-26, are crisp and unaffected by the context, whereas Matthew's record reflects an adjustment to the context. Markan priority is indicated.

Saying #1, v23 - Matt.21:21;

Saying #2, v24 - Matt.21:22;

Saying #3, v25 - cf., Matt.6:14-15. Bultman thinks that this saying is a variant of Matt.5:23-24, with Matthew's version more primitive than Mark.

The cleansing of the temple: Matt.21:12-17, Lk.45-48, Jn.2:13-22. Matthew doesn't record Mark's backgrounding, v18 - often indicated by Mark's use of an imperfect verb.

v] Homiletics: *Forgive and forget*

"I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more", Jer.31:34.

I was taught that if I claimed to be a follower of Jesus I must be willing to forgive others when they sin against me. If I fail to forgive them then God will not forgive me. So, when crossed, I was immediately forced into one of two tacks. On the one hand I played the..... "I still love you; I forgive

you [but I will never forget]" routine. This means that we will never trust them again. Of course, this is a long way from what God means by forgiveness. On the other hand, I played the..... "Well, obviously you're not a Christian, so I don't have to forgive you", routine. Again, not quite what God means by forgiveness.

To break open this problem, there are a number of things we need to understand:

First, forgiveness is not a requirement for salvation. My salvation always rests on what Christ has done for me, not on what I can, or can't, do.

Second, there can be no forgiveness without repentance. Forgiveness is given to those who ask. We do well to remember that God only forgives those who ask for forgiveness.

Third, we can only ever hope to forgive imperfectly. Thankfully, our imperfection is covered by Christ's perfection.

Fourth, our limited capacity to forgive rests on God's abundant forgiveness. When we struggle to forgive someone, we need to focus on what God has done for us in Christ.

Our forgiveness of others will always only ever be an imperfect reflection of the forgiveness offered us in Christ. No matter how high the mountain of our sin, in Christ, God will not even remember it. The offer of God's forgiveness was once to radiate from the chosen family of Israel. Now, in these last days, it is to radiate from us. The house of Israel has withered and died. Let the light of Christ shine from us into a world of darkness.

Text - 11:12

Of fig trees and temples, v12-26: i] The cursing of the fig tree, v12-14. On the previous day, Jesus had entered the temple, surveyed the state of affairs, and then spent the evening at Bethany. Now, the next morning, Mark notes that Jesus is hungry. Having found a fig tree without fruit, Jesus curses it, even though it was out of season. Clearly, Jesus is performing an acted-out parable.

Some suggest that the miracle simply demonstrates Jesus' power, but If Jesus really wanted to demonstrate his power, there would be more sense in having the fig tree fruit out of season than having it wither and die. The episode certainly poses moral questions - this is the only time that Jesus has used his power [spitefully, "with vindictive fury", Bertrand Russell] to destroy. Does Jesus really expect to find fruit on the tree, or is it a rouse? The episode also poses logistic questions - Is the story seasonally misplaced [ie. originally related to the feast of Tabernacles, autumn, for late harvest figs]? Is the tradition faulty [so Manson]?

As noted above, it seems more than likely that Jesus uses the incident as an acted-out parable resting on Old Testament allusions, eg. Jer.8:13, 24:1-10, Ezk.17:24, Hos.9:10, 16-17, Mic.7:1-6. Like the fig tree, Israel has failed to bear fruit; she has failed to rest on the covenant faithfulness of God, on his abundant covenant mercy, and so has failed to be a light in the darkness, "a house of prayer for all nations". So, Israel stands condemned to wither and die. "A tree full of leaf at Passover season is making a promise it cannot fulfil; so, too, is Israel a barren temple", France.

τη επαυριον dat. "**the next day**" - [AND] ON THE TOMORROW. The dative is adverbial, temporal, as NIV. Cranfield argues that, given Mark's limited temporal links, this link was obviously part of the tradition that Mark drew on.

εξελθοντων [εξερχομαι] gen. aor. part. "**as they were leaving**" - [THEY] HAVING GONE OUT. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "they" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV; "when/after they left Bethany." Probably "after" indicating that the fig tree is related to the temple environment rather than Bethany.

απο + gen. "-" - FROM [BETHANY HE WAS HUNGRY]. Expressing separation; "away from." "Jesus was feeling hungry / getting hungry."

v13

ιδων [ειδον] aor. part. "**seeing**" - [AND] HAVING SEEN [A FIG TREE]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, "when, from some distance away, his eyes fell upon", Cassirer, but possibly causal, "because he saw he went (came) .."

απο + gen. "**in [the distance]**" - FROM [FAR OFF.] With the adverb μακροθεν forming an adverbial construction of place; "he saw afar."

εχουσαν [εχω] pres. part. "**[a fig tree] in [leaf]**" - HAVING [LEAVES HE CAME to find out]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "a fig tree"; "a fig tree which had leaves / was in leaf." Such would be the case at Passover time, i.e., coming into leaf, but without fruit (fruiting occurs May/June). As noted above, it is possible that, given the parabolic nature of incident, the show of leaves without fruit alludes to the beauty of the temple, its ritual etc. but a place of worship devoid of fruit, i.e. not a "house" for the nations. Plummer suggests that the fig tree is "a braggart tree."

There is an obvious ellipsis here, possibly of an adverbial infinitive introducing a purpose clause, "in order to find out"; "(in order) to see", Moffatt. Although it seems clear that Jesus uses the cursing of the fig tree as an acted-out parable, it is possible that at least fig buds would have been on the tree and these can be used for a topping with bread. So, looking for something on the fig tree at this particular time of the season may not be that irrational; note Gundry.

None-the-less, if Jesus is using the fig tree as a teaching tool, there is more impact if there is no fruit on the tree because it is out of season.

ει αρα + fut. "if" - IF THEREFORE [HE MIGHT FIND SOMETHING ON IT]. Expressing an uncertain expectation associated with an effort to attain something; "if by chance", Zerwick #403; "to see if he could find any fruit on it", Phillips.

ελθων [ερχομαι] aor. part. "when he reached" - [AND] HAVING COME. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, as NIV.

επ [επι] + acc. "-" - UPON [IT HE FOUND NOTHING]. Spatial. "He could find no fruit on it."

ει μη "but [leaves]" - EXCEPT [LEAVES]. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception.

γαρ "for" - BECAUSE [THE SEASON WAS NOT FIGS]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why he found nothing but leaves; "because it wasn't the season for figs", CEV. The clause possibly alludes to Micah 7:1. Mark is quite clear that it was not the fruiting season and therefore arguments that the incident derives from a different time when the tree would have had fruit, or some late season fruit, etc., seem rather pointless.

v14

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "-" - [AND] HAVING ANSWERED [HE SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant.

αυτη dat. pro. "to the tree" - TO IT. Dative of indirect object.

φαγοι [εσθιω] opt. "may [no one ever] eat" - [NO LONGER INTO THE AGE FROM YOU NO ONE] MAY EAT [FRUIT]. The optative is used to express a wish; the only optative in Mark. Note the doubling up of negatives; "may no one ever again eat fruit for you", Cassirer. Or as Gundry would have it; "No buds now? Well, then, no fruit in June - or ever afterwards." The ever afterwards, εις τον αιωνα, is a temporal idiomatic phrase, "to the end of the age."

ηκουον [ακουω] imperf. "heard" - [AND] WERE HEARING [THE DISCIPLES OF HIM]. The imperfect possibly expressing attentive listening, although the imperfect is often used with speech as a matter of form, or to provide background information. This final clause seems rather redundant, but for the Master to go around cursing fig trees is not something we would expect of him, so Mark underlines the fact that this incident was verified by the disciples, particularly Peter, v21.

v15

ii] The cleansing of the temple, v15-19. Leaving Bethany, Jesus travels to Jerusalem and enters the temple again. Israel was God's special people, a holy nation, and the temple was the visible expression of this reality before the whole

world. Yet, the temple has been turned into little more than trash-and-treasure market. With righteous anger Jesus enacts God's condemnation. Jesus, having offended the *holier than thou* religious crew of his day, now find himself the focus of their hate - they fear his power and his popularity.

It was not inappropriate for traders, in the Court of the Gentiles, to exchange foreign money into temple money, or sell wine, oil, salt and animals for sacrifice. There may have been cheating, although it is hard to believe that this would be condoned by the authorities. Certainly, v16 identifies a rule from the Mishnah maintaining the holiness of the temple. This would support the idea that the trading was "unclean", but would Jesus take issue on matters of "minutia", ie., cleansing laws, cf. Mk.7:1-23?

The substance of the offence is probably related the quotation from Isaiah 56:7. The context of this passage concerns the salvation of "others". "My salvation is close at hand" and it will be for the "foreigner" who thinks "the Lord will surely exclude me from his people." As well as gathering the "exiles of Israel" the Lord will also "gather still others to them". "My house (in the sense of the house of Israel, the family of God, the chosen people of God, the children of God) will be called a house of prayer for all nations." The actual temple building was but a physical representation of the substance of the people of God - the gathering of God's people indwelt by his presence.

So, the issue is not so much that the market desecrated the temple, but that it evidenced a deeper failure, a failure of faith. Israel no longer rested on the covenant faithfulness of God and thus its religious life was no longer "a light unto the Gentiles", a "house" for the nations, an access to God's covenant mercy for a broken world. Israel had failed to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah 56:1-8; she was like a fig tree in full leaf, but devoid of fruit, and so now Christ will fulfil this role in his person and through his people. Israel is left abandoned and cursed - "a den of robbers", cf., Jer.7:1-29. For Israel, all is lost, for "the Lord has rejected and abandoned this generation that is under his wrath."

ερχονται [ερχομαι] pres. "**on reaching [Jerusalem]**" - [AND] THEY CAME TO [JERUSALEM]. Historic / narrative present, probably indicating the next step in the narrative (ie., identifying narrative transition).

εισελθων [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "**Jesus entered**" - [AND] HAVING ENTERED [INTO THE TEMPLE]. The participle is adverbial, temporal, "on entering the temple", Berkeley. The NIV has "temple area" since trading was not allowed in the temple proper, but only in the court of the Gentiles.

εκβαλλειν [εκβαλλω] pres. inf. "**[began] driving out**" - [HE BEGAN] TO CAST OUT. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "began".

τους πωλουντας [πωλεω] pres. part. "those who were [buying and] selling" - THE ONES SELLING [AND THE ONES BUYING IN THE TEMPLE]. As with "the ones buying", the participle serves as a substantive. These merchants sold items for the temple sacrifices, eg., animals, wine, salt,

κατεστρεψεν [καταστρεψω] aor. "he overturned" - [AND] HE OVERTURNED, TURNED OVER, UPSET. The money changers were changing secular money into coinage accepted for temple offerings and for the payment of the half shekel temple tax.

των καλλυβιστων [ης ου] gen. "of the money changers" - [THE SEATS] OF THE MONEYCHANGERS. The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

των πωλουντων [πωλεω] gen. part. "of those selling" - [AND THE BENCHES] OF THE ONES SELLING [THE DOVES]. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being possessive.

v16

ινα + subj. "-" - [AND HE WAS NOT ALLOWING] THAT [ANYONE MAY CARRY]. An interesting use of *hina*, used here in place of a complementary infinitive. An infinitive with a cognitive verb, although usually classified as complementary, can be viewed as introducing a dependent statement of perception. So here, we may classify the *hina* clause as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception / indirect speech, expressing what was not allowed; "he would not allow that any person should carry an item through the temple." "He would not allow anyone to use the temple court as a short-cut between the shops and their houses", Barclay.

σκευος [ος ους] "merchandise" - THINGS, OBJECTS, VESSELS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to carry through." Probably referring to merchandise, as NIV, cf., Zech.14:21, but possibly the word means "weapon".

δια + gen. "through" - THROUGH [THE TEMPLE]. Here spatial; "through" in space. A stylistic repartition of the prefix of the verb "to carry through."

v17

εδιδασκεν [διδασκω] imperf. "he taught" - [AND] HE WAS TEACHING [AND SAID TO THEM]. Often taken as an inceptive imperfect, but it can just indicate a minor step / change in subject for a narrative discourse.

ου γεγραπται [γραφω] perf. pas. "is it not written" - HAS IT NOT BEEN WRITTEN. The perfect tense is often used of revelation, ie., expressing a past act with ongoing consequences. The negation, in a question, assumes an answer in the affirmative.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement, quotation, Isa.56:7.

μου gen. pro. "my" - MY [HOUSE]. Possessive; referring to God, as per the quote from Isaiah. Often taken to refer to Jesus, but there is no indication that Jesus is applying the text to himself.

κληθησεται [καλω] fut. pas. "will be called" - WILL BE CALLED. "Will be called", but better "will be known [as a house of prayer]", Knox, Cassirer, although it is likely that the Aramaic sense applies, "my house will be a house of prayer" The true nature of Israel's religion lies not in sacrifice, but in a prayerful reliance (faith) on the covenant mercy of God.

προσευχης [η] gen. "of prayer" - [A HOUSE] OF PRAYER. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / local, limiting "house"; "a house *where God's people* pray." "A place of worship", CEV. Decker opts for a telic (goal / purpose) sense; "a house *intended for* prayer."

πασιν τοις εθνεσιν dat. "for all nations" - TO = FOR ALL THE NATIONS, GENTILES. Dative of interest, advantage, as NIV. Only in Mark. The Abrahamic covenant promised a divine blessing to the whole world. Thus, the prophets spoke of the incoming of the Gentiles, of ten Gentiles holding onto the tassels of the faithful Jew as he entered the gates of Zion, cf., Zechariah. Yet, "the buying and selling in the Court of the Gentiles was effectually preventing the one area of the temple that was open to the Gentiles from being a place of prayer", Cranfield.

δε "but" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point.

υμεις "you" - YOU [YOU HAVE MADE]. Emphatic by use and position. Probably alluding to Jeremiah 7:11. As Boring notes, the allusion is not to traders involved in extortion, but to the people of sinful Israel who use the temple as a place of refuge, to a people "who supposed that they could violate God's law at will, and then retreat to the inviolable temple."

σπηλαιον [ον] "[it] a den" - [IT] A CAVE. Accusative complement of the direct object αυτον, "it", standing in a double accusative construction, stating a fact about the object "it".

ληστων [ης ου] gen. "of robbers" - OF THIEVES, BANDITS. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / local, limiting "den"; "a den *where* thieves *live*." "You have made it a place where robbers hide", CEV.

v18

Jesus' antics in the temple, and his increasing popularity, prompts a hateful reaction from the religious authorities, v18.

ηκουσαν [ακουω] aor. "they heard" - [AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE SCRIBES] HEARD *about Jesus actions*. We might have expected a participle here, "having heard" = "when the chief priests and the teachers of the law heard [what had happened]", cf. Matt. ιδοντες "what saw".

εζητουν [ζητω] imperf. "**began looking**" - [AND] THEY WERE SEEKING. The imperfect stands with the main verb, "they heard", an aorist, providing a consequence or explanation for its action, so Decker; "they looked out for a means of making an end of him", Cassirer. Unlikely to be inceptive, as NIV.

πως + subj. "**for a way [to kill him]**" - HOW [THEY MIGHT KILL HIM]. This particle is used instead of the adverb οπως which would normally be used with an indirect question asking the manner in which the action might be played out; "how [might we kill him?]" Here with the deliberative subjunctive.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE [THEY WERE AFRAID OF HIM] BECAUSE [ALL THE CROWD]. Used to introduce two causal clauses explaining a) why they went into planning mode instead of arresting Jesus straight away, "for they were afraid of him"; b) why they were afraid of him, "for the entire crowd was carried away by his teaching", Peterson.

εξεπλησσετο [εκπλησσω] imperf. "**was amazed**" - WERE AMAZED. Again, Mark uses this important word to describe a positive reaction toward Jesus, but a reaction that falls short of faith. "The masses were amazed and captivated by his teaching", Junkins; "the awe-inspiring power of Jesus' teaching", Gundry.

επι + dat. "**at [his teaching]**" - UPON [THE TEACHING OF HIM]. Here the preposition expresses cause.

v19

οταν + ind. "**when**" - [AND] WHEN. Introducing a temporal clause, definite rather than indefinite. During his ministry in Jerusalem, Jesus left the city at the end of the day and spent the evening in Bethany. "When it got late", Cranfield.

οψε adv. "**evening [came]**" - [IT BECAME] LATE, AFTER. Predicate adverb, here with the sense "evening."

εξω [εκ] + gen. "**out of [the city]**" - [THEY WERE GOING FORTH] OUTSIDE OF [THE CITY]. Locative.

v20

iii) The lesson of the cursed fig tree and Jesus' concluding pronouncement to his disciples to have "faith in God", v20-22. The message of the acted-out parable of the cursed fig tree is plain enough: faithless fruitless religious Israel, like the fruitless fig tree, will wither and die. Jesus' exhortation to the disciples, as they look upon the withered fig tree, is "take hold of God's faithfulness." Don't be like the people of Israel who have ignored God's gracious kindness, ignored his overflowing mercy. Note that a fig tree, representing Israel, is a common image in the Old Testament. cf., Jer.8:13, Ezk.17:24, Mic.7:1-6.

πρωι adv. "**in the morning**" - [AND] EARLY. Temporal adverb.

παραπορευομενοι [παραπορευομαι] pres. part. "as they went along" - WALKING BY, PASSING BY. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, "while they were walking by."

εξηραμμενην [εξηραινω] perf. pas. part. "withered" - [THEY SAW THE FIG TREE] HAVING BEEN DRIED UP, WITHERED. The perfect expressing "abiding results", Taylor. The participle could be classified as an object complement in a double accusative construction, but better, adjectival, attributive.

εκ "from" - FROM [ROOTS]. Expressing source / origin. "Jesus powerful word "struck first at the very source of the tree's life", Gundry.

v21

αναμνησθεις [αναμνησκω] aor. mid./pas. part. "[Peter] remembered" - [AND] HAVING REMEMBERED. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said", "Peter remembered and said." The middle voice is used for emotion, and in this voice the verb takes the sense "to remember."

αυτω dat. pro. "[said] to Jesus" - [PETER SAYS] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

εξηρανται [εξηραινω] perf. pas. "has withered!" - [LOOK, THE FIG TREE WHICH YOU CURSED] HAS BEEN DRIED UP. The perfect again expressing abiding results.

v22

The sense of the punch-line in the pronouncement story is anything but clear. Literally it is "have (take / seize / hold on to / recognise) faith / faithfulness of God." When Paul uses the phrase πιστεως Ιησου "faith of Christ", often translated "faith in Christ" (ie., objective genitive), there is a good chance he means "faithfulness of Christ" (ie., subjective genitive) - "the righteousness of God (the righteous reign of God / "God's saving righteousness", Schreiner) through / by means of faithfulness of Christ (his obedience on the cross) [is] for/to all who believe", Rom.3:22. Is Jesus using the same terminology here?

If we are to read "hold onto the faithfulness of God", then Jesus is asking the disciples to take hold of / hold onto (= put their faith in) the covenant faithfulness of God exhibited primarily in his covenant mercy / grace / forgiveness. That which Israel had failed to do, Jesus calls on his disciples to do. The temple had functioned like a fruitless tree, barren and cursed. Now an alternative presents itself in Jesus and his community of believers. Israel has failed to rest in faith on the covenant faithfulness of God and so instead of serving as "a house of prayer for all nations", they have become "a den of brigands". God's new Israel in Christ must become that "house of prayer for all nations", a people of faith, resting on

the covenant mercy of God in Christ, and so become a light shining into the darkness.

εχετε [εχω] pres. imp. "**have**" - [AND HAVING ANSWERED (attendant participle) JESUS SAYS TO THEM (dative of indirect object)] HAVE, HOLD ONTO. See above. Variant **ει εχετε**, "if you have faith in God", forming a conditional imperative, is disregarded by Metzger. Note that the verb could be indicative, "you have God's faithfulness", but most commentators think an imperative is intended.

θεου " **[faith] in God**" - [FAITHFULNESS] OF GOD. With the genitive "of God", the obvious question is, are we dealing with a subjective, or objective genitive? Most commentators opt for an objective genitive, God being the object of the faith. Yet, subjective / possessive seems more likely = God's faithfulness, cf., Marcus. "Hold onto God's faithfulness" is not only logical, but better grammar. In fact, this is the only well supported objective genitive in Mark, which probably means that there are none in Mark (there are those who argue that there are none in the NT, ie. it is an invalid classification - a rather bold claim!).

v23

iv] Linked sayings on prayer and forgiveness, v23-26. Mark now assembles three stitched independent sayings which serve to define the religious life of God's new Israel. This is presented as "an alternative: faith and prayer that bypass the sacrificial system of the 'den of brigands' and appeal directly to the heavenly Father for mercy", Marcus. The usual technical links apply to stitch the sayings together: i] faith; ii] faith / prayer; iii] prayer / forgiveness. We are best to follow Boring who argues that "the cluster of sayings on prayer and faith seems to be best explained as possibly his (Mark's) conception that the Jerusalem temple was being replaced by the Christian community as the place of faith, prayer and the presence of God", cf., *The Church as Temple*, Best.

Saying #1. The first saying concerns the exercise of a mountain-moving faith. It is suggested by some commentators that Jesus has in mind a particular mountain when he says "may God pick you up and throw you into the sea" (the passives "be picked up" and "be thrown" are probably divine passives). Boring and Marcus argue that the issue here is not "the power of faith", but "this mountain", the Temple Mount. Its impending destruction will be a severe test of *faith* for the New Testament church. "The mountain's *removal* is not a meaningless tragedy or frustration of God's plan, but in Mark's interpretation makes way for the ultimate *house of prayer for all people*, the Christian community", Boring.

The context (Mark's placement of the saying) certainly links the saying to the Temple Mount, but ultimately we are dealing with a metaphorical mountain,

not a concrete one - a massive impediment that requires a steady reliance on (faith in) the revealed will of God. In fact, it is possible that the image of casting mountains (and trees) into the sea "was a recognised metaphor for doing things of great difficulty, eg., a rabbi who could explain difficult passages of scripture was known as a 'mountain-remover'", Nineham. Edwards is surely right when he says the temple is not the object of the faith. "By taking the destruction of the tree as a model for disciples ... [we can] expect to be able to achieve the impossible through faith in God", France.

The *impossible mountain* is best understood as "God's redemptive, mountain-moving activity his promised redemptive activity in the world", Evans. The consummation of God's covenant mercy was evident in the person and work of Jesus, it was indeed evident in the levelling of the Temple Mount, it is evident in gospel ministry today, and it will be evident in the eschaton. The instrument of God's redemptive mountain-moving activity is faith in his revealed will.

ὅμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - [TRULY I SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object. The phrase serves to underline what follows.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech, stating what Jesus says.

ὅς αν + subj. "**if anyone [says]**" - WHOEVER [MAY SAY]. Introducing an indefinite relative clause, here conditional, 3rd class, where the condition has the possibility of coming true, "if anyone / whoever, *as the case may be*, then it will be so for him."

τω ορει [ος] dat. "**to [this] mountain**" - TO [THIS] MOUNTAIN. Dative of indirect object. The close demonstrative pronoun "this" has led many commentators to identify a particular hill, eg., the fortress of Herodion which can be seen from the Mount of Olives, so Edwards, or the Mount of Olives itself, so Gundry, Hurtado .. , cf., Zech.4:7, 14:4. Marcus suggests that Jesus is speaking about the Temple Mount and is actually alluding to the destruction of the temple which Jesus has just symbolically enacted in the cursing of the fig tree. See above.

αρθητι [αρω] aor. pas. imp. "-" - BE PICKED UP, LIFTED UP [AND BE THROWN INTO THE SEA]. As noted above, both "be picked up" and "be thrown" are best treated as divine passives; "may God lift you up and throw you into the sea."

μη διακριθη [διακρινω] aor. pas. subj. "**does not doubt**" - [AND] MAY NOT EVALUATE, DOUBT, WAVER. This verb is set in the subjunctive mood since it is the controlling verb in the protasis of the conditional sentence. Supplying a nice contrast to believing, such that believing is not "doubting". The word primarily means "evaluate", so "judge correctly / render a decision / differentiate". On some occasions in the NT, the word slips toward "doubt / waver". Surely here the sense

is that a person does not waver in their decision to rest on the revealed will of God, rather than "that there are no doubts in their mind", Barclay. So possibly, "not doubting in his inner core where he tells no lies to himself", Junkins. Every believer has doubts; sticking with God's promises in Jesus, in the midst of all our doubts, is the substance of faith.

εν + dat. "**in [their heart]**" - IN [THE HEART OF HIM]. Local, expressing space, metaphorical; "if there are no doubts in [their] mind", Barclay.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT. Adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not, but".

οτι "**that**" - [BELIEVES] THAT [WHAT HE SAYS BECOMES, HAPPENS]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what he "believes". A very important reference indicating that the faith that moves mountains is a faith that relies on the revealed will of God. Christian faith is not doubt-free wishful thinking!!!

αυτω dat. pro. "**for them**" - [*then* IT WILL BE] FOR HIM. Dative of interest, advantage.

v24

Saying #2. This second independent saying virtually restates the first, but without the mountain allusion. The prayer of faith [that which God wills, in particular, covenant mercy / redemption], is fully answered. As noted above, this saying is used by many to support the notion that all our prayers will be answered as long as we have faith. This proposition can be very damaging when the prayer is not answered, given that the quality of a person's faith is then to blame for the unanswered prayer. Some argue that all prayers are answered, either yes, no, or not yet, but this is a bit of a copout. Often the context, as here, defines the **παντα ὅσα**, "everything which / whatever", we are to pray for believing. The "whatever" is whatever God wills, rather than whatever we will.

δια τουτο "**Therefore**" - BECAUSE OF THIS. Sometimes taken as a causal construction, but usually inferential; "therefore, for this reason." It is very likely that this saying of Jesus came with his usual introduction, "truly I say to you", but Mark has made a slight change to facilitate the stitching of the saying to the first one, using **δια τουτο** as his stitching device rather than the usual **γαρ**, "for".

υμιν dat. pro. "**[I tell] you**" - [I SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

παντα ὅσα "**whatever**" - EVERYTHING WHATSOEVER. Accusative direct object of the verb "to pray." Obviously "everything" God says he will give us when we ask him, ie., "what he says", v23. This qualification is made abundantly clear in the scriptures and for this reason we are not free to ignore it when unstated.

προσευχεσθε και αιτεισθε "you ask for in prayer" - [WHICH] YOU PRAY AND ASK. Semitic construction, technically a hendiadys; "whatever you pray for." **ὅτι "that"** - [BELIEVE] THAT. As in v24 introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what should be believed, namely *I've got it*.

ελαβετε [λαμβανω] aor. "you have received [it]" - YOU RECEIVE [IT]. Note the use of the punctiliar aorist; "believe you have got it", Moffatt.

υμιν dat. pro. "[it will be done] for him / [and it will be] yours" - [AND] IT WILL BE TO = FOR YOU. The NIV has taken the dative as one of interest, advantage, but this has been corrected in the TNIV which opts for a dative of possession. Note the similar expression in v24, "it will be to him".

v25

Saying #3. The third saying, referencing the redemptive focus of prayer, reminds us that forgiveness rests wholly in the covenant mercy of God, and that the forgiven forgive.

The difficulty we face with this verse is the **ἵνα** clause, which, if taken to express purpose or result, undermines divine grace. The saying clearly relates to the Lord's Prayer, Matt.6:12, where "forgiving" and "forgiven" are related; "forgive **ὡς** ("as") also we have forgiven." It is very unlikely that **ὡς** serves here as a comparative, "just like we also have forgiven" - the last thing we want is for God to forgive us just like we forgive others. The **ὡς** is probably causal, and **και** ascensive, "because even we have forgiven" - not very often, but at least we can do it. So, the verse is using a *how much more God can do* formula, eg., The Midnight Guest, Lk.11:5-10 (note context). Matthew then qualifies the request with the saying in v14-15 which illustrates the "righteousness which exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees" with respect to forgiveness. Jesus' ethic / law on forgiveness underlines the fact that it cannot be done, so forcing the believer to seek the divine gift of forgiveness through faith, rather than obedience. Of course, the pharisee in each one of us claims the capacity to forgive, even at time believing that we do forgive, often with words like "I forgive you, but I will never forget how you hurt me."

If we take the *hina* clause as final, then the point of this saying is ethical, the new Israel "must be a forgiving community", Boring - "forgiving others is a prerequisite to praying for one's own forgiveness", Gundry, "forgiving of others must grow out of one's being forgiven", Evans, cf., Matt.5:23-24, 18:15-35, Lk.17:3-4, Eph.4:32, Col.3:12-13. Yet, the point of the first two sayings is that the new Israel's religious life must be about facilitating a house of prayer where the redemptive mountain-moving power of God is realised through faith. So, it is likely that this saying aligns with Matt.6:14-15, where an accepted principle of

worship (cf., Sir.8:2-12) which serves to guide ethics (before seeking God's forgiveness, the supplicant is expected to forgive those indebted to him), is redefined by Jesus in such a way that the forgiveness demanded of us for God's forgiveness is beyond us, and therefore we are forced to rest for forgiveness, not on our works, but on faith in the one and only forgiving man.

The principle of God's prior grace, operative in his children, is well established in the scriptures, such that here the consecutive link is properly understood in reverse, namely, a person forgives as a result of being forgiven, rather than being a prerequisite for forgiveness / "effective prayer", France. See Luke 7:47 for the same ploy; "the many sins of her have been forgiven for (ὅτι) she loved much." Reversed in the following clause, "To whom little is forgiven, he loves little"

Of course, true faith bears the fruit of love, in this case, a forgiving acceptance of others with all their flaws. Given the context of Israel's failure to be "a house of prayer for all nations", it's failure to be "a light unto the nations", it's failure to shine the mercy / grace of God to broken humanity, the new Israel is given the task to bear this fruit to the nations. Against Israel's closed-shop and corruption, the Christian church is to be gospel orientated, grace orientated, accepting, forgiving. Our forgiving of other's does not earn, or cause, God's forgiveness of us. As James reminds us, faith produces works (love), faith without works is a dead thing (a pretence). So, forgiveness is not earned by forgiving, rather forgiving flows from our having been forgiven. Although our capacity for mercy / forgiveness is limited due to our sinful nature, if we are devoid of mercy / forgiveness, then maybe we have yet to experience mercy / forgiveness.

ὅταν + ind. "**when**" - [AND] WHEN [YOU STAND]. Serving to introduce a indefinite temporal clause denoting repeated action, "whenever", TH. Note the usual posture of prayer for a Jew.

προσευχομενοι [προσευχομαι] pres. part. "**praying**" - PRAYING. The participle is adverbial, probably best treated as final, expressing purpose, "whenever you stand up in order to pray"; "whenever you rise to pray", Berkeley. The durative aspect of the present tense may apply, here expressing repeated action over time.

ει + ind. "**if**" - IF. Introducing a conditional clause 1st. class, where the condition is assumed to be true; "if, *as is the case*, *then* [forgive]."

κατα + gen. "**against [anyone]**" - [YOU HAVE SOMETHING] AGAINST [SOMEONE, *then* FORGIVE]. Here expressing opposition; "against [someone]."

ινα + subj. "**that**" - THAT. Best taken here as introducing a consecutive clause expressing result / hypothetical result; "so that", rather than a final clause expressing purpose. As noted above, reversed logic is probably intended - as a result of being forgiven, the forgiven person forgives.

ὁ "-" - [AND = ALSO THE FATHER OF YOU] THE ONE [IN THE HEAVENS]. This article, serving as a nominalizer, introduces a noun clause standing in apposition to "your Father."

ὕμιν dat. pro. "[**may forgive**] **you** [**your sins**]" - [MAY FORGIVE] TO YOU [THE TRANSGRESSIONS OF YOU]. Dative of interest, advantage, "may forgive your sins for you"; "your Father in heaven will forgive your sins", Barclay.

v26

"But if you do not forgive neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses" - Variant, now regarded as taken from Matthew 6:15.

11:27-33

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

1. A symbolic judgment upon Israel, 11:1-12:12

iii] The controversy over Jesus' authority

Synopsis

Jesus is walking in the temple precincts and is approached by what is most likely a deputation from the Sanhedrin. They ask by what authority Jesus has done "these things." Presumably they are referring to Jesus' cleansing of the temple. The question may be straightforward, but it is likely to be an attempt to draw out a claim to messiahship, a claim that Jesus is not as yet ready to make in public. Jesus says he is willing to answer their question, but they must first answer his. He asks them whether they thought that the Baptist's mission was God-ordained.

In discussing the issue, the deputation recognises that they are in a corner. If they affirm that the Baptist's mission is divinely authorised then obviously Jesus is going to ask them why they are not willing to accept the Baptist's testimony concerning him, namely, that his mission is also divinely authorised and thus that he does have the authority to cleanse the temple. If, on the other hand, they suggest that the Baptist's mission was nothing more than human devising, then they are going to have to answer to the populous who hold John to be a prophet. The authorities choose silence, and Jesus happily concurs.

Teaching

Jesus' authority is from God.

Issues

i] Context: See 11:1-11. Following Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the cleansing of the temple, Mark arranges a series of questions raised by the authorities - the question concerning Jesus' authority, the paying of tribute to a secular State, the resurrection of the dead, and the greatest commandment. Linked to the first question is the parable of the Wicked Husbandman and the prophecy of the stone, 12:1-12. Mark concludes chapter 12 with Jesus' warning about the hypocrisy of the religious authorities, v38-40, which hypocrisy is offset by the story of the widow's mites, v41-44.

ii] Structure: *The authority of Jesus:*

A pronouncement story.

The challenge of the Jewish authorities, v27-28;

Jesus returns the favour, v29-30;

Response to the scholastic dialogue, v31-33.

iii] Interpretation:

Given that the Baptist's authority is from God, Jesus' authority is certainly no less. Jesus' authority is from God, but unlike John he is more than a prophet. Israel's failure to recognise this fact, overtly displayed in the sign of the cleansing of the temple, brings with it disaster. This fact is revealed in the next episode where, in the parable of the Wicked Husbandman, Judaism, with its temple and all, will be destroyed and the "vineyard" given to "others".

The messianic credentials of Jesus have already been established and put on full display "in Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and especially in his militant action in the Temple", Marcus. Now we see the religious authorities react, challenging Jesus' credentials and the authority by which he acts.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.21:23-27, Lk.20:1-8. Like Mark, Matthew also links this episode with the cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple. Luke seems less concerned to maintain the link.

Although a self-contained story, it evidences a close association with Jesus' cleansing of the temple, telling "how Jesus answered a challenge arising out of his action in the temple", Taylor. The association of both stories early in the oral tradition is likely and so it is unlikely that Mark is responsible for their linkage. Bultmann's suggestion that the membership of the deputation and the description of Jesus' walking in the temple court is a Markan construct is also very unlikely. It also seems likely that the parable of the Wicked Husbandman was linked early in oral tradition to the cleansing of the temple and the question about authority. Given its context, the parable explains the meaning behind the opposition to Jesus by the religious authorities and the consequences of this opposition for redemptive history.

Text - 11:27

The question about authority, v27-33: i] the question, v27-28. Given that the members of the Sanhedrin have already decided to seek Jesus' death, 11:18, it seems likely that their question is *a fishing exercise*, an attempt to extract a claim to messiahship. Trading in the temple court is a rather suspect activity and so the authorities are not really able to lay a charge of violating the sanctuary, but there is value in seeking to pin Jesus down on where he thinks he derives his authority for such an act. His standing as messiah is the basis of his authority, but Israel's religious authorities reject this possibility.

ερχονται [ερχομαι] pres. "**they arrived**" - [AND] THEY CAME. Historic / narrative present tense identifying the next step in the narrative, ie., a paragraph marker. Taylor holds the view that impersonal plurals, such as this, originally represented "we" in the oral tradition.

παλιν adv. "**again**" - AGAIN [INTO THE TEMPLE]. Sequential adverb. Ref. to v15. According to Mark's scheme, this is the third time Jesus and his disciples have entered Jerusalem.

περιπατουντος [περιπατεω] gen. pres. part. "**while [Jesus] was walking**" - [AND HE] WALKING AROUND. The genitive participle its subject **αυτου**, "he", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

εν + dat. "**in [the temple courts]**" - IN [THE TEMPLE]. Local, expressing space.

προς + acc. "**to [him]**" - [AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS, THE SCRIBES AND THE ELDERS CAME] TOWARD [HIM]. Spatial, expressing movement toward. The listing of the three religious orders of the Sanhedrin probably indicates that this is an official deputation.

v28

εν + dat. "**by**" - IN = BY. Instrumental; "by, with, through", as NIV. "By means of what authority" = "what right have you to act as you are doing", Barclay. Not simply his rabbinical authority, if any, but the status he claimed for himself that would permit him to do "these things." The authorities probably want him to claim messianic status. "Divine authority, and not legal or political right, is meant", Taylor.

τιοι pro. "**what**" - WHAT KIND OF, WHAT SORT OF [AUTHORITY]. Qualitative interrogative pronoun. Gundry argues that categories of authority are in mind (prophetic, priestly, royal,), but often weakened to an interrogative **τις**; "by what kind of authority" = "by what authority."

ταυτα pro. "**these things**" - [DO YOU DO] THESE THINGS. As noted above, the cleansing of the temple is probably in Mark's mind. In Luke's parallel passage, 20:1-8, "these things" obviously refer to Jesus' "teaching the people in the temple and telling the good news", v1.

αυτω dat. pro. "**[they asked]**" - [THEY WERE SAYING] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object. As a question, "asked".

η "**or**" - OR. Here as a simple comparative rather than a disjunctive; "What kind of authority makes you act in this way and from whom does the authority making you act this way derive", Cassirer.

σοι "**[who gave] you**" - [WHO GAVE THIS AUTHORITY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object. France argues that the second question draws out the implication of the first, namely, "we did not give this authority to you."

ὅνα + subj. "**to [do this]**" - THAT [YOU MAY DO THESE *things*]. This construction may introduce a final clause expressing purpose after the verb "to do", "in order that", or better, a consecutive clause expressing result, "with the result that you do these things", or even an epexegetic clause specifying "the authority", namely, "to do these *things*". The *hina* clause is not found in the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke.

v29

ii] The answer, v29-30. "Jesus does not operate on the basis of any human authority, but speaks and acts on the basis of his own authority, which Mark does not distinguish from that of God", Boring.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from the religious authorities to Jesus / untranslated.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**[Jesus replied]**" - [JESUS SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

επερωτησω [επερωταω] fut. "**I will ask**" - I WILL ASK [YOU]. Followed by the accusative "you" = "I will ask you about"; "I'm going to ask you about a particular issue and if you"

ενα "**one**" - This adjective sometimes replaces **τις**, "a certain question"; "I'm going to ask you a question", Phillips. Lagrange argues for its proper force, "I will ask you just one question"; "a single question", Taylor.

λογον [ος] "**question**" - WORD. "Matter / point", Cranfield, Taylor. "One word / question" serves as an accusative complement of the object **ujmaV**, "you"; "I will ask you one question."

και + fut. "**and**" - AND [YOU ANSWER ME]. This conjunction, followed by a verb in the future tense, is sometimes used to introduce the apodosis of a conditional clause (a Semitic construction), particularly in this case where an imperative verb is used in the protasis, "answer me and I will tell you" = "if you answer me [then] I will tell you what authority I have for what I do", Phillips.

μοι dat. pro. "**[I will tell] you**" - [AND I WILL SAY] TO YOU [BY WHAT AUTHORITY I DO THESE THINGS]. Dative of direct object after the **απο** prefix of the verb "to answer, reply."

v30

το art. "-" - [THE BAPTISM] THE = WHICH *was*. The article serves as an adjectivizer turning the genitive noun "of John" into an attributive modifier limiting "baptism".

ιωαννου [ος] gen. "**John's**" - OF JOHN. The genitive is adjectival, taken as possessive by NIV, but more likely verbal, subjective / idiomatic, "which was *performed and administered by John*", cf. TH.

ἐξ + gen. "[was it] from [heaven]" - FROM, OUT OF [HEAVEN WAS IT, OR] FROM [MEN]? Expressing source / origin. "Heaven" is used out of deference to the divine name, so "from God", ie., a circumlocution; "was the source of the baptism which John administered divine or human?" Barclay. Given that the issue is one of authority, the sense is "Who gave John the right to baptise? Was it God in heaven, or merely some human being?" CEV. "The question whether John was a true prophet had a direct bearing on the question of Jesus' authority", Cranfield.

μοι dat. "[tell] me" - [ANSWER, REPLY TO] ME. Dative of direct object after the απο prefix of the verb "reply to." The repetition of "answer me" is sometimes used in an argument where the interlocutors are flummoxed; "Go on, answer me!" It also further reveals Jesus' authority, certainly his mastery over the religious authorities and their presumption to question his right to act as he has.

v31

iii] Response to the scholastic dialogue, v31-33. The participants in the scholastic dialogue refuse to take the next logical step and opt out with a "we don't know." They opt out for political reasons, rather than theological ones. Obviously, they do not believe in John's credentials, namely, that he is a prophet, or more importantly, he is the one crying in the wilderness in preparation for the coming of the messiah. If they accepted John's credentials, they would, by necessity, have to accept Jesus credentials. They accept neither, but do accept the necessity of their political standing in eyes of the people.

"Denial of the divine authority of John's mission ... does not seem to be a viable option, as it might turn popular opinion against the deniers. But neither is admitting its authority, since John's eschatological baptism was interwoven with his eschatological preaching about the coming one, and John seems to have identified Jesus with the latter", Marcus.

προς + acc. "among" - [AND THEY WERE DISCUSSING, DEBATING (variant: reasoning)] TO [THEMSELVES]. Here expressing association; "with, within, among." "They were arguing with one another", TH.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "and said" - SAYING (variant: + τι ελωμεν "what will we say?"). The participle is usually classified as attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the verb "to discuss", as NIV, but it can also be classified as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their reasoning.

εαν "if" - IF, *as may be the case* [WE SAY FROM HEAVEN, then HE WILL SAY.] Introducing a conditional clause 3rd. class where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true; "if we say that the baptism John performed and administered is authorised by God, then he will say why [therefore] did you not

believe in him?" = "if we say, 'Divine', he will say: 'why then did you not believe in him?'" Barclay.

οὐν "then" - THEREFORE. Variant reading; inferential, drawing a logical conclusion.

διὰ τι "why" - BECAUSE OF WHAT = BECAUSE OF WHY = WHY. A causal interrogative construction.

αὐτῷ dat. pro. "[believe] him" - [DO YOU NOT BELIEVE IN] HIM? Dative of direct object after the verb "to believe in." "Believe is used here in the sense of accept that the Baptist preaches the revealed will of God. Possibly neuter, "it" = the baptism John administered.

v32

ἀλλὰ "but" - Strong adversative, as NIV.

εἰπωμεν [λεγω] aor. subj. "**if we say**" - *if* [WE SAY]. From v31 **εἰν**, "if", is assumed, introducing a 3rd. class conditional clause, as in v31. The problem is that the apodosis, the *then* clause, is missing / an ellipsis. Luke includes **εἰν** in his account and adds the apodosis, "then all the people will stone us." Rather than an incomplete conditional clause, it is possible that the subjunctive is deliberative, producing a question; "but shall we say from men?" ESV, so also NRSV.

ἐξ + gen. "**of [human origin]**" - FROM [MAN]. As above, the sense being "by human appointment", Manson.

γὰρ "for" - [THEY WERE AFRAID OF THE CROWD] BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they feared the crowd.

ὅτι "**[everyone held] that**" - [EVERYONE WAS HAVING = CONSIDERING JOHN] THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what everyone "held / considered", "what everyone was quite sure of, namely, that John was a prophet."

ὠντως adv. "**really [was a prophet]**" - REALLY, INDEED [HE WAS A PROPHET]. It is unclear which verb this adverb is attached to. The NIV opts for the verb to-be **ἦν**; "John was genuinely a prophet", Barclay, "was in fact a prophet", REB, "was indeed a prophet." Swete suggests it modifies the verb. "They really / truly held / considered that John was a prophet." This seems more likely, given its position in the principal clause, although Taylor suggests it was drawn there from the subordinate clause for emphasis. The adverb would modify "held / considered" by strengthening it, so "everyone was convinced that John was a prophet", Rieu.

v33

καὶ "so" - AND. Here probably standing in for **ὥστε καὶ**, "so, so then, therefore, accordingly."

αποκριθεντες [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "**they answered**" - HAVING ANSWERED, REPLIED TO. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; "they answered and said to Jesus" - redundant / Semitic construction.

τω Ιησου [ος] dat. "**Jesus**" - [THEY SAY] TO JESUS. Dative of indirect object, although note that the **απο** prefix verb "to reply to" takes a dative of direct object as a matter of form; "replying to Jesus they said".

ουκ οιδαμεν [οιδα] perf. "**we don't know**" - WE DO NOT KNOW. They do actually know, so this is an avoidance statement. In English, the response would be a little more non-committal, evasive; "We're not really sure." The English language provides a greater scope for subtle expression, particularly when it comes to the forked tongue. "They are so base as to choose rather to shuffle than to acknowledge what they know to be true", Calvin.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**[Jesus said]**" - [AND JESUS SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

εγω pro. "**[neither will] I**" - [NEITHER] I [I SAY]. Emphatic by use and position.

υμιν dat. pro. "**[tell] you**" - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

εν + dat. "**by**" - BY [WHAT KIND OF AUTHORITY I DO THESE *things*]. Instrumental, as above. Jesus may not have directly answered their question, but he has implied that he does have the authority to do "these things." Jesus claims the right to act as he does, but he chooses not to identify the source of his authority. Of course, the claimed source is not hard to deduce. The Jewish leadership has "knowingly rejected God's messenger John and God's Son Jesus..... Jesus was aware of all this in advance and is not an unwilling victim to their machinations, but the one who is authoritatively in charge of the whole scenario", Boring.

12:1-12

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

1. A symbolic judgment upon Israel, 11:1-12:12

iv] The parable of the defiant tenants

Synopsis

In the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, a man plants a vineyard for himself and gives charge of it to certain vintners on a share basis. When it comes time for the owner to collect his share of the fruit, the vintners assault, and even murder his agents. The owner even sends his son, on the assumption that the vintners will respect his own son, but all they do is murder him. The parable concludes with a question; what do you think the owner will do to these evil vintners? The parable is followed by a fulfilment text from Psalm 18 - the prophecy of the stone.

Teaching

Israel's rejection of Jesus, the glorious Christ, brings with it disaster.

Issues

i] Context: See 11:27-33.

ii] Structure: *The parable of the defiant tenants*:

The parable of the Tenants, v1-9;

A fulfilment text, v10-12.

iii] Interpretation:

Israel's failure to recognise Jesus as messiah, Son of God, is overtly displayed in the sign of the cleansing of the temple. Israel's rejection of the Christ brings with it disaster. This fact is reinforced in the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen / Tenants / Vineyard. The kingdom of God is at hand and brings with it judgment for those who reject his gracious kindness. The concluding fulfilment text, addressing the wider context of Israel's rejection of the Christ, predicts that the rejected one will become the glorious one.

Form - a teaching parable or kingdom riddle / parable? The parable is often treated as a teaching parable in the form of an allegory explained by its context: the man who planted the vineyard = God; servants = prophets; son = Jesus; the murder of the son = the cross; the killing of the tenants = destruction / judgment of Israel / Jerusalem / Temple; given to others = inclusion of the Gentiles. The parable certainly suits its historical context and may well have been delivered by Jesus at this point in time.

It is though, more likely a kingdom / climactic parable, a gospel riddle, missing the introductory "the kingdom of God / heaven is like" The content is typical: *blah blah* leading up to a climax, cursing / judgment = the kingdom of God / heaven is at hand. The introductory statement "he began to speak to them in parables" clues us to the fact that Jesus is speaking to the unbelieving crowd in riddles.

The word **παραβολη**, "parable", would not be used at this point in time and in this setting for an illustration / teaching parable. The wording of the added saying in Matthew's gospel, "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", Matt.21:43, indicates that as far as Matthew is concerned, we are dealing with a kingdom / climactic parable ("The kingdom of God is like ..."). So, we have here a kingdom parable: "He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others" = the kingdom of God is at hand; the day of judgment is upon us, repent and believe.

The punch-line - the day of judgment is at hand - is in the form of a question-answer, v9. It is possible that the riddle ended with the question only, v9a, the answer being obvious. Either way, the disciples are certainly privy to the riddle.

The fulfilment text that follows, v10-11, is often viewed as a typical example of proof-texting by the early church, and as such, serves as an editorial exposition of the parable. Of course, the proof-texting may be down to Mark (or Matthew!!). Yet, it is likely that it does not specifically address the parable, but rather the wider context of Israel's rejection of Christ which was specifically evidenced in the questioning of his authority by the delegation from the Sanhedrin. The chapter division here disrupts the unity of what is a larger pericope / episode. See in more detail Matthew 21:42

What the commentators say about The Parable of the Defiant Tenants: It is likely that from the earliest days of the Christian church this parable was treated as an allegory. The first complete commentary on Mark published early in the seventh century states "God is called a man, a father, to put it in a human way. The vineyard is the house of Israel, and the hedge is the protection of the angels. The pit for the winepress is the Law. The tower is the Temple. The farmers are the priests. The leaving on a journey on the part of God represents the freedom of our will. The servants sent are the prophets. The produce of the vineyard is obedience. Some of the prophets were flogged, others wounded, and others killed. The son, the most beloved and the final one, is the only begotten."

This approach continued up to the publication of *Gleichnisreden Jesu* by Jolicher. He argued that much of the parable was a construct of the early church and was designed to reference the death of Jesus. None-the-less, Jolicher interpreted the major elements of the parable allegorically. To this day the parable is usually treated as an allegory, so Cranfield, Taylor, Marcus, France, Gundry, Mann, Boring, Evans,

The argument as to whether it is a construct of the early church varies in degree depending on the stance of the commentator. So, for example, Taylor, taking a conservative line, argues, "whether the parable has undergone some degree of expansion is a matter for conjecture."

Dodd, in *The Parables of the Kingdom*, argues that "this parable is a true parable of the Kingdom, since it points to the final crisis in the dealings of God with his people." Although Dodd argues that it was not originally an allegory, its context and present shape leads him to interpret it allegorically. Jeremias in *The Parables of Jesus*, with some reservations, agrees with Dodd, although he leans more toward an allegorical interpretation. He views it as a word of judgment on Israel's religious leaders who "have multiplied rebellion against God (and) therefore shall the vineyard of God be given to others", namely, "the poor."

Treated as an allegory, the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen answers the question concerning Jesus' authority, condemns the ruling priests as unfit to hold their high office and predicts that God's purposes will be accomplished through his Son, despite deadly opposition, so Evans, p.239. Blomberg, *Interpreting*, takes a more generalising approach: a) God is patient and long-suffering, even in the face of rebellion; b) The day will come when God judges those opposed to his will; c) God's purposes will be finally accomplished.

Some commentators, wary of an allegorical approach to the parable, opt for a single idea approach; more a metaphor than an allegory, eg., "The tenants of God's vineyard have been guilty of rebellion against God and so the vineyard is to be given to others", Nineham. This approach is reasonable, given Matthew's added independent saying of Jesus, cf., Matt.21:43. Matthew will sometimes extend the function of a kingdom parable. In its primary sense, it announces the coming kingdom, but Matthew will sometimes add an illustrative function. He does this with the parable of the Wicked Husbandman by his addition of the saying in 21:43. So, it is not unreasonable to follow Matthew's lead. Note that Matthew's allusion to Isa.8:14-15, Dan.2:44, in v44, although present in most texts, may well have come across from Luke 20:18. It serves to refocus on the "stone".

The context of the parable and its proximity to the fulfilment text in v10-11, tempts us to adopt an allegorical interpretation. Yet, the parable is primarily a kingdom / climactic parable announcing the immediacy of the kingdom - the day of judgment is at hand. This realistic story of an absentee landlord trying to administer his investment within a dysfunctional society, serves as a riddle; a word of judgment from God to dull the hearing of those who refuse to hear, Mk.4:10-12. Only those with ears to hear can unlock the secret of the riddle, namely, that the kingdom of God is at hand / the dynamic realm and reign of God is about to be realised in the Christ, the Son of God, so, repent and believe. This, of course, is the secret message of all kingdom parables; it is the gospel, nothing more, nothing less.

Authenticity: In summary, critical scholarship tends to the view that an original kingdom / climactic parable, subject to allegorical interpretation, was shaped to reflect the rejection and crucifixion of Christ. To this was added a fulfilment text in support of Christ's prophetic awareness of his end.

The synoptic gospels bear witness to the shaping of tradition, but at the same time, they bear witness to the careful transmission of that tradition. The gospel writers have their say in the arrangement of the tradition, not in the altering of it. Whether oral or written, the early believers understood that the apostolic tradition was divine revelation. So, the parable is likely to be close to the original. As for the fulfilment text, to think that Jesus neither foresaw nor foretold his death, or that he ignored the scriptures to that end, is close to absurd.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.21:33-46; Lk.20:9-19.

It seems likely that the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen was linked early in oral tradition to the cleansing of the temple, the question concerning Jesus' authority, and the prophecy of the stone, although it should be noted that many commentators see this arrangement as a Markan construct.

Matthew guides the interpretation of the parable with the addition of the saying, "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and given to a nation that yields the proper fruit", 21:43. Matthew also adds the parable of the Two Sons, 22:1-14. This parable is unique to Matthew and it may well be that the placement of this received tradition is down to Matthew himself.

Text - 12:1

The parable of the wicked husbandmen, v1-12: i] The parable proper, v1-9a. Note parallels with Isaiah 5:1-2. See "Interpretation" above.

λαλειν [λαλεω] pres. inf. "**to speak**" - [AND HE BEGAN] TO SPEAK. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin." A common transitional phrase in Mark; "Then Jesus set out to address them", Cassirer.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object. Obviously including those who questioned Jesus' authority; the delegation from the Sanhedrin.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [PARABLES]. Possibly instrumental, "by means of parables", but more likely adverbial, expressing the manner of his speaking, "with parables", "in a parabolic way"; "in riddles". The plural "parables" is "referring not to a series of parables, but to the manner of the teaching", Taylor; "Parabolically", Rawlinson.

γεωργοις [ος] dat. "**to some farmers**" - [A MAN PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT AROUND A FENCE, WALL, HEDGE AND DUG OUT A *winepress* VAT AND BUILT A TOWER AND RENTED, LEASED IT] TO FARMERS, TENANT FARMERS [AND SET OUT ON A JOURNEY]. Dative of indirect object.

v2

τω καιρω [ος] dat. "**at harvest time**" - [AND HE SENT A SLAVE TO THE FARMERS] IN TIME, SEASON. The dative is adverbial, temporal; "at the time of harvest."

ινα + subj. "**to [collect]**" - THAT [HE MIGHT RECEIVE]. Introducing a purpose clause; "in order that he might collect."

παρα + gen. "**from [them]**" - FROM BESIDE [THE FARMERS]. Here expressing source; "from the tenant farmers", as NIV.

απο + gen. "**some of**" - FROM = OF. Here the preposition serves as a partitive genitive, as NIV.

του αμπελωνος [ων ωνος] gen. "**of the vineyard**" - [THE FRUIT] OF THE VINEYARD. The genitive is adjectival, possibly verbal, subjective, but probably more descriptive, idiomatic, "the fruit *which is produced by* the vineyard." "Fruit" may be taken verbally, "harvest", "the harvest *produced by*"

v3

λαβοντες [λαμβανω] aor. part. "**they seized [him]**" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN [HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verbs "to beat" and "to send." "The vine growers, however, caught hold of him, gave him a thrashing, and sent him away empty-handed", Cassirer.

κενον adj. "**empty-handed**" - [THEY BEAT AND SENT AWAY *him*] EMPTY. Ref. persons; "empty-handed." Accusative complement of the assumed direct object "him", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "him"; "sent *him* away empty-handed."

v4

εκεφαλιωσαν [κεφαλιω] aor. "**they struck [this man] on the head**" - [AND AGAIN HE SENT TO THEM ANOTHER SLAVE AND THAT ONE] THEY STRUCK ON THE HEAD. The Gk. is somewhat obscure, but something like "wounded on the head" is intended. "An act of violence is intended", Taylor, possibly stoning; "having stoned" is added to some manuscripts. "Head-butted", Marcus.

ητιμασαν [ατιμαζω] aor. "**treated him shamefully**" - [AND] DISHONOURED, INSULTED, TREATED SCANDALOUSLY. "Maltreated him", Barclay.

v5

οὓς μὲν οὓς δὲ pro. "**some of them [they beat], others [they killed]**" - [AND HE SENT ANOTHER AND THAT ONE THEY KILLED AND *they maltreated* MANY OTHERS, [BEATING] SOME AND [KILLING] OTHERS. The relative pronoun **οὓς** serves as a demonstrative pronoun, "some others", while **μὲν δὲ** establishes an adversative comparative construction.

δερνοντες [δερω] pres. part. "**they beat**" - BEATING. This participle, as with "killing", is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the maltreatment of the servants, but possibly instrumental, expressing means. The verb modified by the two participles is assumed. The object of this verb is the accusative **πολλοὺς ἄλλοις**, "many others", so "*they maltreated* many others, beating some but killing others" = "some they beat up, some they killed", Peterson.

v6

ετι adv. "**left**" - [HE] STILL [HAD ONE]. Adverb of time, expressing a continuing situation; the absentee landlord still had one other person whom he could send. The adjective "one" serves as a substantive, emphatic by position. The adjective "one" serves as a substantive, emphatic by position

υἱόν αγαπητον "**a son whom he loved**" - A BELOVED SON. Accusative, standing in apposition to **ένα**, Here probably with the sense of "one", "his only son", but if there is a messianic allusion then, "a dearly loved son", Cassirer.

εσχατον adv. "**last of all**" - [HE SENT HIM] LAST, FINALLY [TO THEM]. Best taken here as a temporal adverb; "finally he sent him", ESV.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "**saying**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "he sent", "he sent and said", or adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his sending, "saying".

ὅτι "- " - THAT [THEY WILL RESPECT, HAVE REGARD FOR THE SON OF ME]. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech; "they will show honour to my son", TH.

v7

ὅτι "- " - [BUT THOSE SHARE FARMERS SAID TO THEMSELVES] THAT. Recitative; introducing a dependent statement of direct speech.

οὗτος pro. "**this**" - [THIS *one* IS THE HEIR]. The close demonstrative pronoun serves as the nominative subject of the verb to-be. Cranfield notes that the pronoun here, used as a substantive, takes a disparaging sense; "those husbandmen, being such as we know they were", Swete.

δευτε "**come**" - Adverb serving as an interjection; "come on now!"

αποκτεινωμεν [**αποκτεινω**] aor. subj. "**let's kill**" - LET US KILL [HIM AND THE INHERITANCE WILL BE OURS]. Hortatory subjunctive.

v8

λαβοντες [**λαμβανω**] aor. part. "**they took him and [killed him]**" - HAVING TAKEN [THEY KILLED HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to kill", as NIV.

εξω + gen. "**out of [the vineyard]**" - [AND THREW OUT] OUTSIDE, OUT OF [OF THE VINEYARD]. Spatial, as NIV; used in place of **εκ**. Stylistic repetition of the prefix of the verb **ekballw**, "to cast out."

v9

As noted above, the question by itself seems the likely ending of the parable, given that Jesus is prone to ask a question and leave it at that, eg., Lk.17:9. In Matthew the crowd answers the question. In any case, the answer is obvious. What is not obvious, is the meaning of the parable, but for those with eyes to see it proclaims the immediacy of the kingdom, in this case, the bad news rather than the good news.

ουν "**[what] then**" - [WHAT] THEREFORE [WILL DO]. Inferential / drawing a logical conclusion; "therefore".

του αμπελωνος [**ος**] gen. "**of the vineyard**" - [THE MASTER] OF THE VINEYARD? The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / of subordination; "the lord over the vineyard."

απολεσει [**απολλυμι**] fut. "**[he will come and] kill**" - [HE WILL COME AND] DESTROY [THE FARMERS]. The verb is usually translated here as "kill", but the sense is "destroy", possibly meaning put them out of business.

αλλοις dat. adj. "**to others**" - [AND GIVE THE VINEYARD] TO OTHERS. Dative of indirect object. The adjective serves as a substantive, so "to other share-farmers / tenant farmers."

v10

ii] Fulfilment text, v10-11. As noted above, this text addresses the wider context, namely, the rejection of the Christ by Israel's religious authorities. It announces that the rejected stone is now the cornerstone of God's plans, a wonder to behold. In Psalm 118:22-23, Israel is the stone, although in Jewish exegesis there is some evidence that David / messiah / Christ is viewed as the stone. The text celebrates divine deliverance and the reversal of fortunes, and this applied to the stone / Christ. In Aramaic, the words for "son" and "stone" are similar, prompting the stitching of the text to the parable. Of course, this linkage is not evident in the Gk. So, the parable proclaims that the kingdom of God is at hand, and the fulfilment text proclaims that the rejected one is the cornerstone / lord / king of the kingdom.

ουδε **"haven't you [read]"** - [HAVE YOU] NOT [READ THIS SCRIPTURE]? Used in a question expecting a positive answer. The sense is "not even"; "have you not even read this scripture?" Moffatt. The question "implies that the prophecy was well known", Taylor.

λιθον [ος] acc. **"the stone"** - THE STONE [WHICH]. "Stone" is the subject of the clause and so should be nominative, but it has been attracted to the accusative relative pronoun ὃν, "which".

οἱ οικοδομουντες [οικοδομew] pres. part. **"the builders"** - THE ONES BUILDING [REJECTED]. The participle serves as a substantive.

εις + acc. "-" - [THIS *one* HAS BECOME, COME TO BE] INTO. This preposition + the accusative "head" serves as a predicate nominative; a Semitic construction.

γωνιας [α] gen. **"the cornerstone"** - HEAD, CAPSTONE [OF *the* CORNER]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive; "cornerstone". The position of this stone in a building is unclear. It may be the key cornerstone from which the building is aligned and upon which it is built, but it could also be the key stone in an arch, so Cranfield. At any rate, the stone is the most important stone.

v11

παρα + gen. "-" - [THIS CAME TO BE] FROM BESIDE [*the* LORD]. Expressing source; "from beside"; "This is the action of the Lord", Barclay. αὐτη, **"this"**, being feminine, is a strict reflection of the Hebrew text.

θαυμαστη **"marvellous"** - [AND IT IS] MARVELLOUS, WONDERFUL, INCOMPREHENSIBLE. Predicate adjective. "We rub our eyes - we can't hardly believe it", Peterson.

εν + dat. **"in"** - IN [THE EYES OF US]. The prepositional phrase, "in our judgment", TH, is adverbial; "As far as we are concerned, it is incomprehensible." The paradox of the gospel reverses human values and expectations. "We are left

gazing in wonder at the inscrutable ways of God as they are being revealed, not only in the teaching, but also in the experience of the Messiah", France.

v12

iii] The reaction of the religious authorities, v12. This verse is rather compressed and so has been rearranged in most modern translations. France does a good job unpacking it: "They were trying to arrest him, *but could not yet, because* they were afraid of the crowd since they knew, *and were aware that the crowd also knew*, that he had spoken this parable against them, *so that the crowd was now more likely to take his side against them. So, for the time being they take no action*, and they leave him in possession of the field."

κρατησαι [κρατew] aor. inf. "to arrest [him]" - [AND so consequently THEY WERE SEEKING] TO TAKE POSSESSION OF = SEIZE [HIM]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they were seeking; "they tried to find a way to arrest Jesus", Barclay. The subject of the verb "to seek" is obviously the delegation from the Sanhedrin, as NIV.

γαρ "because" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they looked to arrest Jesus. The arrangement of the sentence in the Gk. could imply that the causal clause explains why they feared the crowd, but this doesn't make sense; see note above. The authorities considered arresting Jesus because they took to heart Jesus' word of judgment, but didn't carry through with their plans because they feared the crowd.

οτι "-" - [THEY KNEW] THAT [HE HAD TOLD THE PARABLE]. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they knew / perceived / understood; "for they knew well enough that the parable was directed against them", Cassirer.

προς "against [them]" - TOWARD [THEM]. Here expressing opposition, as NIV, cf., Moule IB 53. Boring suggests that the parable was "not intended to be misunderstood and to harden" because the religious authorities understood that the parable was "against" them, i.e., it is not a kingdom / climactic parable. Actually, they did misunderstand the parable because it wasn't actually against them personally, and it certainly did harden their resolve to arrest Jesus. This predictable response on the part of the authorities may explain why Jesus would present a kingdom parable with elements so easily aligned to the context of rejection. What it doesn't explain is why believers would so easily follow suit, given that we have come to understand the secrets of the kingdom!!!

και "but" - AND [THEY FEARED THE CROWD]. Here adversative; "however, they were afraid of the populace", Cassirer.

και "so" - AND so. Here inferential, "so, therefore, accordingly."

αφεντες [αφιημι] aor. part. "**they left [him]**" - LEAVING [HIM THEY WENT AWAY]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to go away, depart", as NIV.

12:13-17

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

2. The blindness of Israel exposed, 12:13-44

i] The question concerning paying taxes

Synopsis

Jesus has confronted a delegation from the Sanhedrin questioning his authority to act as he does, particularly his cleansing of the temple. Having failed to call Jesus to account, they now send a number of Pharisees and Herodians to test him on the issue of paying tribute money to Caesar.

The Pharisees were inclined to pay the tribute, but the Herodians, and especially the Zealots, were against paying tribute to the Romans. The question on tribute was politically dangerous. If Jesus declares that he is against the tribute he will be charged with sedition. If he supports the tribute, he shows himself to be a rather weak-kneed messiah. Jesus' answer, "give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's", startles the members of the delegation, leaving them speechless.

Teaching

An acknowledged sovereignty carries with it obligations.

Issues

i] Context: See 11:27-33.

ii] Background: At this time, Judea was under Roman rule and it was expected of every person living in Judea, Samaria and Idumea that they pay a poll-tax to the Roman emperor. The money collected was for the emperor's privy purse and had been collected since 6AD. The tax had to be paid in Roman silver coinage which bore the name and image of Caesar. The tax was hated by the Jews since it reminded them that they were under Roman rule. When first imposed, it prompted insurrection and fostered a nationalistic hate of Rome.

iii] Structure:: *The question concerning paying taxes*,:

A pronouncement story.

The initiative rests with the authorities;

The initiative rests with Jesus.

iv] Interpretation:

Jesus further demonstrates his messianic authority by deciding on matters affecting God's people, even the matter of secular taxation. The

response of amazement by the authorities demonstrates a recognition of this authority, but not a submission to it.

As for the authoritative word itself, Jesus makes the point that an acknowledged sovereignty carries with it obligations. By extension: A believer has divinely ordained obligations toward the secular state, obligations which do not infringe the rights of God. These obligations are transitory and do not compare in magnitude with our obligations to God.

At first glance, Jesus' words seem to attribute an equality of rights and privilege to both the secular state and to God / Church. This dichotomy is probably invalid and was not intended by Jesus. Jesus' words sit within the eschatology of the coming kingdom and within the context of a specific question concerning taxation. The kingdom of God is at hand, God's domain and dominion is bursting into the world of human affairs. Caesar's rule, represented by his visage on the silver coinage of the day, is but short lived and passing away. If Caesar needs funds to finance his rule, so be it, but such does not compare to the rule of God. "Let the things of this world be esteemed according to the smallness of their value, and let these duties be discharged as necessity may arise; but let men know above all that the greatest thing lies elsewhere, in fidelity to the heavenly Father", Loisy.

Boring draws a number of truths from Jesus' words:

- Jesus does not forbid paying taxes to Caesar;
- It is clear that there are things that belong to Caesar;
- There is no paralleling of Caesar and God;
- By placing Caesar and God together Jesus establishes a relationship between both realms. "We cannot settle questions of political life without considering the claims of God, nor seek to live a religious life oblivious to the problems of society", Robert Tannehill;
- The nearness of the kingdom of God relativizes the Roman government's power and claims. This point rests on the context of Markan eschatology overtly revealed in chapter thirteen.

v] Synoptics:

Matt.22:15-22, Lk.20:20-26. Matthew adds some context; "they went away and left him alone." Mann, who goes against the majority of commentators, notes this passage in support for the priority of Matthew and Luke. Mark works with "the gospels of Matthew and Luke before him. Mark combined the two texts whenever those texts are sufficiently close to make this possible..... As between phrases in Matthew and Luke, he chose

to use Luke, and when there was a significant difference in content, Mark chose the longer text of Matthew."

Text - 12:13

A question about taxes paid to a pagan government, v13-17.

αποστελλουσιν [αποστελλω] pres. "**later they sent**" - [AND] THEY SENT [TOWARD HIM]. Historic / narrative present, is probably used to indicate a step in the narrative, ie., a new paragraph. The subject "they" refers to the delegated members of the Sanhedrin, so Swete,; "The principal leaders of the Jews sent some of the sharpest scholars and politicians", Junkins. The TH suggests that it is unlikely for the subject to refer so far back and so it is best taken as impersonal; "Some of the Pharisees and Herodians were sent", so also Cranfield and Taylor.

των φαρισαίων [ος]) gen. "**of the Pharisees**" - [SOME] OF THE PHARISEES [AND THE HERODIANS]. The genitive, as with Herodians ("henchmen of Herod", TH), is adjectival, partitive.

ίνα + subj. "**to [catch him]**" - THAT [THEY MIGHT CATCH, ENTRAP HIM]. Here introducing a purpose clause; "in order that." The word "catch" is used of hunting and fishing, so this was a *fishing expedition* to catch him out. "If they could trap him into saying something that would warrant his arrest and execution", Junkins.

λογω [ος] dat. "**in his words**" - IN A WORD, SPEECH, UTTERANCE. Instrumental, "by means of what he may say", but possibly adverbial, modal, expressing manner, "with his speech"; "they were sent to set a verbal trap for Jesus", Barclay.

v14

These words of high praise are nothing but flattery, although true.

ελθοντες [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**they came**" - [AND] HAVING COME [THEY SAY]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said", as NIV.

αυτω dat. pro. "**to him**" - TO HIM [TEACHER]. Dative of indirect object.

ότι "that" - [WE KNOW] THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they think they know.

αληθης adj. "**[you are] a man of integrity**" - [YOU ARE] TRUE. Predicate adjective. When used of persons: "truthful, sincere, frank, upright."

σοι "you" - [AND IT IS OF NO CONCERN] TO YOU. Dative of direct object after to verb **μελω**, "to be concerned about." "You do not concern yourself with." "You count no man's favour", BAGD, ie., Jesus is not "impartial", Manson.

περι + gen. "**by others**" - ABOUT, CONCERNING [NO ONE, NOTHING = ANYONE]. Expressing reference / respect; "about anyone's *opinion*."

γάρ **"because"** - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Jesus is not swayed by the opinion of others.

ανθρωπων [ος] gen. **"who they are"** - [YOU DO NOT LOOK TO FACE] OF MEN. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. Referring to a person's face, or as we would say, their "front". So, Jesus is no "respector of persons", Zerwick. Luke's "receive the face" (Semitic terminology) expresses the same thought, ie., to show partiality.

ἀλλ [ἀλλὰ] **"but"** - Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not, but"

ἐπ [ἐπι] + gen. **"in accordance with"** - ON [TRUTH YOU TEACH]. Probably adverbial, expressing cause / basis, "on the basis of truth", "in/on truth" = "truly", Taylor; "You really do teach the life God wishes us to live", Barclay. BAGD suggests that here the sense is "in accordance with", so NIV.

του θεου [ος] gen. **"of God"** - [THE WAY] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic; "the way God wants people to live", Cully, "The Faith", TH.

ἐξιστιν impersonal verb **"it is right"** - IS IT RIGHT, PERMISSIBLE. "Allowed by God's Law", Cranfield.

δουναι [διδωμι] aor. inf. **"to pay"** - TO GIVE = PAY [TAX, POLL TAX]. The infinitive serves as the subject of the impersonal verb "is permissible"; lit., "to give [the poll tax to Caesar] is permissible [or not]?" = "Tell us, should we pay taxes to the Emperor or not", CEV.

Καισαρι [ρ] dat. **"to Caesar"** - TO CAESAR [OR NOT]? Dative of indirect object; "to the Emperor".

δωμεν [διδωμι] aor. subj. **"should we pay"** - SHOULD WE GIVE [OR SHOULD WE NOT GIVE]? Deliberative subjunctive; "Are we to pay, or are we not to pay", Moffatt.

v15

ειδως [οιδα] perf. part. **"knew"** - [BUT HE] KNOWING [THE HYPOCRISY, AFFECTATION, POSE, PRETENCE, DISSIMULATION OF THEM]. The participle is adverbial, best taken as causal; "because he was well aware of their hypocrisy." Rogers suggests that the word is used here of "an attempt to evade the law." The Pharisees were always looking for ways to soften (circumvent?) the rigorous requirements of the law - to tithe mint and cumin while ignoring justice. Cranfield suggests that the issue here is insincerity; "their question was not a genuine question prompted by a desire for instruction."

αυτοις dat. pro. **"[he] asked"** - [SAID] TO THEM [WHY ARE YOU TESTING / TEMPTING ME]. Dative of indirect object.

μοι dat. pro. **"[bring] me"** - [BRING A DENARIUS] TO ME. Dative of indirect object. A denarius is a small silver coin minted by the Roman government; a

required coinage in which to pay the poll-tax. It bore the image of the emperor with an inscription declaring him to be divine and pontifex maximus, ie., high priest. Such Roman coinage was offensive to Jews and would normally be kept well hidden within the temple complex. The value of the coin was the daily hire of a labourer. Local copper coinage was minted for trade and the like. This coinage did not carry any images out of deference to Jewish religious sensibilities.

ἵνα + subj. "-" - THAT [I MAY SEE]. Introducing a purpose clause; "in order that I may see *for myself*." There is no suggestion here that Jesus has never seen a denarius, rather that he intends to use it to make a point.

v16

οἱ δε pl. art. "**they**" - BUT/AND THEY (the Pharisees and Herodians) [BROUGHT *a denarius to him*]. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, here a change in subject from Jesus to the religious delegation.

αὐτοῖς dat. pro. "**[he asked] them**" - [AND HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

τινος gen. pro. "**whose**" - WHOSE [IMAGE AND INSCRIPTION *is THIS*]? Interrogative pronoun, the genitive being possessive; "this image and likeness *is whose*?" = "Whose face is this ... and whose name is in the inscription?" Phillips.

Καίσαρος [ρ] gen. "**Caesar's**" - [AND THEY SAID TO HIM] CAESAR'S. The genitive is adjectival, possessive; "*the image and inscription is the image and inscription of Caesar / is Caesar's image and inscription*" = "The Emperor's", Barclay.

v17

ὁ δε "**then**" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, as v16, here a change in subject from the delegation to Jesus.

αὐτοῖς dat. pro. "**to them**" - [JESUS SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

Καίσαρι [ρ] dat. "**[Give back] to Caesar**" - [GIVE BACK] TO CAESAR. Dative of indirect object. The same construction is used of "and to God what is God's."

τα "**what [is Caesar's]**" - THE *things* [OF CAESAR, AND TO GOD THE *things* OF GOD]. The article serves here as a nominalizer turning the possessive noun "Caesar" into the accusative direct object of the verb "to give." A similar construction applies to τα του θεου, "the things of God."

εξεθαυμαζον [εκθαυμαζω] imperf. "**they were amazed**" - [AND] THEY WERE TOTALLY AMAZED. The prefix εκ serves here to intensify. The verb is important in the gospels since it is often used of a positive first step toward faith. The delegation recognises the significance of Jesus' authoritative handling of a difficult ethical conundrum. The next step is to recognise the significance of

Jesus' person, ie., he is the messiah. Sadly, not many take the next step. Note how Mark concludes his gospel with the women leaving the empty tomb with "trembling" and **εκστασις**, "amazement". In a sense, Mark asks us whether we are willing to take the next step.

επ [επι] + dat. "**at [him]**" - UPON [HIM]. Luke has "at his answer", with **επι** being causal after a verb of feeling; "because of his answer / on the basis of his answer." The same sense is probably intended here, although with a bit of poetic license since we are usually not amazed at a person, but rather, at what a person does; "they were astonished at the way in which he had parried their question", Barclay.

12:18-27

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

2. The blindness of Israel exposed, 12:13-44

ii] The question concerning the resurrection

Synopsis

Jesus is still in the temple complex and is approached by a delegation of Sadducees with a question. The question concerns the resurrection of the dead, an issue of debate between Sadducees and Pharisees. The Pharisees believe in the resurrection of the dead, but the Sadducees don't. The question looks like a debating ploy used by the Sadducees to confound those who believe in the resurrection of the dead and so they thought they would try it out on with Jesus.

Teaching

"*Quod Deo non perit, sibi non perit*", Augustine; When God loves once, he loves for ever, cf., Rom.8:38-39.

Issues

i] Context: See 11:27-33.

ii] Background: The Sadducees were a priestly party in Israel, drawn from the upper class of Jewish society and responsible for the administration of the temple. They were conservative in theology and so resisted the growing trend to look beyond this world for a day of recompense. For the Sadducees, divine justice was administered in this age, not in an age to come. So, they rejected a doctrine of resurrection.

As for the Pharisees, their view of resurrection is likely influenced by Greek philosophy. Meyer argues that this influence was pervasive and still evident in later rabbinic sayings, eg., "the soul remains near the grave after death."

It is interesting to note how Christianity is still influenced by Platonic thought, the idea that the soul departs the body at the point of death, ascending to heaven. The New Testament teaches that body and soul, the whole self, is raised on the day of resurrection. Of course, given that the heavenly realm stands outside of time, there is actually no waiting for those asleep in Jesus.

The Sadducees' question concerning levirate marriage is based on the Mosaic regulation found in Deuteronomy 25:5. This law serves to protect inheritance rights and at the same time provide for the widow.

iii Structure: *The question concerning the resurrection:*
the Sadducees' question, v18-23;
Jesus' answer, v24-27.

iv] Interpretation:

Although the Sadducees do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, their question related its manner. Jesus first addresses the manner and then the fact.

The question posed by the Sadducees takes an extreme example of a woman whose husband dies, and who, following Jewish law, is then married to a series of brothers who intern die. So, "whose wife will she be" at the resurrection?

Jesus responds by pointing out that they have failed to observe two substantial truths: First, they have failed to note that the scriptures assume life beyond death; and second, they have underestimated the power of God to create such a life. Jesus then gives a glimpse of this life, noting that, being of a different order to life on earth, the structures of this age do not necessarily apply there, eg., marriage. In the age to come we will be like the angels, living in harmony with God. Jesus then gives the Sadducees a sample text from scripture which teaches that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, ie., the scriptures imply life beyond death.

Note that Jesus does not relate his words to his own resurrection.

The substance of Jesus' argument: The Old Testament generally teaches that a person, their soul and body, their whole being, perishes at their death. Jesus does not deny this truth, but comes at the issue from a different angle. Jesus makes the point that mere mortality cannot terminate a relationship with the God who gives life. Moses calls God the God of Abraham after Abraham was dead, but God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Jesus is not implying that Abraham is alive now in heaven, raised spiritually from the dead; Jesus is not Plato. Jesus answers Job's question, "if a man dies, will he live again?" The answer is "yes", because a loving God in a covenant relationship with his people necessitates a life beyond death for that people.

v] Synoptics:

Matt.22:23-33, Lk.20:27-40. Re Mark's statement that resurrected believers "will be like the angels in heaven", note Luke 20:36.

Text - 12:18

The question on the resurrection of the dead, v18-27: i] The Sadducees ask their question, v18-23.

ειπασι [ειμι] pres. inf. "there is" - [AND SADDUCEES, WHO SAY = AFFIRM] TO BE [NO RESURRECTION]. The infinitive of the verb to-be introduces a dependent

statement of indirect speech; "who say that there is no resurrection", ESV. Referring to the eschatological resurrection of the dead in the last day.

έρχονται [έρχομαι] pres. "**come [to him]**" - ARE COMING [TOWARD HIM]. Historic / narrative present, indicating narrative transition, ie., a new paragraph.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "**with a question**" - [AND THEY WERE ASKING, QUESTIONING HIM] SAYING. The participle may be classified as attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the verb "to ask", "they came asking and said", or adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their "asking", "they asked him a question, saying", ESV. Note that the verb **επηρωτων**, "to ask", is imperfect. It is probably not durative, "pestering", but rather follows the form of using an imperfect with speech.

v19

ἡμιν dat. pro. "**for us**" - [TEACHER, MOSES WROTE] TO US. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage. "Us Jews", not just "us Sadducees."

ὅτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the Sadducees account of what Moses wrote.

εαν + subj. "**if**" - IF. Introducing a conditional clause 3rd. class where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true, "if, *as may be the case*, *then*"

τινος pro. "**a man's [brother]**" - [A BROTHER] OF A CERTAIN *person* [SHOULD DIE]. The pronoun serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, relational, as NIV.

και και "**and and**" - AND [LEAVE BEHIND A WIFE] AND [NOT LEAVE A CHILD]. The first **και** is coordinative, but the second is best taken as adversative; "but leaves no child", ESV.

ἵνα "-" - THAT. The placement of *hina* between the protasis (the *if* clause) and the apodosis (the *then* clause) of the conditional clause, serves to introduce the apodosis as an imperatival dependent statement standing in its own right; "Moses wrote to us, 'if anyone's brother should die and leave behind a wife but not leave a child *then* [*he wrote*] that his brother should take the wife and raise up offspring for his brother'", Gundry.

εξαναστηση [εξανιστημι] aor. subj. "**raise up [offspring]**" - [THE BROTHER MAY TAKE WIFE OF HIM AND] MAY RAISE UP [SEED]. The sense is not of rearing a child, but of bearing a child; "his brother is obligated to marry his widow and have children", Peterson.

τω αδελφω [ος] dat. "**for [his] brother**" - TO THE BROTHER [OF HIM]. Dative of interest, advantage, as NIV.

v20

ὁ πρωτος adj. "**the first**" - [SEVEN BROTHERS THERE WERE AND] THE FIRST *one* [TOOK A WIFE]. The adjective serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to take." "The first" does not necessarily mean the eldest, but in a story like this the eldest would probably be intended; "Let's say there were seven brothers. The eldest married a woman of his choice, then died", Junkins.

αποθνησκων [αποθνησκω] pres. part. "**died**" - [AND] DYING [DID NOT LEAVE A DESCENDANT]. The participle may be treated as attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the verbal phrase "to take a wife / marry", as NIV, but also adverbial, temporal; "and when he died he left no offspring", ESV.

v21

μη καταλιπων [καταλειπω] aor. part. "**leaving no [child]**" - [AND THE SECOND TOOK HER] NOT HAVING LEFT [A SEED = DESCENDENT, OFFSPRING, FAMILY]. An attendant circumstance participle seems likely; "he also died and left no children."

ὡσαυτως adv. "**it was the same with [the third]**" - [AND] SIMILARLY, LIKEWISE, IN THE SAME WAY [THE THIRD *one*]. Adverb of manner.

v22

και "**in fact**" - AND [THE SEVEN DID NOT LEAVE A SEED]. Here the conjunction is likely to introduce a concluding thought / summary; "and so it was that the seven *brothers married the woman but* left no descendent."

εσχατον παντων "**last of all**" - LAST OF ALL. The adverb εσχατον is the adverbial form of the neuter adjective "last". The genitive παντων, "of all", is partitive. This not uncommon construction is adverbial, temporal, "finally, lastly"; "Finally the wife died", Peterson.

και "**[died] too**" - [THE WOMAN] ALSO [DIED]. Adjunctive.

v23

εν + dat. "**at [the resurrection]**" - IN [THE RESURRECTION, WHEN THEY ARE RAISED]. Here the preposition is adverbial, temporal; "When God raises people from death", CEV. The following tautological variant reading ὅταν + subj., "when [they are raised]", is Semitic idiom. "On the day of resurrection."

τινος gen. pro. "**whose**" - OF WHOM, WHICH. Interrogative pronoun, the genitive being possessive / relational.

αυτων gen. pro. "-" - OF THEM. The genitive is partitive.

γυνη [η] "**wife [will she be]**" - [WILL SHE BE] WIFE. Predicate nominative.

γάρ "since" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why there is a question as to husband; "for she was married in succession to the whole seven", Barclay.

εσχον [εχω] aor. "were married to [her]" - [THE SEVEN] HAD [HER]. "Had" in the sense of possessed - a cultural / idiomatic usage.

γυναικα [η] acc. "-" - A WIFE. Accusative complement of the direct object αυτην, "her", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the direct object "her"; "seven had her as a wife."

v24

ii] Jesus responds, v24-27. "You are way off the mark and the reason for this is because, first of all, you don't know your Bibles, and second, you limit the power of God." This is probably Mark's intended meaning, but the Greek of v24 is somewhat awkward due to δια τουτο.

Jesus first addresses their limited understanding of God's life-giving power to overcome death and bestow life, v25. "Resurrection is not a matter of human potential but of divine power; their rejection of it is the product of a secular perspective", France. Jesus then examines the scriptures, making the point that their knowledge of it is inadequate, v26-27. "The Law itself, if its implications are weighed, demands belief in the resurrection", Nineham.

αυτοις dat. pro. "[Jesus replied]" - [JESUS SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ου ... πλανασθε [πλανω] pres. mid./pas. "are you not in error" - ARE YOU NOT MISTAKEN, DECEIVED, LED ASTRAY, MISLED. The negation ου in a question expects the answer "yes". The Sadducees are mistaken both in their understanding of scripture and the nature of the resurrection life.

δια τουτο "-" - BECAUSE OF THIS. This causal construction usually refers back and is inferential; "therefore, for this reason." Here δια τουτο is usually taken as causal, standing in for οτι or ινα; "you are mistaken because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God", as NIV. "Isn't this the reason *you are so screwed up on the issue of the resurrection, namely* that you do not know?", so Taylor.

μη ειδοτες [οιδα] perf. part. "because you do not know" - HAVING NOT KNOWN. The participle is usually treated adverbial, causal, as NIV, "Isn't this the reason *that* you are mistaken because you have no proper comprehension of the scriptures."

του θεου [ος] gen. "[the power] of God" - [THE SCRIPTURES, NOR THE POWER] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, usually taken as verbal, subjective / idiomatic, "the power *exercised by* God", but adjectival, possessive is possible. "You don't know how God works", Peterson.

v25

γάρ **"for"** - Here probably a stitching device and so left untranslated, as NIV.
ὅταν + subj. **"when"** - WHEN. Temporal conjunction introducing a temporal clause, as NIV. Jesus is referring to the resurrection of the righteous dead. Having been judged and found innocent in Christ, they will end up possessing heavenly life. It was popularly held that the unrighteous also rise, but having been found guilty, are confined to hell. Other than parabolic allusions, Jesus doesn't really develop this idea. So, we are unsure whether the unrighteous face eternal punishment, or eternal annihilation. Either way, this end is to be avoided!

ἐκ + gen. **"-"** - FROM [DEAD THEY RISE]. Expressing source / origin; "when they rise from among the dead" = "when the dead rise (impersonal verb)."

γαμουσιν [γαμῶ] pres. **"they will [neither] marry"** - [NEITHER] DO THEY MARRY [NOR ARE THEY GIVEN IN MARRIAGE.] The present tense for this verb, as for "given in marriage", does not imply that they are in heaven already. The present tense here is usually taken as futuristic, as NIV, or gnomic, expressing action that always exists, as NRSV, "they neither marry nor are given in marriage." Theories abound as to the details of this non-conjugal resurrected state. Most agree that there will be no procreation, nor sexual relations (For Milton, sex is Satan's downfall, driven by jealousy at the coupling of Adam and Eve. Milton portrays the angels involved in a spiritual form of sex - an interesting theory, but that's all!). Are the resurrected sexless, all males, or males and females, ? And so the speculation goes on! The exaltation, even ecstasy of the last canto of Dante's *Divine Comedy* may help dispel such speculation. The speculation ended for me when David Matombo, an African student at my theological college, a person with very limited English, interrupted our student-inspired speculation with "in heaven there will be just you and Jesus." I got the point!

ἀλλ [ἀλλὰ] **"but"** - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "neither nor (negated coordinate construction), but" "neither do they marry, nor are they given in marriage, but" A male / female construct "neither do the men marry or are the women given in marriage; again cultural, so "after the dead are raised we are past the marriage business", Peterson.

ὡς **"like"** - [THEY ARE] LIKE [ANGELS]. Comparative. Resurrected people will not live in heaven like the angels live in heaven, but "they will have a life such as the heavenly angels have", Cranfield. In Luke's tradition there are the added thoughts: "they cannot die anymore", and "are children of God, being children of the resurrection", Lk.20:36. Note also Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:35f.

ἐν **"in [heaven]"** - IN [THE HEAVENS]. Local; expressing space; "like the angels who reside in heaven."

Jesus now addresses the fact of the resurrection of the righteous dead. The text establishes that God is the God of the living. The text does not the Platonic idea of the soul existing beyond death, but the idea that a covenant relationship with God, must, by its very nature, require life, a life that somehow extends beyond death, a life that is ultimately immortal.

δε "now" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument.

περι + gen. "**about**" - CONCERNING [THE DEAD]. Reference; "about, concerning, with reference to."

ὅτι "- " - THAT. Here serving as an exegetical **ἵνα**, specifying the issue concerning the dead, namely, that they are raised.

εγείρονται [εγειρω] pres. mid./pas. "**rising**" - THEY ARE BEING RAISED. The present tense is gnomic or futuristic; "as for the dead being raised to life", Cassirer.

ουκ "not" - [HAVE YOU] NOT [READ]. Used in a question expecting a positive answer; "yes". The question itself "is not a request for information, but is meant as an accusation", TH.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN. Local; expressing space.

Μωσσεως [ης εως] gen. "**[the book] of Moses**" - [THE SCROLL, PAPYRUS, BOOK] OF MOSES. The genitive is adjectival, of content / idiomatic; "the book *containing the words of* Moses." The "book of Moses", the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. For the Sadducees, these books were given a higher status than the rest of scripture, which is probably why Jesus uses Exodus 3:2-6 to clinch his argument.

επι + gen. "**in the account of**" - UPON [THE BUSH, THORN-BUSH]. Reference; "with reference to the passage which relates the story of the burning bush / thorn-bush." "In the passage relating the story of ("concerning", Marcus) the burning bush", Cranfield.

πως "how" - HOW, IN WHAT WAY. In this instant the interrogative particle is being used to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus has noted in the Book of Moses; "have you not read in the book of Moses how / that God spoke to him"

αυτω dat. pro. "**to him**" - [GOD SPOKE] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "- " - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant.

εγω pro. "**I am**" - I am [THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND GOD OF ISAAC AND GOD OF JACOB]? Emphatic by use and position. The present tense of the verb to-be is assumed, so "I the God" = "I am the God" = "I am the God of the present." Is the point of the text "I am the God with whom they now stand in relationship",

or "I am the God of those I once stood in relationship"? If the latter, then by extension, "once such a relationship is established it cannot be terminated merely by death." He is not the God of the dead, but living. Marcus suggests that the idea of life beyond the grave is not an extension of the text, but is established by a literal reading of the text, "I am [presently] the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." God would not call himself their God unless he intended to raise them to life again.

v27

νεκρων gen. adj. "**of the dead**" - [HE IS NOT THE GOD] OF DEAD *people* [BUT OF LIVING *people*. YOU ARE MISTAKEN MUCH]. The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, idiomatic / of subordination; "The living God rules over the living, not the dead." The participle **ζωντων**, "the living *ones*", similarly serves as a substantive. The clause presents as a counterpoint construction; "not....., but"

12:28-34

The journey to God's mountain, 6:1-10:52

2. The blindness of Israel exposed, 12:13-44

iii] The question concerning the greatest commandment

Synopsis

While debating with the religious authorities in the temple precincts, a scribe, impressed by Jesus' answers, asks him a question concerning the greatest of all the commandments - which is the most important? Jesus answers with two quotations from the Old Testament, Deut.6:4f, and Lev.19:18 - faith in the one God, with the duty of wholehearted love both to God and mankind.

Teaching

None are righteous, no not one.

Issues

i] Context: See Mark 11:27-33.

ii] Structure: *The great commandment*:

A scholastic dialogue.

the opening question and answer, v28-32;

the Scribe's response, v32-33;

Jesus' response, v34.

iii] Interpretation:

In this, the next question-answer dialogue, Jesus is asked a key question concerning the Mosaic Law - which is *πρωτη*, "first, prominent, most important?" In reply, Jesus provides a commonly held summary of the Law, namely, love God, love neighbour, cf., Lk.10:25-28.

The religious teacher is encouraged by Jesus' answer, repeating, in similar fashion, his own understanding of God's "first" law. To this Jesus replies "you are not far from the kingdom of God." Those who watched on were left stunned.

It is likely that this *righteous* man thought his righteousness had already secured his position in the kingdom, so being told he was "not far from" it, is by no means good news. Mark again reminds us of the nomism of religious Israel and their failure to recognise that *none are righteous, no not one*. In so doing, we are again confronted by the fact that righteousness can neither be secured nor maintained by obedience to the law; the gospel of grace is the only answer to the human condition.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.12:34-40, cf., Lk.10:25-28. Mark provides a fuller account of the tradition than Matthew, while Matthew emphasises the context of controversy - "one of them tried to catch him out." Matthew leaves out the mirrored response of the righteous man, as well as Jesus' reply, "you are not far" Matthew either excises these elements from the Markan tradition, given the context of controversy, or they weren't present in his received tradition.

This episode is not recorded in Luke's account of the Messiah in the temple, 19:45-21:38. Luke and Mark parallel their accounts from the cleansing of the temple: there is the question of authority; the parable of the defiant tenants; the question on tribute; the question on the resurrection; [in Mark, the question on the greatest commandment]; David's greater son; the warning about Israel's teachers; the widow's offering. Finally, both end with the prophecies concerning the destruction of the temple. So, why does Luke not record the question on the greatest commandment?

The answer possibly lies, on the surface at least, with the questioner and the question seemingly genuine, while the other episodes in this section show the piety of religious Judaism tainted by hypocrisy and facing judgement - the interpretive implication being that church leaders today can catch the same disease. So, did Luke leave out of his gospel an episode where Jesus seemingly praises a scribe? Of course, as already noted, Mark includes this episode because it actually exposes the scribes state of loss. He, like all Israel, stands condemned by the very law he thought confirmed his covenant standing before God.

Of course, Luke, like Mark, doesn't miss the point of this summary of the Law of Moses. He uses it with the parable of The Good Samaritan, along with Jesus' words, "Do this and you will live", Lk.25-37. As my uncle one said to me, after I had just pointed out to him that he had cut the last studs a foot short, "there was only ever one good carpenter, and they crucified him!" Who dares claim that they can "Go and do likewise"?

v] Homiletics: *The Two Great Commandments*

In the Anglican / Episcopalian tradition, the Ten Commandments are read to the congregation at the beginning of the service of Holy Communion. In shortened versions of the service, the Ten Commandments are replaced by the Two Great Commands.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ said: You shall love the Lord you God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it:

You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

The response of the people, composed by Archbishop Cranmer for the 1552 Prayer Book, was "Lord, have mercy on us: and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit." Often today, congregations will just use the response, "Lord have mercy."

So then, what's the point of this introduction to the Holy Communion? The Reformers well understood the purpose of the Law. Although the Law does serve as a guide to right living, it primarily serves to expose sin. So, God's people gather, they hear the law, and are again reminded of their state of loss. Yet, they have gathered before a merciful and loving God, who in Jesus Christ has wiped away their sin. As the service moves from Law to Confession, and then to Absolution, the congregation stands and joins in praise to a gracious and merciful God.

We are able to possess the kingdom of God when we, who are "not far from the kingdom of God", face the absolute nature of His Law.

Text - 12:28

The question concerning the greatest of all the commandments, v28-34. i] The opening question and answer, v28-32. Religious Judaism in the first century had identified 613 individual commandments of the Law. Much time was spent grading them according to importance, and this because keeping them maintained a person's place in the kingdom. In response to the question as to the number one law, Jesus gives a summary of the whole law. This summary is based on Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. It was a commonly used summary at this time, eg. "Love the Lord and the neighbour", Testament of Issachar. Jesus begins by quoting the Shema' - obedience rests on a knowledge of the unique character of God and of his covenantal love toward Israel. Then he quotes the law itself. God demands of his people a total devotion and commitment of their life to Him, as well as devoted care toward a neighbour. Although Leviticus 19:18 confined love to "the sons of your own people", Jesus has already widened the ideal of love to include everyone. Only the hardness of the human heart limits love.

εἰς **"one"** - ONE. Equivalent to an indefinite pronoun, "a certain one" = "a scribe", Moffatt.

των γραμματεων [εως εως] gen. **"of the teachers of the law"** - OF THE SCRIBES. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

προσελθων [προσερχομαι] aor. part. **"came"** - HAVING COME, APPROACHED. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal; "Then a scribe came up", Moffatt. It stands in parallel with two other participles, ακουσας, "having heard", and ιδων, "having seen", all attendant on the main verb

ἐπηρωτησεν, "asked". This rather awkward construction (a Markan trait, so Turner) prompts numerous translations, but the point is clear enough.

ἀκουσας [ακουω] aor. part. + gen. "**and heard**" - HAVING HEARD [THEM]. Moffatt treats the participle as adjectival, limiting "a scribe", so forming a relative clause, "who had listened to the discussion", but it doesn't stand in agreement with "the scribe." So, adverbial, temporal; see above. Note that the verb "to hear" takes a genitive direct object, as here; αυτων, "them"

συζητουστων [συζητω] gen. pres. part. "**debating**" - DEBATING, ARGUING, DISCUSSING. The participle serves as the genitive complement of the genitive direct object "them" standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the direct object "them".

ιδων [ειδον] aor. part. "**noticing**" - HAVING SEEN. "See", in the sense of "understand." The participle is again adverbial, usually treated as temporal, "When he heard Jesus give a good answer", CEV. Given the string of adverbial clauses, it makes sense to head toward an attributive modifier limiting "a scribe", although it doesn't stand in agreement with the genitive "scribe"; "Now there was a certain expert in the law who had heard them dispute with one another and who realised how well Jesus had answered them", Cassirer.

οτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what the scribe heard / noticed.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - [HE ANSWERED] THEM [WELL]. Dative of direct object of the απο prefix verb "to answer."

ποια "**which**" - [ASKED HIM] OF WHAT KIND OF. Probably here functioning as an interrogative pronoun, "what / which?"

πρωτη adj. "**the most important**" - [IS] *the* FIRST, PROMINENT [COMMANDMENT]. Predicate adjective.

παντων gen. adj. "- OF ALL. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. The sense is unclear, although probably "the first of all the commandments" is intended.

v29

Jesus answers by quoting the Shema, Deut.6:4.

οτι "-" - [JESUS ANSWERED] THAT. Here serving to introduce a dependent statement of direct speech, or more particularly, a quote.

πρωτη adj. "**the most important one**" - FIRST [IS]. Attributive adjective limiting an assumed "commandment". "The commandment that takes priority over all the others", Barclay.

κυριος ο θεος ημων "**the Lord our God**" - [HEAR ISRAEL] LORD GOD OF US. Technically ο θεος, "the God [of us]", stands in apposition to κυριος, "Lord", but a verb may be implied, "The Lord is our God."

κύριος εἷς ἐστίν "the Lord is one" - ONE LORD IS. The clause may be translated differently: "is one Lord", "the Lord is one", or "is the only Lord." The difficulty lies in whether God's person is being described, or whether his relationship with Israel is being described. So, Moffatt has "the Lord is our God, the Lord alone", underlining the Lord's relationship with Israel. Yet, it seems more likely that divine uniqueness is being proclaimed; "the Lord our God is the one Lord", REB.

v30

ἀγαπήσεις [ἀγαπάω] fut. "love" - [AND] YOU SHALL LOVE [*the LORD THE GOD OF YOU*]. The future is volitive, expressing the Hebrew imperfect, and thus serving as a command. What does it mean to "love" God? Loving the neighbour is probably best understood in the terms of acting with compassion toward the neighbour, but what of God? Is it commitment? Taylor notes that this is the only passage in the synoptic gospels that speaks of human love toward God. Moffatt notes the reticence of NT writers to use love-language in addressing God. At least we can say that "it is a love which makes decisions and acts, and is not a mere feeling", Cranfield.

ἐξ + gen. "with" - OUT OF, FROM. Expressing source / origin. Indicating that our response to God should come from within us rather than be just a superficial doing.

ὅλης adj. "all" - WHOLE, ALL. Underlining the complete response of obedience demanded by God, an obedience in response to his prior love.

τῆς καρδίας [α] "heart" - OF THE HEART [OF YOU]. In Hebrew thought, the centre of our intellectual processing.

τῆς ψυχῆς [η] "soul" - [AND OUT OF, FROM WHOLE] OF THE SOUL [OF YOU]. Inner being.

τῆς διανοίας [α] "mind" - [AND FROM WHOLE] OF THE MIND, THOUGHT, INTENTION, INTELLIGENCE, UNDERSTANDING [OF YOU]. Mark changes the LXX quote here adding this word, obviously to underline the importance of rational thought in the process of obedience, Thus he removes the possible confusion caused by the word "heart", which in Greek thought takes on an emotional function, as distinct from the Hebrew understanding of the "heart" as primarily a rational organ.

τῆς ἰσχυροῦς [υς υος] "strength" - [AND FROM WHOLE] OF THE STRENGTH, MIGHT [OF YOU]. Mark uses "strength" instead of the LXX "power."

v31

δευτέρα adj. "the second" - A SECOND [*is THIS*]. Predicate nominative. The "first" includes an integral second command. Jesus' linking of the two is not

original, but the perfection he demands of them is. His unique "completing" of the law serves to expose sin and thus the need for divine mercy.

τον πλησιον adv. "**neighbour**" - [YOU SHALL LOVE] THE ONE NEAR = NEIGHBOUR [OF YOU]. Adverb is used here as a substantive. "Neighbour" in Hebrew means "fellow citizen / friend / other person." A wide sense is clearly intended in scripture, for love even extends to the alien and traveller within ones gates. "Love others as much as you love yourself", CEV.

ὡς "as" - AS, LIKE [YOURSELF]. Comparative. For meaning it may be worthwhile repeating the verb as in the CEV above. The issue of self-love is raised in this verse. Commentators argue that Jesus has either endorsed self-love, or has not actually addressed the issue at all, and so neither endorses, nor condemns. Surely self-love is an amoral natural human trait. Psychologically it would be difficult for a person to love others if they didn't first love themselves, in which case, Jesus assumes the obvious. "In the same way we care for our own welfare, let us care for the welfare of others."

τουτων gen. pro. "**than these**" - [GREATER] *than* THESE [THERE IS NOT ANOTHER COMMANDMENT]. Genitive of comparison after the predicate adjective μειζων, "greater". "These are the two commandments which take priority over all others", Barclay.

v32

ii] The Scribe's response, v32-33. The teacher affirms Jesus' use of the Shema. In line with Exodus 20:7 he does not use the divine name. He adds The phrase "and there is no other beside him", Deuteronomy 4:35. He also affirms Jesus' summary of the Law, making the point that the love of God and neighbour is far superior to cultic sacrifices, specifically whole burnt offerings. Religious Judaism would often rate cultic sacrifice above care toward a neighbour, even though the teaching of the Old Testament on this matter was well understood, cf., 1Sam.15:22, Hos.6:6. None-the-less, the ethical superiority of benevolence over cult is not a radical idea. Verses 32-34 are peculiar to Mark.

καλως adv. "**well said**" - [AND THE SCRIBE SAID TO HIM] WELL [TEACHER]. Predicate adverb, probably used as an exclamation, cf., NRSV, Moffatt., but possibly to be taken with "said", "truly, Master, thou hast well said", Cranfield, cf., RV. "You are absolutely right", Phillips.

επ [επι] + gen. "**[you are right] in [saying]**" - UPON [TRUTH YOU SAY]. Here expressing cause / ground; "on the basis of the truth you *just* said, namely that", possibly, "in accordance with truth", TH.

ὅτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech, stating, expressing what Jesus said, but rephrased in quote form, with the issue of importance explained.

εἰς "[**God is one**]" - ONE [THERE IS]. Predicate nominative. "God" is understood, and is unstated in typical Jewish style.

πλην + gen. "**but**" - [AND THERE IS NOT ANOTHER] EXCEPT, ONLY [HIM]. Here expressing an exception.

v33

το αγαπαν [αγαπαω] inf. "**to love**" - [AND] THE TO LOVE [HIM FROM WHOLE OF THE HEART AND FROM WHOLE OF THE INTELLIGENCE AND FROM WHOLE OF THE STRENGTH AND] THE TO LOVE. This articular infinitive, along with its modifiers, as well as its second use with its modifiers, stands as the subject of the verb to-be; "to love with all, and to love your neighbour is more important" As a whole, the clause is recitative, continuing the object clause / dependent statement of command, introduced by ὅτι in v32; "you are right in saying that [you are] to love him with all [your] heartis greater." A "love toward God that involves the totality of our thinking, understanding and strength far outweighs"

της συνεσεως [ις εως] "**understanding**" - THE INTELLIGENCE, UNDERSTANDING, SAGACITY. As with v30, this word serves to exegete the sense of "heart" and is not found in Deut.6:5, although here it does serve to replace "soul". "All our heart, mind and strength", CEV.

περισσοτερον [περισσοτερος] comp. adj. "**more important**" - [IS] MORE EXCEEDING, MORE ABUNDANT, MUCH MORE. This comparative adjective serves as the predicate of the verb to-be. The word is not as strong as Jesus' "greater". See note v34. Far outweighs", Barclay.

παντων gen. adj. "**all**" - *than* ALL. The genitive is ablative, of comparison.

των ὀλοκαυτωματων [α] gen. "**burnt offerings**" - OF WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative. Animal sacrifices where the whole carcass is consumed by fire. The scribe is not denouncing the sacrificial system, rather "what he does is to assert the supremacy of love of God and man over the cultus", Taylor.

θυσιων [α] gen. "**sacrifices**" - [AND] OF SACRIFICES. General sacrifices where the flesh was eaten by the worshippers.

v34

As is always the case, Jesus' concluding saying / pronouncement / punch-line, is crucial to our understanding of the episode. The problem is that we cannot read Jesus' body language, or tonal inflections, so is Jesus being complementary, or sarcastic? Commentators tend to think Jesus is being complementary, so:

Lagrange, "he almost has the necessary disposition to receive the gospel";

Cranfield, "the scribe's unreserved acknowledgement of the demands of God's law without any attempt at evasion or at self-justification indicated a certain openness and humility before God";

Rawlinson, "you come near possessing the qualifications needed for entry into the kingdom of God";

Johnson, "Jesus recognises him as genuinely religious";

Lane, "these verses record the approving response of the scribe and Jesus' recognition of his favourable disposition in the perspective of the Kingdom of God";

So also Taylor, France, Gundry, Anderson, Marcus and Evans.

Yet, as already noted, it is quite possible that Jesus is being ironical, so Edwards. The context of this episode records Jesus' ongoing conflict with the religious authorities and his critical analysis of the religion of Israel; they are blind guides leading the people to destruction. So, given the context of the episode, it is unlikely that Jesus is being complementary.

It is likely that the scribe's question is antagonistic (Matthew notes this fact in his record of the tradition), and it is possible that his reply to Jesus actually moves from Jesus' uncompromising demand for perfection. The scribe's answer may have been intelligent, but he still remains outside the kingdom, and thus, like all humanity, is lost. Being just out, is as good as being a long way out - *a miss is as good as a mile*. If Jesus' response was positive and affirming, why would no one dare ask him any more questions? Finally, the fact that Luke drops this episode in his account of the messiah's temple discourse, indicates that, on the surface at least, Jesus' words on the greatest commandment seem out of place. Of course, they are out of place if Jesus did actually "commend" the scribe, but definitely not if in fact he condemned him with faint praise.

ἰδὼν [εἰδὼν] aor. part. "**when [Jesus] saw**" - [AND JESUS] HAVING SEEN. The participle is adverbial, probably serving to introduce a temporal clause, as NIV.

αὐτον "-" - HIM. An example of a hyperbaton where the subject or object of a subordinate clause is displaced such that it becomes the subject or object of another clause, usually, as here, the main clause. Common in Aramaic, but also found in Greek. Some texts try to sort Mark's grammar out by dropping the pronoun. So, read as "when Jesus saw that he."

ὅτι "that" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Jesus saw. Decker suggests that it is epexegetic, specifying the accusative **αὐτον**, "him", although this would not be the case if we read **αὐτον** as the accusative subject of the subordinate clause; see **αὐτον** above; "when Jesus saw that he"

βουνεχως adv. "**wisely**" - [HE ANSWERED] WISELY, THOUGHTFULLY, WITH UNDERSTANDING, SINCERELY, DISCREETLY, WITH GOOD SENSE. Modal adverb modifying the verb "he answered." This is the only use of this word in the NT, and is not necessarily a commendation. "In a manner that showed he had a mind", Gundry.

μακραν adv. "**[not] far from**" - [SAID TO HIM, YOU ARE NOT] FAR AWAY, FAR OFF. Here the accusative of the noun is used as a predicate adverb. Possibly, "not far from the kingdom", in the sense of, "not far from the person and teaching of Jesus in whom the kingdom is manifested", so Cranfield, Edwards. Possibly of the future manifestation of the kingdom in the last day, although it is unlikely that Jesus is confirming the scribe's membership in the heavenly kingdom. Probably a spatial sense is intended where the kingdom is a *now/not* yet reality which a person may enter, the entry of which is accessible to the scribe, as it is accessible to all humanity. Of course, the trick is knowing how to get in, and given the scribes question and response, not only is he not in, he hasn't got the faintest idea of how to get in. "Within reach", Dodd.

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM. Expressing separation; "away from."

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [THE KINGDOM] OF GOD. As already noted, the genitive here prompts numerous translations, eg., possessive, "God's kingdom"; verbal, subjective, "the kingdom *which* God *rules over*." For "the kingdom of God" see Mk.1:15.

ουδεις ουκει "**from then on no one**" - [AND] NO ONE ANY LONGER. This emphatic double negative serves to underline Jesus' victory in his debate with the religious authorities, and is further evidence that this particular interchange is not as positive as first seems.

επερωτησαι [επερωταω] aor. inf. "**[dared] ask**" - [WAS DARING] TO ASK = QUESTION [HIM]. This infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to dare."

12:35-37

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

2. The blindness of Israel exposed, 12:13-44

Jesus' question concerning David's son

Synopsis

Jesus is in the temple court in Jerusalem, answering questions put to him by the religious authorities. He now asks his opponents a tricky question. Referring to Psalm 110:1, Jesus asks what the theologians of his day mean when they say that the messiah is David's son. Israel's theologians assume that the Psalm is written by David and that in v1 David is referring to the messiah. A son does not have authority over his father, so why does David call the messiah his lord? How can the messiah be both the son of David and lord over David? The religious authorities are left flummoxed, but the crowd is impressed.

Teaching

Jesus may be a descendant of David, but as the messiah, he is lord over David - lord over all, and under the authority of no man.

Issues

i] Context: See 11:27-33. At first glance there seems little attempt by Mark to relate this independent saying of Jesus to its context, other than place it within a question-answer section of his gospel. None-the-less, the allusion that Jesus is David's lord leads nicely into a description of Israel's religious poverty, v28-44, and then to Jesus apocalyptic teaching on the coming judgment, chapter 13.

ii] Structure: *Who is David's son?*:

And Jesus answered and said, teaching in the Temple

"How do the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David?

David himself said in the Holy Spirit,

The Lord said to my lord, "Sit on my right
until I put your enemies under your feet."

David himself calls him lord;

and how is he his son?"

And the large crowd heard him gladly,

This chiasmic structure is suggested by Marcus. Form: A A', narrative frame, B B'; the problem of messianic sonship; C C', the problem explained; D, scriptural input:

iii] Interpretation:

Jesus does not explicitly identify himself with the "lord" of this Psalm, but presumably the identification is intended; certainly, Mark intends it. The Lord God addresses the "lord" over David - David's "lord", ie., the one who has authority over David. For Mark, Jesus is indeed a descendent of David, the "Messiah" / "son of David", who, in his later ministry, accepted the testimony of Bartimaeus and the popular acclaim of the crowd, 11:10, thus fulfilling messianic prophecy. Yet, the title "son of David" does not properly express the authority of the messiah for he is David's "lord"; he is not a son under the authority of David.

Matthew's account of this pericope implies that Jesus the messiah is not just lord over David, but lord over everyone and everything. He sits, not at the right hand of David, but at the right hand of the Ancient of Days. The early church, resting on apostolic testimony, confessed the Christ as Lord, and Mark would be well aware of this confession. So, it seems likely that we are expected to take the lordship of Christ from this passage, that he is Lord, co-regent with God the Father.

The authenticity of Psalm 110. The above conclusion rests on the assumption that Jesus / Mark believed that David composed Psalm 110 and that it was messianic in intent.

It is generally accepted that in the incarnation, the divine-man Jesus *emptied* himself to become man with all the human limitations so entailed, although without sin. We may rightly question Davidic authorship today, but we don't expect Jesus to be endowed with twenty-first century scholarship. There is also no guarantee that the Psalm was viewed as messianic in the first century. If the Psalm is Maccabean (second century B.C.) then its messianic interpretation may well be a later construct (this issue has prompted ongoing debate). Despite these qualifications, it does seem likely that we are to understand the Psalm as both Davidic and messianic and "that the reader is expected to apply it to *Jesus*", France.

Marcus argues that the quote from Psalm 110:1 is partly conflated with Psalm 8:9, still expressing the authority of the messiah, but as the new Adam, the divinely endowed sovereign of creation. Probably a mite overly subtle.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.22:41-46, Lk.20:41-44. See Daube, *The Earliest Structure of the Gospels*, NTS 5:3, 1959, for his argument that the series of questions, concluding with this question asked by Jesus, developed as a replacement

for the four questions posed at Passover Haggadah, and so were set in tradition long before their adoption by Mark.

v] Homiletics: *Jesus is Lord*

The lordship of Christ is not overtly proclaimed in our reading today, rather, it is implied. Of course, what is implied here is proclaimed elsewhere in the scriptures. For example, Paul writing to the Romans tells us that Jesus is "a descendant of David", "appointed the Son of God in power", "Jesus Christ our Lord."

Church history is a fascinating subject, and modern church history even more so. In theory, at least, if we understand the past we won't make the same mistakes in the present. So, consider this example of recent church history.

In the 1960's, a rather strange change began to take shape throughout the Evangelical segment of the Anglican communion. The compact between the gospel and the Prayer Book, a compact that had existed for over two hundred years, began to break down.

At the time of the great awakening, following the ministry of John Wesley, most of the revivalists left the English church to form the Methodist church. Yet, some of the revivalists remained, submitting themselves to the Prayer Book and the polity of the Anglican church. They were called the Evangelicals. They only ever amounted to about 10% of the church and so rarely gained high position. They stayed because they fully believed that Jesus is Lord. The Anglican church might be old hat, fuddy-duddy, a bit catholic, but they believed that the kingdom is built "'not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit', says the Lord God almighty." Jesus builds his house, a kingdom not of this world, apart from method, organisation and structure. For the Evangelicals, the house was built through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, and this because "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation." So, the Evangelicals sat easily with their loyalty to the Prayer Book, as well as the gospel.

But all this started to change in the 1960's. The Evangelicals faced a number of difficulties, for example, the inroads of liberalism, but what began in the 60's was a terminal parting of the ways. Slowly but surely there was a wholesale abandonment of the Prayer Book and Anglican polity within Evangelical Anglicanism. What caused this seismic shift?

First, Evangelicalism was somehow infected by legalism, a congregationalist pietism that promoted sanctification by obedience - trust and obey, rather than by grace through faith alone. When a believer doubts the lordship of Christ in salvation they begin to think that their own holiness, rather than Christ's holiness, has something to do with their

acceptance before God. So, Evangelicals began to feel uneasy with the catholic trappings of the Anglican church. Slowly but surely the trappings were removed.

The second cause lay in downplaying of the lordship of Christ in church building. As congregational numbers began to fall away, Evangelicals began to turn to Church Growth methodology. The focus fell on people management strategies rather than gospel communication strategies. Consequently, robed Prayer Book services were slowly replaced by a happy-clappy cabaret.

The old Evangelical Anglican compact is now little more than a memory, but its demise serves to remind us of the consequences of doubting the lordship of Christ. Remember, "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain", Psalm 127:1.

Text - 12:35

Jesus overturns the scribal view of the messiah, v35-37. The religious authorities were giving Jesus a hard time with their tricky questions, but had ended up floundering with nothing more to say. Jesus now has his turn, and so asks them a tricky question. We are not told if the theologians present attempt to answer Jesus' question, it's likely that they didn't even get to first base. The question may be tricky, but more importantly, it reveals something of Jesus' true person. So, Jesus asks "why" Israel's theologians constantly speak of the messiah as the son of David. Their constant reference to the messiah as a descendant of David implies that David has precedence over the messiah, as if the messiah's authority is equal to, or even less than David.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "-" - [JESUS] HAVING ANSWERED [WAS SAYING]. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant, expressing action accompanying the verb "said"; "answered and said." A Semitic construction.

διδασκων [διδασκω] pres. part. "**while [Jesus] was teaching**. TEACHING. The participle is adverbial, best taken as temporal, as NIV.

εν "in" - IN [THE TEMPLE]. Local, expressing space.

πως "why" - HOW [SAY]. Interrogative, "how", usually in the sense of "in what way" / "to what extent" - here as a challenge, Boring; "how is it that the experts in the law maintain that God's anointed is a descendent of David's?", Cassirer - how do they come to that conclusion given that the scripture says?

οι γραμματεις [ευς εως] "the teachers of the law" - THE TEACHERS. "The Scribes", most of whom were Pharisees.

οτι "that" - Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the teachers of the law say.

Δαυιδ gen. (proper) "of David" - [THE CHRIST IS SON] OF DAVID? The genitive is adjectival, relational. The title is messianic, but strictly it indicates "descendant of David." It was a popular messianic title because of its nationalist overtones, and for this reason Jesus avoided it. Although popular, David's links to the messiah are not overly strong, cf., Jer.23:5, 33:15 for the branch raised up out of David, and the "branch" allusions in Isa.11:1 and Zech.3:8, 6:12.

v36

Jesus blows his opponents away with a text from scripture. He quotes from Psalm 110:1, a Psalm recognised as a Psalm of David. Here David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, speaks of the messiah as his lord, his master, the one who has authority over him. David describes the Lord God, YHWH, addressing the messiah as David's lord, his master. So, the "lord", the messiah, may be a descendant of David, but he is something more than just a descendant. In the end he sits, not at the right hand of David, but at the right hand of God where he will bring everything under his subjection. David's lord is co-regent with God the Father; he is Lord, capital "L"

εν + dat. "by" - [DAVID HIMSELF SAID] BY [THE HOLY SPIRIT]. Instrumental, expressing means, "under the influence of", BAGD. The statement asserts that the word of the Psalm is authoritative, it is divine revelation. Like the prophets, David looks into heaven where he beholds the one he calls "my lord", enthroned at the right-hand of the Ancient of Days. Mark implies that "my lord" is Jesus, the Christ, and certainly he is affirmed as such by the early church. "David himself, moved by the Holy Spirit", Barclay.

κυριος [ος] "The Lord" - LORD. In the Hebrew text of this quote the word is used for God, YHWH. The second use of the word "Lord" is the word *adonay*, a word for master, king, ruler, so "lord". The LXX uses **κυριος** for both, as in the quote before us. Taking the Psalm as a coronation hymn, "the first Lord refers to God and the second to the king; that is, at his coronation the king of Israel was inducted as God's vice-regent and seated symbolically at God's right hand", Edwards.

τω κυριω [ος] dat. "to [my] Lord" - [SAYS] TO LORD [OF ME]. Dative of indirect object. David recognises "my lord" "as his superior rather than his son", France.

εκ pres. imp. "-" - [SIT] AWAY FROM = AT [RIGHT OF ME]. The sitting position denotes authority / co-regency; David's Lord sits at the right-hand of the Lord God. This too is the position assumed by Daniel's Son of Man. Technically **εκ** expresses separation in this phrase, but logically expressed locally, "at", as NIV; the ensuing phrase is idiomatic. "The right-hand signified honour and closeness to God, and legitimacy to rule with dominion and justice", Edwards.

ἕως αν + subj. "**until**" - UNTIL [I PUT THE ENEMIES OF YOU]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, future time, as NIV.

ὑπακατω + gen. "**under**" - UNDER, BENEATH [THE FEET OF YOU]. Spatial. Expressing subservience.

v37

Jesus now drives home his point. "If He is David's Master, does not our Law deny a son mastery over his father?" This paraphrase by Junkins nicely captures Jesus' point and would have flummoxed his opponents. Of course, Jesus is not actually denying that the messiah is a descendant of David, he is just making the point that he is something more than David's descendant. Those with eyes to see, those earnestly waiting for the messiah and his kingdom, could not help but ask themselves whether David's Lord, the co-regent with God, is actually the man asking the question. The religious authorities are obviously not impressed with Jesus' words, but the common people are.

The verse is technically not a conditional clause but the position of και may give the sense of a 1st. class condition; "if, as is the case, [David,] then [how can he?]" Junkins' paraphrase is worth considering; "If He is David's Master, does not our Law deny a son mastery over his father?" See ποθεν below.

αυτος pro. "**himself**" - [DAVID] HE = HIMSELF [CALLS HIM LORD]. The personal pronoun is intensive, as NIV.

ποθεν "**how then**" - [AND] FROM WHERE [IS HE *the* SON]? This interrogative conjunction is usually taken here to express cause / reason, "in what sense, how, in what way, why", Taylor, etc, as NIV., but this is disputed. Gundry suggests it expresses source, "from where"; "where in the scriptures do you find the messianic title son of David?" The question logically implies that the messiah is not David's son - by calling him "Lord" he obviously isn't David's son. Yet, it is more likely that the question does not deny that the messiah is a descendant of David, but just that he is something more than a descendant. The argument establishes the inferiority of David to the messiah rather than deny the messiah's heritage, cf., Rom 1:3-4 - both son of David and Son of God. Of course, the title Son of God has its own difficulties in that it can signify nothing more than messiah / Christ, but then, depending on the context, it can signify the filial relationship of the Son with God the Father. "The Markan Jesus is not denying the Messiah's physical descent from David but the adequacy of the Davidic image to express his full identity", Marcus.

πολυς adj. "**the large [crowd]**" - [AND THE] LARGE, HUGE [CROWD]. The AV, leaning toward classical Greek, has "the common people", and this may well be the sense here.

ἠδευς adv. "**with delight**" - [WAS HEARING HIM] GLADLY, WITH PLEASURE.
Adverb of manner. "The large crowd enjoyed listening to Jesus teach", CEV.

12:38-44

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

2. The blindness of Israel exposed, 12:13-44

v] The religious poverty of Israel

Synopsis

It is the final days of Jesus' ministry, and he is teaching in the Temple precincts. His subject, in the passage before us, is the issue of piety. After commenting on the corrupted piety of Israel's religious leader, Jesus points to a poor woman and her gift to the temple of two copper coins, a gift of everything she had. Here is true piety.

Teaching

"God measures our charity not by its amount, but by our means and by the spirit in which we give", A.M. Hunter.

Issues

i] Context: See 11:27-33.

ii] Structure: *The churchman and the widow*:

Condemnation of Israel's religious authorities, v38-40:

Description of their status seeking, v38-39;

Description of their moral corruption, v40a;

Eschatological condemnation, v40b.

Pronouncement story - the widow's mite, v41-44.

Narrative - the situation is described, v41-42;

Jesus' pronouncement, v43-44.

iii] Interpretation:

The intended message of this passage is a matter of some debate among commentators. William Lane surely heads in the right direction when he suggests that the passage is "a call for absolute surrender to God and total trust in him." Of course, given that *the old Adam has his way until deposited in the grave* (Luther), absolute surrender is beyond us all. Such reminds us to look to the one who has surrendered everything on our behalf and so find in him divine approval. As the apostle Paul would put it, these things "were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come", 1Cor.10:11.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt:23:1-36, Lk.20:45-47. Matthew works off his own source material here, while Luke tends to follow Mark, and as usual, smooths out his Greek.

v] Homiletics: *Pious piety*

"Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks upon the heart", 1Sam.16:7.

What point is Jesus making in the story of the widow's two cents? For example, does it serve to pass a moral judgment on affluent societies? Is it telling us that for the poor at least, the coming kingdom will mean deliverance from oppression and the fulfilment of hope in God? What does this story teach us?

Our reading today serves as an indictment upon religious Israel, the pious rich, the "righteous" ..., and thus points to impending judgement. "Such men will be punished most severely", says Jesus. Yet, Jesus' righteous judgement upon religious Israel is not just for reading IN church, but rather FOR church. The widow doesn't serve to image what we must be to receive the fulfilment of our hope, our salvation, rather she serves to remind us of the hypocrisy that is already ours, a hypocrisy that can place us under condemnation.

The danger facing we churchies, is that our religiosity can easily hide our true life-motivations - motivations toward status, privilege, wealth.... God views the substance of our behaviour, not the external act and its consequences. He looks at the heart.

So, know thyself and to thyself be true!

Text - 12:38

The religious poverty of Israel: i] Pulling no punches, Jesus sets out to expose the sins of Israel's religious leaders, and does so with an outspoken condemnation, v38-40. The theologians of the day (priests, Levites, scribes - the clergy and teachers) were highly respected, addressed as "Rabbi", "Father", "Master", and given the seats of honour at the synagogue and at feasts. The people even stood as they passed by in their flowing white robes.

The point Jesus makes is that people who are so meticulous at keeping the law would surely know that God alone should receive the praise of men. Their self-intoxication exposes their hypocrisy. Not only are they status-ridden, but they abuse their privileges. Scribes could not be paid for their religious duties and so often sponged on the hospitality of people with limited means. Justice is set aside and replaced by religious display. As far as Jesus is concerned, this selfish behaviour cast them under God's judging eye.

In the Gk. text, v38-40 makes up one sentence, a sentence which serves to describe "the teachers of the law / the scribes."

εν + dat. "**as [he taught]**" - [AND] IN [THE TEACHING OF HIM HE WAS SAYING]. The preposition here is temporal, introducing a temporal clause, "while he was teaching", TH, or taken as read, "and in his teaching he was saying", Evans.

απο + gen. "**for [the teachers of the law]**" - [BEWARE] FROM = OF [THE SCRIBES]. Causal. This preposition is often used with a verb of fearing; "beware of the scribes." "Be on your guard", Barclay.

των θελοντων [θελω] pres. part. "**they like**" - THE ONES DESIRING, WANTING. The articular participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the noun "scribes", "the scribes who desire". The warning is specific of those particular scribes who are hypocritical, rather than all scribes in general: "watch out for those teachers of the law who like to ..."

περιπατειν [περιπατεω] pres. inf. "**to walk around**" - TO WALK ABOUT. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what the scribes desire, namely, to walk around in long robes.

εν στολαις [η] "**in flowing robes**" - [IN] LONG ROBES. Dressing up "in" something is a common expression, although not common in Mark. The sense is probably "festive robes", France. Variant, "in porticos / cloisters", obviously not original.

ασπασμους [ος] "**greeted**" - [AND *to receive*] GREETINGS [IN THE MARKET PLACE]. Introducing a second object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what the scribes desire / want, namely, "*to receive* greetings in the market place"; the infinitive is assumed. Greetings in the sense of "deferential salutations", Moule.

v39

πρωτοκαθεδριας [α] "**the most important seat**" - [AND *to be given the*] CHIEF SEATS [IN THE SYNAGOGUES]. Introducing the third object clause / dependent statement of perception following the participle "desiring"; again with the infinitive assumed. And also (**και**) "desiring/wanting" *to be given* the best seat in the house. In a synagogue this is the box in front of the ark within which is stored the scrolls of scripture.

πρωτοκλισιας [α] "**the places of honour**" - [AND *to be given the*] PLACES OF HONOUR. Introducing the fourth object clause / dependent statement of perception; again, with the infinitive assumed. Also "desiring/wanting" *to be given* the seat next to the host. "The best seats at banquets", CEV.

τοις δειπνοις [ον] dat. "**banquets**" - [IN] THE FORMAL DINNER, RECEPTION. Usually an evening meal. "Dinner parties", Phillips.

v40

οι κατεσθιοντες [κατεσθιω] pres. part. nom. "**they devour**" - THE ONES DEVOURING, EXPLOITING. This articular participle serves as an independent / hanging nominative. It is sometimes translated adjectivally, limiting / modifying "the teachers of the law / the scribes", v38; "beware the scribes who devour the houses of widows" The trouble is, its case should agree with "scribes" which is genitive, "beware of the scribes", and not nominative as here. Some suggest a solecism - a grammatical mistake. Gundry disagrees, suggesting it is Markan style. A new sentence is intended with the nominative, "the ones devouring", followed by a resumptive, "such men"; "Those who eat up the property of widows,, (these ones) will receive a sentence all the more severe", REB.

τας οικιας [α] "**houses**" - THE HOUSES. Accusative direct object of the verb "to devour." The sense is of a religious person abusing the generosity of those who have little to spare. So, "house" may be better expressed as "property / belongings / wealth." "Grow fat on widow's property", Phillips.

των χηρων [α] gen. "**of widow's**" - OF THE WIDOWS. The genitive is adjectival, possessive; "the houses that belong to widows."

προφασει [ις εως] dat. "**for a show**" - [AND] FOR SHOW, PRETENCE, PRETEXT. The dative is adverbial, modal, expressing manner, as NIV.

προσευχομενοι [προσευχομαι] pres. part. nom. "**make [lengthy] prayers**" - PRAYING [LONG]. This participle presents the same difficulties as "devouring" above; probably "beware the scribes who make lengthy prayers for a show."

ουτοι "such men" - THESE ONES. A resumptive, see above.

περισσοτερον adj. "**most severely**" - [WILL RECEIVE] GREATER [JUDGMENT]. Possibly elative, as NIV, although a comparative sense is also possible, such that those scribes who do such things will receive a more severe sentence. Such descriptive language reinforces the reality of eschatological judgment, although it is unlikely that Jesus is making the point that punishments on the day of judgment are variable. "Punished more harshly", Gundry.

v41

ii] Mark now contrasts the devotion of a widow with that of the scribes, and by so doing, further exposes the corruption of Israel's religious leaders, v41-44. In her devotion to God, the widow gives all that she has. She has two coins, so she could have kept one back, but she gives everything (unlike those who "devour widows' houses"). The coins were the smallest minted in Palestine, a copper

"lepton". For his Gentile readers, Mark notes that a "lepton" is a fraction (about one eighth) of the smallest Roman copper coin, a "quadrans" ("a penny"/"cent").

While Jesus is seated on a bench, he sees the widow place her coins in one of the thirteen trumpet-shaped money boxes found against the wall in the Court of the Women. Jesus uses the widow's gift to teach his disciples about the nature of service to God. A sizeable gift, with its capacity to do great things for God, is not as valuable in God's sight as the motivation behind the gift. The widow's expression of total commitment to God is far more valuable than a generous gift which does little to the affluence of the giver, even though the gift may achieve wonderful ends. "Mark's point here is that the *robbed* widows, in contrast to the *robber* scribes, are those who truly serve God", Boring.

καθισας [καθιζω] aor. part. "**Jesus sat down**" - [AND] HAVING SAT DOWN. The participle is adverbial, best taken as temporal; "Then he sat down in front of the collection box", Williams.

κατεναντι + gen. "**opposite**" - OPPOSITE, BEFORE [THE TREASURY]. This adverb is used here as a spatial preposition.

πως "[watched]" - [HE WAS OBSERVING] HOW [THE CROWD]. This interrogative adverb of manner serves here to introduce an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Jesus observed; "he was observing how / that the people" "He was watching how the crowds of people were putting their money into the treasury", Barclay.

χαλκον [ος] "**money**" - [THROWS] COPPER = COINS = MONEY. Often meaning "copper coinage", but here probably just "money", as NIV.

το γαζοφυλακιου [ον] "**the temple treasury**" - [INTO] THE TREASURY. Usually identified as the thirteen trumpet-shaped offering bowls in the Court of Women, although Taylor suggests it is the treasury itself where the gift must be publicly declared and so, easily overheard.

εβαλλον [βαλλω] imperf. "**threw**" - [AND MANY RICH PEOPLE] WERE THROWING [MUCH]. The imperfect is used here to supply background information - a supplementary action to the action of the crowd who were βαλλει (present tense), "throwing", their money into the offering box.

v42

ελθουσα [ερχομαι] aor. part. "[**a poor widow**] **came**" - [AND ONE POOR WOMAN] HAVING COME. Attendant circumstance participle, or adverbial, probably temporal, "but then a poor widow came and"

λεπτα [ον] "**very small copper coins**" - [THREW TWO] LEPTONS. The smallest Jewish coin worth a fraction of a cent.

κοδραντης "**a fraction of a penny**" - [WHICH IS] A KODRANTES. Predicate nominative. Mark explains the value of a lepton by comparing it with Roman

coinage, again a coin of minute value. "Put in two small coins worth a few cents", NAB.

v43

προσκαλεσαμενος [προσκαλεομαι] aor. part. "**calling**" - [AND] HAVING CALLED, SUMMONED [THE DISCIPLES OF HIM]. The participle is adverbial, possibly temporal (Decker), or consecutive, expressing result, "with the result that"; "so he called his disciples and said to them", Moffatt.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [HE SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

αμην λεγω υμιν "**I tell you the truth**" - TRULY I SAY TO YOU. Always used to underline the following words.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech / stating, "truly I say to you that this poor widow."

εβαλεν [βαλλω] aor. "**has put**" - [THIS POOR WIDOW] THREW = PUT. Variant perfect tense is accepted by many translations, so NIV, NRSV...

πλειον adv. "**more**" - MUCH, MANY / MORE. Comparative adverb; "to a greater extent."

των βαλλοντων [βαλλω] gen. pres. part. "**than all the others**" - *than* [ALL] THE ONES THROWING [INTO THE TREASURY]. The participle serves as a substantive, while the genitive is ablative, of comparison, as NIV. The sense is possibly that the value of her gift exceeds the total value of all that was thrown in, although probably Jesus is saying she gave a gift of greater value, in devotional terms, than even the most generous gift given that day. "This poor widow has put more in than any of the others who have contributed to the treasury."

v44

γαρ "-" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the value of the poor woman's gift exceeds the value of the rich. The worth of the gift, since it was given to God, is determined, not by its size, but by the attitude of the giver. The poor woman's gift was of more value because it was a total giving of herself in faith and love to her Lord, a gift that left nothing for herself. "For they all put in a contribution out of their surplus, (she gave) her whole living", Moffatt.

του περισσευοντος [περισσευω] gen. pres. part. "**[their] wealth**" - [EVERYONE FROM] THE ABOUNDING. The participle serves as a substantive, genitive after the preposition, **εκ**, "from". "They have put in what they can easily afford", Phillips.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**their**" - TO / FOR THEM [THREW *into the treasury*]. Either an example of the not-so-common dative of possession, or a dative of interest, advantage (Decker); "they all contributed out of their abundance", ESV.

δε **"but"** - BUT/AND [THIS *woman*]. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point.

εκ + gen. **"out of"** - FROM. Expressing source / origin; "out of her want", Taylor.

της ὑστερησεως [ις εως] gen. **"poverty"** - THE WANT, NEED, DEFICIENCY, LACK, POVERTY [OF HER]. "She is very poor", CEV.

παντα adj. **"everything"** - [AS MUCH AS SHE HAD, SHE PUT *into the treasury*] EVERYTHING. The "everything" is specified by the final appositional phrase, "her whole living." She gave what she had to live on, excluding her home and possessions.

τον βιον [ος] **"[all she] had to live on"** - [ALL] THE LIVING [OF HER]. This phrase "all the living of her", stands in apposition to παντα, "everything"; "Her whole livelihood", NAB.

13:1-13

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

3. Prophecies concerning the kingdom of Israel, 13:1-37

i] The last days

Synopsis

Having exposed Israel's hypocrisy, Jesus abandons the temple in fulfilment of Ezekiel 10:18-19, 11:22-23, and moves to the Mount of Olives where he answers the disciples' question concerning the preliminary signs that will usher in the end of the old order of things.

Teaching

The days before "the end" demand endurance.

Issues

i] Context: See Mark 11:1-11. Although often treated as a separate entity, *The Little Apocalypse* serves as the conclusion of Jesus' Temple ministry recorded in chapters 11 and 12. The passage presents a prophetic word from Jesus which answers a question from his disciples. Jesus had commented that the temple would one day be destroyed, v1-2. The disciples naturally want to know how they will recognise this coming day when "these things" (ie., the events leading up to, and associated with, the destruction of the temple/Jerusalem) will be accomplished, v3-4. So, Jesus goes on to detail the preliminary events, "the birth-pangs", v5-13. These events are not signs of the end, but are rather the way things are prior to the end.

In v14-23 Jesus goes on to explain the **ταυτα**, "these things", and the **σημειον**, "sign", that herald the end. He focuses on the **βδελυγμα της ερημωσης**, "the desolating sacrilege", v14 - the Roman military action against the Jewish rebellion which leads up to the destruction of the temple / Jerusalem in 70AD.

Using apocalyptic language, Jesus goes on to speak of the destruction of the temple, his enthronement, and the gathering of the lost, v24-27. Finally, He gives a summary answer to the disciples' question - the "when?" (within "this generation"), and the "how?" (the easily recognised "these things"), v28-31.

The *Little Apocalypse* ends with an illustrative parable on the subject of watchfulness, v32-37.

ii] Structure: Jesus' prophetic discourse - The Last Days:

Jesus' prophetic prediction, v1-2;

An outline of preliminary eschatological troubles, v3-13;

The disciples' question, v3-4;
The normal order of things, v5-8;
The inevitable persecution of God's people, v9-13.

iii] Interpretation:

This passage calls on disciples to endure as the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, draws near. In the interim, disciples must endure.

The disciples have commented on the magnificence of the temple, and Jesus tells them that its days are numbered. Naturally, the disciples want to know "what" events will herald the coming day "when" the temple is destroyed. Before getting into the details, Jesus stresses the reality of the present, for it is the present they need to deal with, not the future.

In the present age, disciples need to stand firm against false messiahs, false prophets confusing the Christian community, diverting believers from their prime objective of proclaiming the gospel to all nations. Believers will also need to stand firm in the face of wars, and rumours of wars, and persecution, all part-and-parcel of the days before the end.

Biblical Prophecy: It is of course a misnomer to describe Mark 13 as an example of apocalyptic literature; the angels, symbols etc. are missing, although its apocalyptic flavour conveys the immediacy of *the desolating sacrilege*. None-the-less, Jesus is more concerned with his disciple's faithfulness in the time before the "day of the Lord" than in the day itself. His focus is on the delay, the "not yet." None-the-less, Jesus' words certainly do have something to say about the future, but what future?

Commentator's like N.T. Wright argue that the whole of the chapter refers to the destruction of Jerusalem. Many other commentators follow the long tradition of interpreting the passage as a symbolic revelation concerning the end of the world at the return of Christ, although today, following the lead of Beasley-Murray and others, there is a tendency to divide the passage into prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, v1-31, and prophecies concerning the end of the age, v32-37.

We are on firmer footing if we view Biblical prophecy as layered. Consider the following illustrations:

[Preliminary Events

] The Kingdom of God Established]

CREATION KINGDOM



Adam and Eve
The garden of Eden

The Flood

POST-FLOOD KINGDOM



Flood..Nosh

Rainbow

Tower of Babel

ABRAHAMIC KINGDOM



Abraham
leaves Ur

Canaan
entered

Joseph

Slavery
in Egypt

HISTORIC KINGDOM



1500BC
Moses
Exodus

Joshua

David

The Prophets

1000BC
590BC
Jerusalem
destroyed

RESTORED KINGDOM



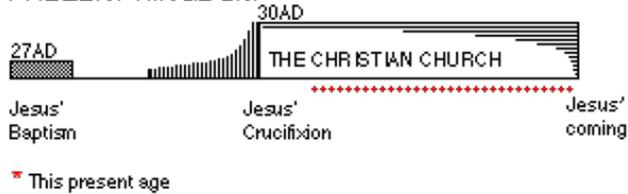
536BC
Release
from
Babylon

Temple
constructed
by Ezra

445BC
Jerusalem's
wall rebuilt
by Nehemiah

70AD
Jerusalem
destroyed
Jesus:
Birth & death

PRESENT KINGDOM



HEAVENLY KINGDOM



A prophet always speaks to his own generation concerning the realisation of God's reign. In like manner to the prophets of the Historic Kingdom who spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem in 590BC, so Jesus, a prophet of the Restored Kingdom, speaks to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. When Jesus speaks about "these things" that are "about to be fulfilled", v4, (with its preparatory sign, the "abomination that causes desolation" - the defilement of the temple?, v14), he is speaking about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Yet, at the same time, Jesus' words about the day of the Lord in 70AD serve as a paradigm of another day, a coming day when the old order of things will pass away with weeping and gnashing of teeth.....



As represented in the illustration above, Biblical prophets will usually direct their words to a particular immediate situation, yet their words will often push beyond this situation. When interpreting a prophetic word, commentators will argue over whether the words concern the immediate present, or are still to be fulfilled in the future. In truth, Biblical prophecy brings with it a depth of perspective. The prophet will address the immediate situation, but the immediate situation often reflects a future reality. The prophecies of Jesus are classic

examples of this feature. Here in Mark, Jesus is speaking specifically about the destruction of Jerusalem, yet his words also push well beyond 70AD to the last days - the present day onward to the Great Tribulation and Armageddon.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.24:1-14, Lk.21:5-10. As usual, there are numerous small differences, but in particular, Mark applies Jesus' words to the destruction of the temple, but Matthew extends them to "the end of the age", v3. Luke follows Mark.

v] Homiletics: *Hanging in there*

We live in the interim between the ascension and Christ's return, and in this interim we experience the same circumstances that Jesus promised his disciples all those years ago. We will experience false prophets, wars and rumours of wars, natural calamities and somewhere in the world, believers will experience persecution.

As Jesus said to his disciples, these circumstances, often horrific for those caught up in them, are but "the beginning of the birth pangs"; they are a taste of that terrible day in the future and so, in a sense, they prompt a faithful eye toward glory. Yet, terrible as the circumstances may be, they are not a sign that the day of Jesus' return is at hand.

As for living in the interim, Jesus gave his disciples four pieces of advice:

First, a disciple must be discerning of their leaders, of their teachers and prophets.

Second, rather than get distracted by the circumstances of life, a disciple needs to focus on the business of evangelism. Communicating the gospel is our top priority.

Jesus' third piece of advice concerns persecution. It was true of the early disciples, and is true today, that followers of Christ, somewhere in the world, face suffering and will need the support of their brothers and sisters.

Finally, during this long interim, Jesus calls on us to endure. The difficulties of life, and the hostilities we may face because of our faith, can, at times, overwhelm us, but through faith, they can be endured.

Text - 13:1

The Last Days, v1-13. Jesus' prophetic prediction, v1-2. Jesus predicts the destruction of the temple, v1-2. Jesus' leaves the temple for the last time, but a disciple's comment about the magnificence of the building, prompts a prophetic word to the crowd. The day is coming when the temple will be completely destroyed.

εκπορευομενου [εκπορευομαι] gen. or. part. "**as [he] was leaving [the temple]**" - [AND HE] GOING OUT. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "he" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

εκ + gen. "-" - FROM [THE TEMPLE]. Source / origin, or separation; "came out of / away from the temple."

των μαθητων [ης ου] gen. "**[one] of [his] disciples**" - [ONE] OF THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM SAYS TO HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

ιδε "**look**" - PAY ATTENTION, BEHOLD. In NT Greek, normally just an interjection standing by itself, but here followed by a clause indicating what to take note of.

ποταποι pro. "**what magnificent**" - OF WHAT KIND, WHAT SORT OF. Interrogative pronoun; here obviously in the sense of an acclamation, "how magnificent." "He who has not seen the temple in its full splendour has never seen a beautiful building", Josephus.

λιθοι [ος] "**stones**" - STONES [AND WHAT SORT OF BUILDINGS]. Josephus mentions the massive size of the stones used in the construction of the temple.

v2

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [AND JESUS SAID] TO HIM [DO YOU SEE THESE GREAT BUILDINGS]. Dative of indirect object. Singular for the singular "one of the disciples" who asked the question. Jesus' words may either be a statement or a question. If a statement, the sense may either be that the temple's greatness will soon be brought down, or that the disciples should not be overawed by its greatness since it will soon be brought down.

ου μη + subj. "**not one**" - NO NO = BY NO MEANS [WILL BE LEFT HERE]. As for **ου μη καταλυθη**, "will not be thrown down", a subjunctive of emphatic negative emphasising the total destruction of the temple. Jesus clearly predicts the destruction of the temple, most likely because it has been a stumbling block for Israel and a symbol of its religious life, which life stands condemned. In any case, one greater than the temple is here, a new age has dawned and the temple will be replaced in the divine economy. Did the crowd turn against Jesus because of this prediction, or because he would not take up the roll of liberator-king? The prediction is used against Jesus at his trial, although he didn't actually say he would personally destroy the temple.

επι + acc. "**[stone will be left] on [another]**" - [STONE] UPON [STONE WHICH WILL NOT NOT = BY NO MEANS BE DESTROYED]. Spatial; cf., Luke 19:44 where the reference is to Jerusalem. Interestingly, other than the foundation platform upon which the temple stood, there are no stones left.

v3

The days before the end the old age and the beginning of the new, v3-13; i] The disciples' question, v3-4. Alone with his disciples on the Mount of Olives, Jesus is asked what sign will warn of the coming day when the temple is about to be destroyed.

καθημενου [καθημαι] gen. pres. part. "**as [Jesus] was sitting**" - [AND HE] SITTING. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "he" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, "while", "as". Grammatically inappropriate here (as in v1), because its subject is part of the main clause. None-the-less, Mark's construction ties Jesus' words, from v5 onward, to his prediction in v2. Jesus is explaining to his disciples his startling, but mysterious words, declared earlier to the crowd, v2.

των ελαιων [α] gen. "**of olives**" - [INTO = IN/ON THE HILL] OF OLIVES. The genitive is adjectival, attributive / idiomatic, limiting "mountain / hill"; "the hill *known as* the olives", etc... Possibly emphasising Jesus' view of the temple and therefore identifying the focus of his words, or more likely fulfilling Ezekiel 11:23, God's abandonment of the temple.

κατεναντι + gen. "**opposite**" - OPPOSITE, BEFORE [THE TEMPLE]. The adverb serves as a spatial preposition.

επηρωτα [επερωτω] imperf. sing. "**asked**" - [PETER AND JAMES AND JOHN AND ANDREW] WAS = WERE QUESTIONING [HIM]. The imperfect tense may be inceptive, "began to ask", or even indicate ongoing questioning, although where there is speech content the imperfect properly reflects the action associated with a series of words. The imperfect is also used for background information, as here. The singular indicates that the questioners are being taken collectively, or that possibly Peter is doing the asking.

κατ ιδιαν "privately" - ACCORDING TO ONE'S OWN = IN PRIVATE, PRIVATELY. The prepositional phrase is adverbial, idiomatic.

v4

ημιν dat. pro. "-" - [SAY] TO US. Dative of indirect object.

ποτε τί "when what" - WHEN [WILL THESE THINGS BE AND] WHAT [*will be* THE SIGN WHEN ALL THESE THINGS ARE ABOUT TO BE COMPLETE]? The two interrogatives + the fut. ind. of the verb to-be, **εσται**, defy convention. The two conjoined questions direct the following discourse, in that Jesus sets out to answer them. The first part of the question is probably not seeking an actual date for the destruction of the temple, since in Aramaic idiom, the next (parallel) phrase in this construction serves to exegete the first, so the two questions are probably best treated as one, "what will be the end of the old order of things, i.e.,

what signs will herald its accomplishment?" The question concerns the "what", ie., the preliminary signals that will serve to warn disciples "when" Jerusalem is about to be destroyed, cf., Dan.12:6,7.

ταυτα "these things" - The Greek word for "these things" is repeated in the second half of the verse, but it is often argued that it does not refer to the same event, the first being the destruction of the temple and the second, the end of the world. Matthew's account drives this view, but here Mark's focus is on one set of events, namely, the destruction of the temple /Jerusalem. None-the-less, as noted above, the destruction of Jerusalem is but the outer shell of a layered prophecy.

ὅταν + subj. "that [they are]" - WHEN [THESE THINGS]. Forming an indefinite temporal clause, but note above.

συντελεσθαι [συντελεω] pas. inf. "to be fulfilled" - [ARE ABOUT] TO BRING TO COMPLETION. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "are about". Rather than describing the end of all things, the word serves to identify the completing, accomplishing, of a process. "What will be the signs that precede the accomplishing of the temple's destruction?"

v5

ii] Jesus explains that the end of the age is not yet upon us, v5-8. Jesus now sets out to describe the circumstances of life prior to the fulfilment of "these things." The first is the emergence of messianic leaders who claim to act with the authority of Christ. They will appear in the interim leading up to the destruction of the temple. Disciples must be discerning and so not be deceived by them. Their presence is not a sign of the end. The second non-sign is wars, famine and natural calamities. These are but a foretaste of the coming terrible day, but are not a sign of its nearness. When they occur, a disciple should not jump to hasty conclusions.

λεγειν [λεγω] pres. inf. "said" - [BUT/AND JESUS BEGAN] TO SAY. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "began". A phrase that signals an important teaching.

αυτοις dat. pro. "to them" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

βλεπετε [βλεπω] imp. "watch out" - LOOK CAREFULLY, BEWARE. Without a direct object the word means "take note, be discerning, be alert." In the context, the word may lean toward "be prepared."

πλανηση [πλαναω] aor. subj. "deceive" - [NOT = LEST SOMEONE] DECEIVE [YOU] (cause someone to hold a wrong view and thus be mistaken, to mislead, to deceive, to cause to be mistaken*). Although there is no **ινα**, the subjunctive by itself may form a negated purpose clause, "beware lest someone leads you astray", but it can also form a dependent statement of perception expressing what the disciples should be careful about, namely, "that no one misleads you." Some commentators argue that the presence of deceivers is a sign that "these things"

"are all about to be fulfilled", Cranfield. Other commentators (eg. France) see v5-8 as a warning against premature expectation, and therefore, not a sign, as such. It seems likely that the presence of deceivers, and dramatic events (v7-8), serve only to evidence that "these things" are still coming. None-the-less, it is possible that these preliminary events are accentuated as the day draws near.

v6

ἐπι + dat. "**in [my name]**" - [MANY WILL COME] IN [THE NAME OF ME]. Spatial, "under" - acting under the authority of Jesus, in the sense of claiming to represent him. Possibly, "abrogating to themselves the title of Messiah which by right belongs to me", Cranfield.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "**claiming**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "will come", "will come and say/claim."

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech / of stating, "will come and claim that"

εγω ειμι "**I am he**" - I AM [AND THEY WILL DECEIVE MANY]. It is unlikely that these deceivers claim divinity by using the great "I AM." It is more likely they are claiming a special association with Jesus the messiah; "I am *the messiah*." Josephus indicates that there were many self-proclaimed prophets (he doesn't use the word messiah) up to the rebellion in 66AD.

v7

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument.

ὅταν + subj. "**when**" - WHEN [YOU HEAR]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, "whenever", although usually translated as definite, "when"; "Don't get into a panic when you hear of wars and reports of wars", Barclay.

πολεμων [ος] gen. "**of wars**" - [WARS AND RUMOURS] OF VIOLENCE, WARS. "Hear" followed by the genitive, may indicate hearing with understanding as against the hearing followed by the accusative **πολεμους**, "[hear of] wars", indicating a hearing without understanding. Probably over subtle.

μη θροεισθε [θροεω] pas. imp. "**do not be alarmed**" - DO NOT BE TROUBLED. Cf., 2Thes.2:2. In the passive voice this verb takes the sense "frightened, disturbed, shaken in your mind." Possibly here, "Don't jump to hasty conclusions."

γενεσθαι [γίνομαι] aor. inf. "**[such things must] happen**" - [IT IS NECESSARY *these things*] TO HAPPEN, OCCUR. The infinitive serves as the subject of the verb "It is necessary" = "to happen is necessary."

ουπω adv. "**still to come**" - [BUT THE END *is*] NOT YET. Predicate adverb with the verb to-be assumed. Violence, or sensational rumours, are not a sign of the

fulfilment of "these things" and so the disciple should not jump to hasty conclusions.

v8

γάρ "-" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why "the end is still to come", because National strife is but the birth pangs of the new age to come.

εγερθησεται [εγειρω] fut. "will rise" - [NATION] WILL RISE UP. The future tense is not indicating a future sign, but rather that these conflicts will go on happening up till "these things" are fulfilled.

επ [επι] + acc. "against" - AGAINST [NATION, AND KINGDOM AGAINST KINGDOM]. Here expressing opposition.

κατα + acc. "in [various places]" - [THERE WILL BE EARTHQUAKES] ACCORDING TO [PLACE and THERE WILL BE FAMINES]. Distributive, "from place to place", or spatial, as NIV.

ωδινων [ιν ινος] gen. "of birth pains" - [THESE are THE BEGINNING] OF BIRTH-PANGS" - The genitive is adjectival, partitive. The birthing imagery illustrates the sufferings of the interim. The wars etc. are but a taste of the future "abomination", not a sign of its nearness, none-the-less, such troubles should prompt a faithful eye toward glory. "The birth-pangs of the Messiah", a rabbinic expression, is regarded by some commentators as an obvious source for Jesus' words, although some modern commentators date the expression later than the New Testament era.

v9

iii] Jesus warns of the coming days of persecution, v9-13. The third non-sign is persecution. At a personal level, the disciples can expect that their fellow Jews will persecute them during the interim before the end. As Jesus was "given over" to suffering, so will they. Not only will the disciples suffer at the hands of their own fellow Jews, they will find themselves defending their faith before secular magistrates. In the face of the troubled days before "the end", disciples will need to sharpen their witness; they must proclaim the gospel from king to surf, throughout all nations. To this end, they will need to rely on the Holy Spirit to give them the words to say when they are forced to give account of their faith. Finally, the disciples must firmly face the days of trouble. Jesus points out that those who follow him will suffer as he suffered. Yet, a disciple who endures through the times of trouble will inevitably be vindicated.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument.

υμεις pro. "you" - YOU [SEE = WATCH OUT FOR YOURSELVES]. Emphatic by use, and reinforced by the reflective pronoun εαυτους, "yourselves", which

functions as the direct object of the imperative verb **βλεπετε**, "watch out"; "but you - watch yourselves." The disciples are no longer watching strife, or hearing rumours of it, they are in it.

παραδωσουσιν [παραδιωμι] fut. "**will be handed over**" - THEY WILL GIVE OVER [YOU]. Indefinite plural. Both John the Baptist and Jesus were "given over" to death. Those ("they") who do the handing over are unspecified.

εις "to" - INTO. Expressing the direction of the action and arrival at. The main verb "you will be handed over" is followed by three prepositional clauses; "they will hand you over to (**εις**) local councils, to (**εις**) synagogues ... and before (**επι**) governors and kings ..." The second prepositional construction is awkward, but the sense is "handed over = taken into (**εις**) synagogues and beaten (**δαρῆσεσθε**)." The third prepositional construction takes a similar line; "handed over = place before (**επι**)"

συνεδρια [ον] "**the local councils**" - SANHEDRIN [AND INTO SYNAGOGUES YOU WILL BE FLOGGED]. Possibly the local Jewish courts or tribunals, as NIV, although the word is used of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. The sense is possibly "people will give you over and in tribunals and synagogues you will be flogged."

επι + gen. "before" - [YOU WILL STAND] BEFORE [GOVERNORS AND KINGS]" - Spatial; "in the presence of, before." As above, the sense of this phrase is governed by the main verb "given over." The disciples will be "given over" and stand before secular authorities and suffer the consequences of being accused before a hostile power. Some commentators argue that it is the Jewish authorities who are the persecutors. Other commentators argue that instead of referring to persecution by secular authorities, this phrase is speaking of the disciples' witness to them, in the sense of preaching the gospel. Although a worthy suggestion, the immediate context of persecution seems to mitigate against this point of view.

εις + acc. "as [witness]" - [FOR THE SAKE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF, BECAUSE OF ME] INTO = FOR [A TESTIMONY, WITNESS]. Here expressing purpose / goal; "this will be an opportunity for you to show them what you believe", Barclay.

αυτοις dat. "to them" - FOR THEM. Dative of interest, advantage, or possibly reference / respect. It is interesting trying to decide whether it is advantage, or disadvantage. If they believe it is to their advantage, good news indeed; if they reject the gospel, it is to their disadvantage, bad news indeed.

v10

το ευαγγελιον "gospel" - [AND INTO = UNTO ALL THE NATIONS FIRST *of all*] THE IMPORTANT NEWS = GOSPEL [TO BE PREACHED IS NECESSARY]. Accusative subject of the infinitive "to be preached", the infinitive being the subject of the impersonal verb "is necessary." Mark defines this message as "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand." Gundry limits this statement of the

gospel to a declaration of the inauguration of God's long promised reign. He argues that to understand the gospel in its entirety it is necessary to add the atoning death of Christ, the resurrection, coming glory... Yet, it is far better to understand the phrase "the kingdom of God is at hand", as a statement that sums up the grace of God that is now ours through the establishment of his eternal righteous reign in and through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. "But before the end comes, the good news must be preached to all nations", CEV.

πρωτον adv. "[**must**] **first**" - Used here with a non-temporal / sequential sense; "first *of all*." The temple will not be destroyed until the gospel has moved from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Mark would undoubtedly agree with Paul the apostle that the gospel had been preached to all nations, even in Rome. The modern idea of having to preach to every language group in the world before the return of Christ, is not in Mark's / Jesus' mind, and certainly cannot be argued from this verse. The verse is treated as a parenthesis by Moffatt with "first" taken in a temporal sense; "(Ere the end, the gospel must be preached to all the nations.)

παντα τα εθνη "**all nations**" - The phrase declares the universal nature of the gospel. It is interesting how the Old Testament image of Israel as a light to the Gentiles, has the Gentiles attracted to the light, just as the Queen of Sheba was attracted to Solomon's kingdom. The reticence of the apostles to evangelise Gentiles may well reflect the orthodox view that the Gentiles will come to Israel, of their own accord, particularly in the last days. Yet, Jesus has a more proactive approach, although no less Biblical.

v11

ὅταν + subj. "**whenever [you are arrested]**" - WHENEVER [THEY MAY BRING, LEAD YOU]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause.

παραδιδοντες [**παραδιδωμι**] pres. part. "**brought to trial**" - HANDING *you* OVER *to the Jewish authorities*. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "they may bring/lead (arrest)", as NIV; "arrest and hand over [to trial]". The word ties this verse to v9, indicating that the handing over is to the Jewish authorities. The Jewish authorities may hand the disciples onto Gentile magistrates, although this is not stated.

τι "**what [to say]**" - [DO NOT BE WORRIED BEFOREHAND] WHAT. The "what" is clearly content, although some argue from the parallels in Matthew and Luke that the addition of "how" indicates speaking in tongues. In the NT, speaking in the Spirit is more often an understandable message uttered in a strange way, rather than a word that "no one understands."

λαλησητε [**λαλεω**] aor. subj. "**to say**" - YOU MIGHT SAY. Deliberative subjunctive.

αλλ [αλλα] "-" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "do not worry, but say whatever is given you", Barclay.

ὅ εαν + subj. "[**just say**] **whatever**" - WHATEVER. Introducing an indefinite relative clause which stands as the antecedent of **τουτο**, "this", "this say", i.e., "whatever is given to at the time." "Use whatever words are given you when the time comes", Cassirer.

ὁμιν dat. pro. "[**is given**] **you**" - [IS GIVEN] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object / interest.

εν + dat. "**in [that hour]**" - IN [THAT HOUR, THIS YOU SHALL SAY]. Temporal use of the preposition. The "hour" is not an end-time reference. "At the time a disciple is handed over to the Jewish authorities."

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why a disciple should retain a passive approach in their defence before the tribunal. The reason for passivity is that the Holy Spirit will give them the words to say. France writes "The promise that the words will be supplied, is for hard-pressed (and often illiterate) disciples on trial, not for lazy preachers!" "Because it will not be you yourselves, but the Holy Spirit who will be doing the speaking", Cassirer.

οί λαλουντες [λαλεω] pres. part. "**speaking**" - [YOU YOURSELVES ARE NOT] THE ONES SPEAKING. The participle serves as a substantive; "for he who speaks is not you", Moffatt.

το πνευμα το ἄγιον "**the Holy Spirit**" - [BUT] THE HOLY SPIRIT. After the prologue, the Holy Spirit is mentioned only three times, and this is the only time we are told that he functions on behalf of disciples. The Spirit's particular function of supporting a disciple's witness is developed in Luke, John and Acts, although this role is also ascribed to Jesus.

v12

παραδωσει [παραδιδομι] fut. "**will betray**" - [AND BROTHER] WILL HAND OVER [BROTHER]. The sense of "betray" for "deliver over" is supported by some commentators, eg., France, Boring, Evans, ... Possibly prompted by Jesus' own experience. Note allusion to Mic.7:6. We know of Stephen and the two James boys suffering death, but other than Saul's purge of Hellenist believers in Jerusalem, we know of no general Jewish persecution of Christians.

εις + acc. "**to**" - INTO = FOR [DEATH]. Here the preposition expresses purpose, "in order to, for."

επι + acc. "[**children will rebel**] **against**" - [AND FATHER CHILD AND CHILDREN WILL RISE UP] UPON [PARENTS AND PUT TO DEATH THEM]. The preposition here expresses opposition; "against".

v13

εσεσθε μισουμενοι [μισεω] pres. pas. part. "**will hate you**" - [AND] YOU WILL BE BEING HATED. The future tense of the verb to-be with the present participle forms a future periphrastic construction, possibly expressing durative aspect = ongoing hatred. The future tense of the verb to-be is rare in the NT.

ὑπο + gen. "-" - BY [EVERYONE]. Expressing agency.

δια + acc. "**because of**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF. This causal construction serves to establish an association with Jesus, cf. 9:37. The disciples will be persecuted because they follow Jesus.

ονομα μου "**me**" - THE NAME OF ME. Used in the sense of Jesus' person and authority.

ὁ ... ὑπομεινας [ὑομπενω] aor. part. "**he who stands firm**" - [BUT/AND] THE ONE HAVING ENDURED. The participle serves as a substantive; "but the man who sees things through to the end", Barclay.

εις τελος "**to [the end]**" - INTO, TO [END]. Temporal construction. Most likely the end of the persecution, even death, but possibly through to the destruction of Jerusalem. As *telos* does not have an article, the meaning is something like "right through", "forever" and so no specific time is in mind. "There is no expectation that this hostility will be overcome, only that it must be endured", France "He who endures, for as long as it takes, will be vindicated."

σωθησεται [σωζω] fut. pas. "**will be saved**" - [THIS ONE] WILL BE SAVED. Lane suggests "vindicated", and this seems better than physical rescue, eg., "will not be killed". Spiritual salvation may be intended, but this sense can lead to the false notion that eternal salvation depends on faithful endurance in the face of adversity. Salvation is given, not earned. This issue split the early church when the "martyrs", those who suffered for having not offered sacrifice to the emperor, questioned the salvation of those who had.

13:14-23

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

3. Prophecies concerning the kingdom of Israel, 13:1-37

ii] The desolating sacrilege

Synopsis

Mark continues with his *little apocalypse*. In a unified prophetic word, Jesus details the tribulation associated with Rome's military action against the Jewish rebellion, AD.66-70. Given the multi-layered nature of prophecy, Jesus' words also apply to the tribulation of the last days.

Teaching

As the tribulation of the last days presses in upon us, a disciple must be alert, always watching to their faith.

Issues

i] Context: See 13:1-13.

ii] Structure: *The abomination of desolation*:

The sign of the desolating sacrilege, v14a;

A word of exhortation, v14b-17:

Instruction for those facing the desolating sacrilege;

A prophecy, v18-20:

The desolating sacrilege - its severity and shortening;

A prophecy, v21-22:

The state of delusion that will confuse humanity

(leading up to the desolating sacrilege);

A general exhortation, v23

(seen by some commentators as redactional).

iii] Interpretation:

Although Mark's "Prophetic Oracle for Judea in a Time of Emergency", Anderson, is somewhat visionary, even apocalyptic, most commentators read it as describing Rome's military action against Israel's rebellion. "The tribulation of Judea is described in Mark in a fantastic context, but nevertheless in terms which suggest a historical catastrophe ... a situation in which ... armies are threatening Jerusalem", Dodd, so also France, Hunter, Nineham, Gundry, Taylor, Swete, Anderson, Hurtado, Lane. In the face of the advancing Roman armies there is panic and fright as the legions prepare to sack Jerusalem. Pity help those caught up in this horror; better it be summer than winter.

On the other hand, we do need to understand that Biblical prophecy is layered, and that although Jesus is addressing the *now* for his generation, his words also apply to the *not yet*, an even greater tribulation that will precede the parousia. The tribulation facing the Jewish population in 66AD serves as a mysterious paradigm for a greater tribulation in the last day. So, it seems that "neither an exclusively historical, nor an exclusively eschatological interpretation is satisfactory, and that we must allow for a double reference, for a mingling of historical and eschatological", Cranfield, so also Edwards, Evans, Marcus, Boring.

There has been many a "coming" of the Lord, a coming in judgment, a divine act of judgment like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra, or the sack of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. When a prophet speaks to his own generation of such a day, behind the immediate "coming" there lies an even more terrible "coming", the inevitable coming of divine judgment upon humanity. This layering is evident in Jesus' prophecy concerning the desolating sacrilege.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.24:15-28, Lk.21:20-24. Luke, as usual, contextualises his account for Gentile readers, so "the abomination of desolation" becomes "when you see Jerusalem encircled by armies, then you may be sure her destruction / desolation is near." Luke also leaves out the prophecy concerning false messiah's, Mk.13:21-23, Matt.24:23-26. Mark's "be on your guard! I have warned you beforehand" loses its impact in Matthew, although Matthew develops the comparison between the coming of false messiah's and the coming of Jesus, cf., Matt.24:27-28.

Boring argues that this passage is a compilation by Mark from extant sources, oral and/or written - "a composition from discrete sayings. It is possible that the passage was originally shaped from independent sayings of Jesus, but if so, it was most likely long before Mark got to see it.

v] Homiletics: *The Great Tribulation*

Given the increasing threat of terrorism, world-wide financial problems, war, climate change and natural calamities, people feel less confident for the future and wonder if the end is near. Even New Age devotees are uneasy, especially those who follow the Mayan calendar.

A former neighbour of mine was so concerned he started setting up his property to be totally self-sufficient. When society, as we know it, collapses, he is making sure that his family will be able to survive. I pointed out to him that when the Roman legions left England there were no self-sufficient Roman villas functioning after the Saxons had finished with their

rape and pillage policy. If and when the tribulation does come, the whole town will know where they can get free fuel and food, so unless he is willing to take on the role of Mad Max, he could face some difficult moments.

Jesus explained to his disciples that when the days of tribulation come upon them, the days leading up to the day of judgment, they will be able to read the signs of the times and respond accordingly; they will not be left by God to their own devices. The terrible day for the early Christians was the move by Rome against the Jewish rebels that culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. When Jesus spoke of that day he did so in prophetic language because he was not just speaking about the destruction of the temple, but also of another day, his coming in judgment in the last day.

So, what Jesus says to his disciples he says to us. We will be able to read the signs when the day of tribulation comes upon us, and we will be able to respond accordingly. Above all, our Lord will not leave us alone during those terrible days; he will support us through them, powerfully answering our prayers. Meanwhile, in our day-to-day life, perseverance in faith is the path we must follow.

Text - 13:14

The desolating sacrilege, v14a. Jesus now answers the disciples' request for the sign of "these things." What is the identifying event which heralds God's judgment upon the temple / Jerusalem? Jesus tells us that the sign is Daniel's "desolating sacrilege" which predicts a major secular desecration of the temple. Mark's readers would understand that the secular power is obviously Rome, particularly as Jesus later explains that the sacrilege will occur during the lifetime of his own generation, v30. In fact, Luke spells it out for us, Lk.21:20.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the discourse.

ὅταν + subj. "**when**" - WHEN [YOU SEE]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause, "whenever", translated with a definite "when".

της ερημωσης [ις εως] gen. "**[the abomination] that causes desolation**" - [THE ABOMINATION, DETESTABLE] OF DESOLATION, DESTRUCTION (of that which is made waste). The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "abomination"; it is a "wasted" type of "abomination", a "desolated sacrilege". Daniel is speaking of a "sacrilege" where the temple is profaned and thus "detested and rejected by God", such "that the abominable thing causes the temple to be deserted, the pious avoiding the temple on its account", Cranfield.

ἑστηκοτα [ἵστημι] perf. part. "**standing**" - HAVING STOOD. The participle is adjectival, limiting "desolated sacrilege", "the desolating sacrilege which stands

where it has no right to stand." "It" takes the masculine person which would imply that the "abomination", which is neuter, is being personified. This could well be the case, since the "desolated sacrilege" alludes to the emperor and his legions moving against the apple of God's eye in the *now*, and of the anti-Christ in the *not yet*. "Standing / set up" is somewhat misleading since it reflects the language of Dan.11:31 and the fulfilment of prophecy for Daniel in the setting up of an alter / statue of Olympian Zeus in the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes in 168BC. So, "standing" here doesn't actually mean that the desolated sacrilege stands somewhere where it doesn't belong, rather it has come to exist, to be where it doesn't belong, eg. "usurping a place which is not his", REB.

ὅπου "where" - Functioning adverbially, introducing a local clause.

ου δει "it does not belong" - IT IS NOT NECESSARY = IT/HE OUGHT NOT *to be*. Alluding to the holiness of the temple set upon by pagan forces where they have no right to set foot.

ὁ αναγινωσκων [αναγινωσκω] pres. part. "[let] the reader [understand]" - [TAKE NOTE, COMPREHEND] THE ONE READING. The participle serves as a substantive. This parenthetical note by Mark is not overly clear. Is he just saying to the reader "note the importance of this"? Of course, the importance of what? Is it the desolated sacrilege, or he/it that stands where he/it ought not? And why "reader" when the reader would be reading to a congregation? Is Mark being a bit cryptic, saying something like "you know what that means"?

It seems very likely that Mark is prompting the reader/listener to read Daniel's prophetic imagery in terms of Luke 21:20, as above, rather than read its fulfilment in Antiochus Epiphanes, ie., Mark understands the layered nature of a prophet's words. Possibly Mark feared the Roman authorities, but it seems more likely that he is being faithful to the apocalyptic nature of the oral tradition. Jesus would certainly have used apocalyptic language in prophesying the destruction of the temple, but he would have also explained the imagery to his disciples. Note that these words from Mark are often used to date the gospel in relation to the destruction of the temple, but the words can be used to argue a date either before or after 70AD.

v14b

Advice on how to face the tribulation, v14b-23; i] Risk aversion, v14b-17. Jesus goes on to explain to his disciples what they need to do when faced with this terrible event. The answer is, run; don't wait around to pack up the house, don't even go back for something left behind. Pity help pregnant and nursing mothers in that terrible day, in fact, pity help anyone who can't get away quickly. Tradition has it that the believers in Jerusalem read the signs and left for Pella across the Jordan before Jerusalem was set upon by the Roman legions.

From a prophetic perspective, the destruction of Jerusalem serves as a paradigm for the end of the age and so Jesus' advice to his disciples also applies to the Great Tribulation that precedes the Day of Judgment. The best we can say is that, like the Christians in Jerusalem before the city's destruction by Rome's legions, believers will read the signs of the coming Tribulation and take appropriate action. Yet, given that the distress of the Tribulation bleeds into the present, it is very easy to misread the signs, as history well testifies. We are called to **ὑπομενω**, "to endure, persevere", rather than speculate on the nature of the **ωδιν**, "birth-pangs."

τοτε "then" - Temporal; introducing the *what to do* instructions when faced with the sign of the coming day.

οἱ "those who are" - THE ONES [IN JUDEA]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "in Judea" into a nominal construction, subject of the verb "to flee."

εις + acc. "to [the mountains]" - [LET THEM FLEE] INTO, TO [THE MOUNTAINS]. Expressing the direction of the action and arrival at. "To the hill country", TH. When faced with a marauding army it is a wise move to head for the bush.

v15

ὁ "[let no] one" - [BUT/AND] THE ONE [ON THE ROOF]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "upon the roof-top" into a nominal construction subject of the verb "to come down"; "Anyone who happens to be on the house top", Barclay.

μη καταβατω [**καταβαινω**] aor. imp. "let no go down" - DO NOT COME DOWN. An imperative would normally take the present tense. This negated imperative and the following one "nor let him enter" expresses a single action, as NIV, such that there is no time to come down from the upper room of a house, usually a lightly constructed shelter / sleep out, via the outside staircase and enter the house, pack up and head off. Immediate evacuation is required.

ἄραι aor. inf. "to take [anything]" - [NOR LET HIM ENTER] TO TAKE. The infinitive is adverbial, expressing purpose, "in order to take."

εκ + gen. "out" - [ANYTHING] FROM [THE HOUSE OF HIM]. Expressing separation, "away from", or serving instead of a partitive genitive.

v16

ὁ "[let no] one" - [AND] THE ONE. The article as serves as a nominalizer, as for v15.

εις "in" - TO, INTO [THE FIELD]. Here spatial, used instead of **εν**, so "into" = "in".

μη επιστρεψατω [επιστρεφω] aor. imp. "**let no [one] go back**" - DO NOT RETURN [TO, INTO THE THINGS BEHIND]. Again, this verse expresses the idea of emergency evacuation. "The man in the field must not turn back to fetch his coat", Phillips.

ἄραι [αιρω] aor. inf. "**to get**" - TO TAKE [THE GARMENT OF HIM]. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose.

v17

"Pregnant and nursing mothers will have it especially hard", Peterson.

ουαι "**how dreadful**" - [BUT/AND] WOE, ALAS. Exclamation, expressing distress.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THOSE DAY]. Temporal use of the preposition.

ταις εξουσαις [εχω] dat. pres. part. "**for pregnant women**" - TO THE ONES HAVING [*a child* IN THE WOMB, AND THE ONES NURSING]. The participle serves as a substantive, as also "the ones nursing", dative of interest, disadvantage. "Alas for women with child in those days, or those who have infants at the breast", Cassirer.

v18

ii] Faith in God's providential care of the saints during the tribulation, v18-20. Although the tribulation cannot be avoided, either prior to the destruction of the temple, or prior to the return of Christ, believers are not abandoned to blind brute force. We can know the season and avoid the worst of the cataclysm; we can also pray for divine aid in the face of the cataclysm and so avoid the worst of the circumstances. The Lord promises that "for the sake of the elect" he will aid us during that terrible day, even shorten it.

προσευχεσθε [προσερχομαι] pres. imp. "**pray**" - [BUT/AND] PRAY. We are reminded here that "God the creator has not abandoned history, but is in control and will bring it to a worthy conclusion", Boring. In this particular circumstance, we can pray to the one who is in control, knowing that he will act on our behalf, ie., this prayer falls into the category of a prayer which is according to the will of God.

ινα + subj. "**that**" - THAT. Probably serving to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what to pray, as NIV, rather than introducing a purpose / result clause, "pray in order that / so that ..."

γενηται [γινομαι] aor. subj. "**this will not take place**" - IT MAY NOT BE, BECOME, HAPPEN. What is the subject? Probably "the desolating sacrilege", although possibly "flight".

χειμωνος [ων ωνος] gen. "**in winter**" - OF WINTER. Genitive of time. A time not conducive for flight, ie., wet and muddy, "during a storm / bad weather",

Marcus. This statement is often used to argue that the prophecy does not refer to the parousia, but only to the historical events associated with Rome's putting down of the Jewish rebellion. Of course, it can image the situation surrounding both events, either literally, or figuratively. Even the tribulation of the last days occurs within the framework of world history.

v19

Jesus uses the language of the Old Testament prophets to describe the horror of the tribulation, a time of distress that precedes a divine "coming" in judgment, here the destruction of the temple, but of course also alluding to the distress that will precede the parousia, eg. Dan.12:1, Jer.30:7.

γάρ "because" - FOR, BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why believers need to pray for relief during the tribulation, namely, because the tribulation involves terrible distress.

θλιψις [ις εως] "distress" - [IN THOSE DAYS THERE WILL BE] TRIBULATION, TROUBLE, SUFFERING, DISTRESS. Predicate nominative.

τοιαυτη pro. "-" - [OF SUCH KIND HAS NOT BECOME] SUCH AS. Usual order would be **τοιαυτη** **οἷα**, "such a kind of such (ref. the tribulation)", although this second relative pronoun is virtually redundant, cf., TH. "The like of which has never been", Moffatt.

απο + gen. "**from [the beginning]**" - FROM [BEGINNING]. Temporal use of the preposition.

κιτσεως [ις εως] gen. "-" - OF CREATION. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

ἕως + gen. "**until**" - [WHICH GOD CREATED] UNTIL [THE NOW]. The temporal preposition **ἕως** with the genitive articular temporal adverb **του νυν** (the article serves as a nominalizer) give the sense "up to the present time", Decker.

ου μη + subj. "**never [to be equalled again]**" - NOT NOT = NEVER EVER [MAY BE]. Subjunctive of emphatic negation; "and such will never happen again", Barclay. Note how Jesus, in prophetic mode, transcends the historic event, alluding to an even greater fulfilment. So also, for example, when Ezekiel prophesies concerning the new temple; his depiction of a bricks and mortar temple is, in the end, something that cannot be built by human hands.

v20

ει + ind. **ἂν** + aor. "**if**" - if. Introducing a conditional clause 2nd. class, contrary to fact, lit., "if, *as is not the case*, the Lord had not shortened the days, *then* all flesh would not be saved"

κυριος [ος] "**Lord**" - *the* LORD. Nominative subject of the verb "to shorten." Obviously here "God".

μη εκολοβωσεν [κολοβω] "**had not cut short**" - HAD NOT SHORTENED, CUT OFF [THE DAYS]. Reduced the time of the tribulation; "had not shortened that time", NJB.

ουκ ἄν εσωθη [σωζω] aor. pas. "[**no one**] **would survive**" - [ALL FLESH] WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SAVED. "Saved" in the sense of "survive"; "no human being could survive", Barclay.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction.

δια + acc. "**for the sake of**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF. Causal.

τους εκλεκτους adj. "**the elect**" - THE CHOSEN, ELECT. Adjective used as a noun. God's set-apart people, his special people, ie., believers, Christians. Membership of God's set-apart people is offered as a gift of divine grace on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ and is appropriated through the instrument of faith.

οὓς εξελεξατο [εκλεγομαι] aor. "**whom he has chosen**" - WHOM HE CHOSE. God's act of electing an elect people, the "whom he chose", is best viewed as a corporate electing in Christ, the elect Son of God, the membership of which is through faith in Christ. Against this understanding of "the elect" is the widely held Calvinist view that God elects individuals for either salvation or damnation. This issue is still widely contested.

εκολοβωσεν aor. "**he has shortened [them]**" - HE SHORTENED [THE DAYS]. A literal shortening is likely, although the idea may reflect the compression of the tribulation in the perspective of the prophet, particularly if the tribulation is an ongoing experience for the Christian church, so Fanning. Some liberal commentators suggest that Mark is aware that the Jewish revolt was short-lived. "He will make the time shorter", CEV.

v21

iii] The danger of "false Christs and false prophets", v21-23. It is interesting how Jesus has repeated this warning, cf., v5, 6. It is certainly the case that in a time of distress there will emerge those who claim a secret knowledge of the times. This would apply to the immediate circumstances of the Jewish rebellion; Josephus supplies examples of false prophets who were active in the latter stage of the Roman siege of Jerusalem. Jesus is also warning of the ongoing threat of those who, with charismatic powers (signs and wonders), link the return of Christ with the current events of history. Perseverance in faith is the path for a believer, suffering as Christ suffered, with a sure reliance on the day of vindication, a vindication that will be evident to all, not just those who claim prophetic insight, cf., Boring p.370/1.

τοτε "**at that time**" - THEN. Temporal adverb.

εαν + subj. "if [... says]" - IF [SOMEONE SAYS]. Introducing a conditional clause, 3rd. class, where the proposed condition is assumed a possibility, "if, *as may be the case, ... then* [do not believe]."

ὕμιν dat. pro. "to you" - Dative of indirect object.

ὧδε "here [is the Messiah!]" - [BEHOLD] HERE [is THE CHRIST, BEHOLD THERE, DO NOT BELIEVE *them*]. Predicate adverb of place.

v22

γαρ "for" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why believers should not be taken in by those who claim they know the moment of the messiah's coming.

εγερθησονται ἔγειρω fut. pas. "will appear" - [FALSE CHRISTS AND FALSE PROPHETS] WILL RISE. Boring suggests that these two groups are one category representing those "who promise God's final salvation and claim to represent it." A variant actually exists without "false messiahs." "Appear on the scene", BAGD.

σημεια [ον] "signs" - [AND THEY WILL PERFORM] SIGNS [AND WONDERS, PORTENTS]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to perform." Marcus suggests "signs" from "demonic influence."

προς το αποπλαναν [αποπλαναω] pres. inf. "to deceive [the elect]" - TOWARD TO LEAD ASTRAY. The preposition προς with the articular infinitive forms a final clause expressing purpose, "in order to mislead [even] the elect."

ει "if [it were possible]" - IF [POSSIBLE, THE ELECT, CHOSEN]. Introducing a 1st. class conditional clause where the condition is assumed to be true; "if *as is the case, it is possible, then even* the elect." The elliptical nature of this phrase means that it is not clear whether the attempt by the false prophets to mislead even the elect is successful or not. Commentators divide, as do translations, eg. "the message and signs of the false prophets will be believed - they will lead many astray, even the elect", Edwards, so also Marcus, Evans, or "if possible, the elect' at once gives a final emphasis to the danger of deception and an indication that the elect will not succumb", Gundry. Calvin would certainly approve of Gregory the Great's answer, "if they are elect, it is not possible; if it is possible, they are not elect." The answer will rest on our understanding of "the elect", see above. If the elect are the children of faith then where there is genuine faith it is impossible, but where faith has faded, it is possible, so take care!

v23

Perseverance in faith is the path for a believer.

δε "so" - BUT/AND. Here transitional, indicating a step to a concluding point; "so then."

ὁμεις "-" - YOU. The position is emphatic in the Gk. "As for yourselves", Cassirer.

βλεπετε [βλεπω] pres. imp. "**be on your guard**" - BEWARE, WATCH OUT, BE WATCHFUL. "Keep watch!" "The mark of faithfulness is watchfulness", Edwards.

προειρηκα [προειπον] perf. "**I have told ahead of time**" - I HAVE FORETOLD. "I have forewarned you of it all", REB, ie., Jesus has outlined the events leading up to the destruction of the temple, as per the disciples' question "how / what sign" such that "when they ("these things") do happen the disciples will be prepared for what follows and will not be caught unawares", France.

ὁμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - [ALL THINGS] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

13:24-27

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

3. Prophecies concerning the kingdom of Israel, 13:1-37

iii] The coming of the Son of Man

Synopsis

In this third section of Mark's "little apocalypse", Jesus prophesies the destruction of the temple and the enthronement of the Son of Man.

Teaching

The Son of Man comes to the Ancient of Days, for his enthronement, in power and glory, accompanied by his elect / believers.

Issues

i] Context: See 13:1-13.

ii] Structure: *The coming of the Son of Man*:

Cosmic disturbances, v24-25;

Jesus' enthronement at the right hand of the Ancient of Days, v26;

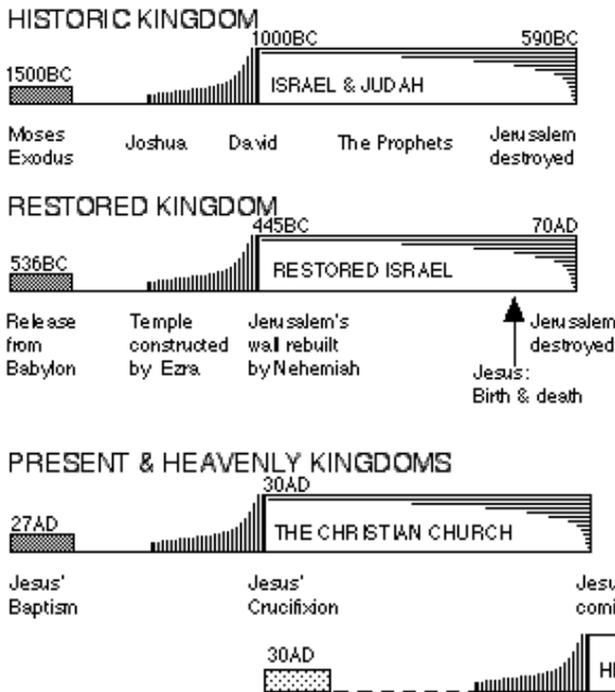
The calling of the lost into God's new and eternal kingdom, v27.

iii] Interpretation:

The great day of the Lord is presented using Old Testament prophetic allusions, first of cosmic upheaval shattering the world of human affairs, and then of Daniel's coming Son of Man who, on coming to the Ancient of Days, inaugurates his cosmic reign with his elect.

Only a few commentators read this passage as depicting the destruction of the temple, eg. N.T., Wright, Dodd, France, also Hatina *The Parousia or the Destruction of the Temple?*. Most view the passage as depicting the parousia, of Christ's return to earth in the last day, so Cranfield ("cosmic signs immediately heralding the Parousia"), Gundry, Evans, Boring, Marcus ("the disintegration of the universe and the return of the Son of Man"), Taylor, Swete, Lane, Hurtado, Anderson,

As already noted in Interpretation, *Biblical Prophecy*, Mark 13:1-13, Biblical prophecy is layered, such that the passage before us addresses the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD70, which, like the destruction of Jerusalem in 590BC, serves as a paradigm for the destruction of all things on the Day of Judgment at the end of the age, the coming day of the Lord, so Edwards. This paradigm is illustrated below in the various manifestations of the kingdom of God.

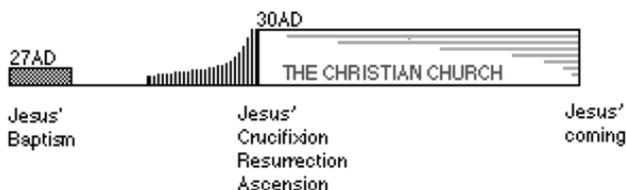
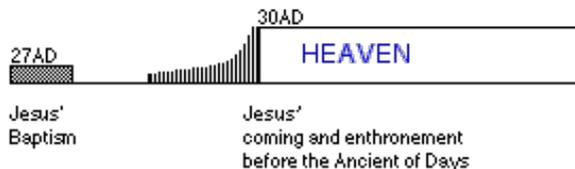


The passage also confronts us with another aspect of Biblical eschatology, namely the *now / not yet* reality of the kingdom of God. Mark's arrangement of Jesus' prophetic sayings is linear, given that this is really the only way we can understand our place in time, yet Jesus' eschatological sayings are often timeless, realised. Jesus confronts us with the reality of a coming kingdom that is both realised as well as inaugurated, as illustrated below.

In terms of the kingdom *now*, "the darkness" has already "come over all the land", 15:33. Satan is defeated on the cross, and so the glorious Son of Man ascends with his elect to the Ancient of Days, and is even now seated upon his throne, with all powers bowing before him. In reality, the great day of the Lord has already taken place, the kingdom is now, such that "God has raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus", Eph.6:2.

Yet, in time terms, the kingdom is *not yet*; it is inaugurated. We still wait for the sun to be darkened and the moon to not give its light, we still wait for that day when we can meet with the Son of Man in the air.

A KINGDOM NOW and NOT YET



iv] Synoptics:

Matt.24:29-31, Lk.21:25-28. Note how Luke replaces the allusion of the angels gathering the elect, found in both Matthew and Mark (Matthew adds "with a trumpet blast"), with "When all this begins to happen, stand upright and hold your heads high, because your liberation is near", Lk.21:28.

Text - 13:24

The coming of the Son of Man, v24-27: i] Jesus now uses apocalyptic language to describe the earth-shattering event of the coming of the Son of Man in judgment, v24-25. As noted above, the actual event is in dispute, but given the disciples' question and the logical sequence of the events described, with the conclusion "this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened", v30, then obviously the destruction of the temple / Jerusalem is the subject.

The verses are not exact quotations from the prophets, but certainly pick up on their language. Verse 24b is usually taken as a derivative of Isaiah 13:10, a

word against Babylon. Wright argues that verse 25 alludes to Isaiah 14:13f, a word against the king of Babylon, although the text is usually identified with Isaiah 34:4, a word against Edom. Either way, both texts allude to a cataclysmic intervention of divine judgment against the unrighteous.

Cosmic dissolution is often associated with the Jesus' coming on the last day, but the language used here by Jesus serves another purpose. The prophets commonly used this type of cosmic language when depicting judgement against the enemies of Israel, but now Jesus turns this very language onto Israel itself, or more specifically onto "God's house in Jerusalem", France.

ἀλλὰ "but" - BUT. Usually read as adversative, but here mildly contrastive, best left untranslated.

ἐν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THOSE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition. A typical apocalyptic term, eg. Zech.8:23. "At that time", Barclay.

μετά + acc. "**after**" - AFTER [THAT DISTRESS, TRIBULATION]. Temporal use of the preposition. Referring to what immediately follows the events associated with the "desolating sacrilege", ie. the lead up to the destruction of the temple/Jerusalem. It could be argued that it "simply denotes temporal succession", TH, but more likely an "immediate sequel", France. "After the period of suffering", Barclay.

αυτης gen. pro. "**its [light]**" - [THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE THE LIGHT] OF IT. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, but it could be classified verbal, subjective.

v25

εσονται ... πιπτοντες [πιπτω] pres. part. "**will fall**" - [AND THE STARS] WILL BE FALLING. The future of the verb to-be with the present participle forms a periphrastic future, possibly emphasising durative aspect.

ἐκ + gen. "**from**" - OUT OF. Expressing separation; "away from."

του ουρανου [ος] gen. "**the sky**" - THE HEAVEN. "Heaven" is being used of "the sky", rather than God's heavenly residence.

αἱ δυναμεις "**the [heavenly] bodies**" - [AND] THE POWERS. Obviously in parallel with the first clause, such that "stars" and "powers" are both heavenly bodies. So, "the orbs of the heavens will be shaken", Moffatt, rather than "and the hosts which have their dwelling in the heavens will be made to totter", Cassirer.

αἱ "-" - THE ONES [IN THE HEAVENS]. The article here serves as an adjectivizer turning the prepositional construction **ἐν τοις ουρανοις**, "in the heaven", into an attributive modifier, limiting "the powers"; "the powers which are in heaven" = "heavenly powers."

σαλευθησονται [σαλευω] fut. pas. "**will be shaken**" - WILL BE SHAKEN. "The picture is of heaven and earth shaken by God's appearance", Evans, or more

particularly his coming in judgment. "And the heavenly bodies will be driven out of their normal course", TH.

v26

ii] The enthronement of the Son of Man, v27. Jesus continues in apocalyptic mode, alluding to Daniel 7:13-14. This verse is often interpreted as a coming to earth, but the coming of the Son of Man in Daniel is a coming to heaven in the clouds "with his angels" (most likely a reference to resurrected believers). The destruction of the national life of Israel, just described in the terms of a cosmic shaking, is consequent on the coming of the Son of Man. Jesus, as the mysterious Son of Man, comes to the Ancient of Days to receive authority and power to enact judgment, causing all knees to bow before him. The righteous reign of God, once evident in the national life of Israel, is now exercised in the corporate Son of Man. The kingdom has come.

τοτε adv. "**at that time**" - [AND] THEN. Temporal adverb, sequential.

οψονται [**οραω**] fut. "**men will see**" - THEY WILL SEE. Indefinite plural. Who are the "they"? Probably only those with eyes to see.

του ανθρωπου [**ος**] gen. "**[the Son] of Man**" - [THE SON] OF MAN. The genitive is adjectival, relational. Messianic title, of Daniel's Son of Man, cf., 2:10.

ερχομενον [**ερχομαι**] pres. part. "**coming**" - COMING. The accusative participle serves as the complement of the direct object "Son of Man", standing in a double accusative construction. As above, it is important to note that the "coming" is to the Ancient of Days, not to the earth, ie., it is a coming to heaven. The coming is witnessed, as Stephen witnessed it, Act.7:55-56, in the exercise of power, particularly in judgment, and in this case, judgment upon Israel evidenced in the destruction of the temple. A divine coming is not good news, but it is the news (gospel)!

εν "**in**" - IN, ON [CLOUDS]. Local, expressing space. A Daniel allusion. Possibly a symbol of divine glory. Jesus leaves the earth in a cloud and comes to heaven in a cloud.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - WITH [GREAT POWER AND GLORY]. The preposition here is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the Son's coming; as a king would come.

v27

iii] The gathering of the lost, v27. Concluding his apocalyptic prophecy, Jesus draws on the exodus imagery of the gathering of the lost remnant into the kingdom cf., Isaiah 11:11, 27:12, Zech.2:6-11, 10:6-11. Jerusalem is destroyed, the Son of Man is on his throne, and so the call goes out to join with him in his eternal reign. The imagery employed by Jesus again displays the *now / not yet* reality of kingdom eschatology. In the terms of inaugurated eschatology, Jesus'

prophecy is being fulfilled in the world-wide Christian mission which began at Pentecost; Gabriel's horn is sounding. Then again, at another level, in terms of realised eschatology, the horn has already sounded and we are even now gathered with Christ in the heavenlies. We can only but be thankful that in this moment of distorted time, this blink in the divine eye, this state of grace, that in this moment we were given the opportunity to find eternity.

τοτε adv. "-" - THEN. Temporal adverb, sequential; "then he will send out his angels", Barclay.

αποστελει [αποστελλω] "he will send" - HE WILL SEND. Send as authoritative representatives. The subject is obviously "the Son of Man."

τους αγγελους [ος] "his angels" - THE MESSENGERS. Accusative direct object of the verb "he will send." The "angels / messengers" are usually identified with the heavenly host who gather believers into heaven before the end (the rapture). In the last day, at the sounding of Gabriel's horn, this may well be the case, but in the present moment it is being fulfilled in the apostolic gospel mission to the ends of the earth. For the present, the "messengers" are disciples, evangelists, so France.

επισυναξει [επισυναγω] fut. "gather" - [AND] HE WILL GATHER TOGETHER, ASSEMBLE. Zech.2:6, "the gathering of Israel's exiles", Evans - the exiles, scattered and lost, bound in captivity. The calling of lost Israel is well illustrated in Paul's missionary strategy - to the Jews first and then the Gentiles. Zechariah paints a beautiful picture of the lost of Israel streaming in to the new kingdom with ten Gentiles holding on to the tassels of each Jew (or better, the one faithful Jew).

τους εκλεκτους adj. "[his] elect" - OF THE ELECT, CHOSEN [OF HIM]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to gather together." The adjective serves as a noun. Variant "his [elect]" is not well supported and usually either omitted, or bracketed in Gk. texts. "The elect", a term only used here in Mark, "are those who belong to the Son of Man", Boring. The elect "belong", not by birth, race, religious association, obedience, but by grace through faith.

εκ + gen. "from [the ends of the earth]" - OUT OF, FROM [FROM THE FOUR WINDS]. Expressing source / origin. "A common expression for the four corners of the earth", Zerwick.

απο **ἕως** "from" - FROM [*the* ENDS OF EARTH] TO [*the* ENDS OF HEAVEN]" - This construction gives the sense "from one end to the other", Zerwick. Jesus has again drawn on Biblical language for this expression, eg., Deut.4:32, 13:8, although the wording is usually "from one end of earth to the other", or "from one end of heaven to the other" (heaven being the canopy around the earth rather than the dwelling of God). We are best to follow Manson who

argues that Jesus is simply paralleling the previous statement, "from one end of earth to the other." "From the limits of the earth to the limits of the sky", Barclay.

13:28-31

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

3. Prophecies concerning the kingdom of Israel, 13:1-37

iv] All will be fulfilled within this generation

Synopsis

In this fourth section of Mark's "little apocalypse", Jesus explains when all "these things" will happen.

Teaching

"These things" will be fulfilled within "this generation."

Issues

i] Context: See 13:1-13.

ii] Structure: *All will be fulfilled within this generation*

A parabolic illustration, v28-29,

A saying, (stitched by the catchword "these things"), v30-31.

iii] Interpretation:

Having described the events leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, which destruction serves as a paradigm for the end of the age, Jesus now explains when this will occur. All "these things" will occur within "this generation." Jesus also explains that as the coming of spring is easily recognised in the sprouting of leaves on a deciduous tree, so the "coming of the Son of Man" is easily recognised. Confronted by this reality, Christ's disciples must "endure, persevere" / hold fast to their faith.

Given that v14-23 are often interpreted as a word about the destruction of Jerusalem, and v24-27 a word about the end of the world, then Jesus' claim that "these things" will occur within "this generation", can cause some difficulty. Yet, the passage itself clearly states that "all these things" will occur within Jesus' own generation, so. France. As already indicated, Jesus' words express the *now / not yet* reality of Biblical eschatology. In the eyes of Jesus the prophet, "these things" were for his generation, the *now*, but they are also for an age to come, the *not yet*.



As already indicated, a word of prophecy, whether from the lips of Jesus, or any of the Old Testament prophets, is not just a word to their own generation. Jesus' prophetic words are multi-layered, i.e., the destruction of the temple serves as a paradigm for the final judgment of this age. "The abomination that causes desolation" took place when Jerusalem came under siege by pagan forces and the apple of God's eye was affronted, yet an even greater abomination awaits those who are alive at the revelation of the anti-Christ and his attack upon the body of Christ, the church. The cosmic signs depicting the destruction of the temple / Jerusalem in v24-25, will become a visible reality in the day of Christ's return. In that day, all the powers of this age will be brought to heel before the enthroned Son of Man, v26-27.

So, chapter 13 is not just a word for the disciples who were alive in the first century, it is a word for us as well. We therefore, as with the disciples of old, must be prepared for the coming day; we too must "endure /persevere" - hold fast to faith.

vi] Synoptics:

Matt.24:32-35, Lk.21:29-33.

Text -13:28

All will be fulfilled within this generation, v28-31: i] The lesson of the fig tree, v28-29. When we see a fig tree come into leaf we know that spring is upon us. In the same way, when we see "these things" (the significant events associated with the destruction of the temple / Jerusalem outlined by Jesus in v14-23, (eg. "the abomination that causes desolation" = the surrounding of Jerusalem by pagan armies???, v14) then we know (can read the signs) that "it" (the destruction of the temple / Jerusalem depicted in v24-25) is upon us. According to tradition the early believers read the sign of "abomination" in the Jewish revolt against Rome, and left Jerusalem for Pella across the Jordan before the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70AD.

μαθετε [μανθανω] aor. imp. "learn" - [FROM THE FIG TREE] LEARN. What we learn from the fig tree, which is deciduous and so flushes with leaves in spring, is that the destruction of the temple (*now*) and the great tribulation (*then*) comes with discernible signs.

την παραβολην [η] "**this lesson**" - THE PARABLE. Accusative direct object of the verb "to learn." Used here of "an illustrative example", France. The illustration requires a deciduous tree, and given chapter 11 and the cursing of the fig tree as a symbol of judgment on the temple, the fig tree serves as a suitable prop. "Let the fig tree serve you as a simile teaching you a lesson", Cassirer.

ὅταν ηδη + subj. "**as soon as**" - WHEN BY THAT TIME [THE BRANCH OF IT HAS BECOME TENDER AND IT PUTS FORTH THE LEAVES]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause with the sense "as soon as / when."

ὅτι "**that**" - [YOU KNOW] THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception, expressing what we know.

εγγυς adv. "near" - [SUMMER IS] NEAR. Predicate adverb of place.

v29

οὕτως "**even so**" - THUS, IN THIS WAY [AND = ALSO YOU]. Comparative with a modal edge; "So [ye] in like manner", AV.

ὅταν + subj. "**when [you see]**" - WHENEVER [YOU SEE]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause.

ταυτα "**these things**" - THESE THINGS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to see." As already noted, "these things" refer to the significant events associated with the destruction of the temple. When we observe "these things" then we know that "it" (the destruction of the temple) is upon us. "When you see these events", Barclay.

γινομενα [γινομαι] pres. part. "**happening**" - BECOMING. The accusative participle serves as the complement of the direct object "these things, standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object. "When you see these things coming about", Cassirer.

γινωσκετε [γινομαι] pres. ind./imp. "**know**" - KNOW. In v28 this verb is obviously indicative, but here it is usually treated as imperative; "you too must realise ...", Barclay.

ὅτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what we can realise / know.

εστιν "**it is [near]**" - IT IS [NEAR]. Of course, the subject can be he/she/it, so some opt for "it" = the end (destruction of the temple, Jerusalem, world ...), the coming, the kingdom, the signs (Cranfield) ... or "he" = Jesus, the Son of Man. Given that the adverb εγγυς, "near", is used, "it" is obviously intended. Given that the destruction of the temple is the focus of the disciples' question, the "it" is obviously the destruction of the temple, so France.

επι "**at [the door]**" - UPON [DOOR]. Spatial, "upon" = "at". An idiomatic figure of speech denoting immediate nearness, standing in apposition to the predicate adverb "near".

v30

ii] Saying, v30-31. Jesus declares that his own generation will witness the fulfilment of "all these things", ie., the events associated with the destruction of the temple / Jerusalem. These two verses have been a problem for those who read v24-27 as futuristic. Numerous solutions are proposed, eg., Shifting v30-31 to after v23, reading "this generation" as Jews, disciples in general, ... cf. Cranfield's list of possibilities. Yet, as already noted, the destruction of the temple serves as a paradigm for another more serious "abomination" at the end of the age, cf. Edwards.

αμην λεγω υμιν "**I tell you the truth**" - TRULY | SAY TO YOU. This header indicates the importance of the following saying. "To you" serves as a dative of indirect object.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech / stating, expressing what Jesus wants to tell us.

η γενεα [α] "**this generation**" - THIS GENERATION. Obviously "the contemporaries of Jesus", Lane, but there are other suggestions, eg., those who do not accept Jesus during the time his disciples remain true to him, etc., cf., 8:12, 9:19.

ου μη + subj. "**certainly not**" - NO NO = BY NO MEANS [MAY PASS AWAY]. A subjunctive of emphatic negation. Note that Schweizer pressed the view that Jesus (or Mark) believed that the realisation of the kingdom would occur within his own lifetime / generation, but that he was mistaken. This view has little support. "Will not come to an end", BAGD.

μεχρις ουδ + subj. "**until**" - UNTIL OF WHICH = UNTIL WHICH TIME. Here introducing an indefinite temporal clause with the sense "until that time in which", TH / Moule IB.

ταυτα παντα "**all these things**" - ALL THESE THINGS [BECOME, HAPPEN]. Nominative subject of the verb "to become." As already noted, the phrase is taken up from the words of the disciples in v4 and refers to the events associated with the destruction of the temple, and not "the whole drama of the end time", Anderson, etc.

v31

ο ουρανος και η γη "**Heaven and earth**" - HEAVEN AND EARTH [WILL PASS AWAY]. Nominative subject of the verb "to pass away." "Heaven" refers here to the canopy over the earth rather than the domain of God, thus "the whole created universe", TH. The impermanence of the created order is a dominant idea in scripture, as opposed to the permanence / eternity of God.

οἱ ... λόγοι μου **"my words"** - [BUT/AND] THE WORDS OF ME. The Law is "inviolable till heaven and earth pass away ... but Jesus' words ... will never pass away", Cranfield.

ου μη + fut. **"never"** - NOT NOT, CERTAINLY NOT [WILL PASS AWAY]. Again, an emphatic negation, this time with the future tense rather than the more common subjunctive. The future indicative is used to emphasise future action.

13:32-37

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

3. Prophecies concerning the kingdom of Israel, 13:1-37

v] Be prepared for the coming day

Synopsis

In this, the concluding section of *the little apocalypse*, Mark gathers together a group of Jesus' sayings, and a short illustrative parable on the subject of watchfulness.

Teaching

Keep watch to your faith; be prepared as the day of the Lord's "coming" draws near.

Issues

i] Context: See 13:1-13.

ii] Structure: *Watch!*:

Saying #1, v32:

No one knows the day or hour.

Saying #2, v33:

The need for unceasing vigilance.

A parable on watchfulness, v34-36:

Saying #3, v37;

Watch!

iii] Interpretation:

Concerning the **ἡμερας εκεινης**, "that day", the day of judgment, the "coming" of the Son of Man, no one knows the day or the hour, not even the angels. Yet, what "coming" is in mind?

Wright argues that in this passage Jesus is still addressing the destruction of the temple, this against most commentators who argue that Jesus is speaking about the end of all things, of the final "abomination", of judgment. In fact, most commentators take a futuristic view of some, if not all, of the proceeding verses. France argues that v1-31 are focused on the destruction of the temple, and only in v32-37 does Jesus look beyond his immediate circumstance to the parousia. Indeed, Jesus may have lifted his eyes beyond the immediate circumstance of the temple's destruction, given the "dramatic shift in perspective from signs to no signs, from knowing to not knowing", Boring.

Yet, as already argued in these notes, what Jesus says of the circumstances facing the apostles, applies also to believers today, i.e. prophecy is multi-layered. From the perspective of the prophet, the prophecy applies to the present, but it also applies to the future. "The destruction of the temple serves as a mysterious paradigm of the parousia", Edwards.

The sayings all address the issue of watchfulness. A believer is to "be on guard; be alert." Yet, the preacher faces a problem explaining what Jesus means by being watchful, by being prepared, by being alert, and this because the text gives us no real clues as to what it means to "keep awake." So, what is Jesus telling his disciples to do?

Many commentators argue that Jesus is calling for "faithful service", active watchfulness, rather than passive waiting, eg., "in Mark's view particularly, (it concerns) the responsibility of the world-wide promulgation of the gospel", Anderson. Yet, if we adopt the *faithfulness* line we end up with a justification and / or sanctification by works scenario. An important principle of Biblical interpretation is that we interpret scripture with scripture. Adopting this approach, a watchfulness that leads to salvation surely has to be a watching to our faith, given that salvation is by grace through faith.

Watchfulness, preparedness, must necessarily be a reliance on the one and only means of salvation, namely the grace of God through faith in Christ. In simple terms, we must not take our eyes off Jesus. We must proceed in the Christian life by the same means we started, by faith in the faithfulness of Christ.

It is worth noting that one of the easiest ways for a believer to get into *sleeping* is to start thinking that their faithful behaviour secures their standing in the sight of God and / or progresses their Christian life. cf, Gal.3:1-5. We all need to be *awake* to this heresy.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.24:36-44, Lk.21:34-36. The first verse is not found in Luke, but exactly aligns with Matthew. Both Matthew and Luke run their own race on the subject of watchfulness. Luke has already used a version of v33-37 at 12:35-40, probably from a separate source, and obviously doesn't want to repeat himself. The general consensus is that Luke himself crafts a general word on watchfulness in line with extant tradition. Matthew, on the other hand, has likely assembled material on the theme of watchfulness from the tradition available to him.

Some alignment between the three gospels is evident:

- v33. Matt.24:42, Lk.21:34;
 v34. Matt.25:14, 30, Lk.19:12;
 v35. Matt.24:42, 50;
 v36. Matt.25:5.

It seems likely that we have in this passage another series of stitched independent sayings of Jesus, assembled by Mark, or even possibly under apostolic guidance during the period of oral transmission. The sayings, and parabolic sayings, are bound together by the common theme of watchfulness in light of the coming day of judgment. The stitching links may just be stylistic, but possibly serve to aid oral transmission: v32, know; v33, know / watch; v34, watch / door; v35-36, doorkeeper / watch; v37, watch.

Text - 13:32

Being prepared for the coming day, v32-37: i] In this first saying, Jesus makes the point that no one, neither prophets nor angels, not even Jesus himself, knows **εκεινης**, "that", particular day or hour, v32. Given the context, the singular demonstrative pronoun, "that" most likely refers to the destruction of Jerusalem / the temple which was the focus of the disciples' question in v4, cf., "know that it is near", v29. Of course, the parousia is also in view. See "Interpretation" above.

Concern has been expressed over Jesus not knowing the exact date of the temple's destruction, but it is best explained "as a necessary part of [Jesus] participation in the limitations of human existence", Marcus.

δε "but" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the subject matter / paragraph marker, so Decker - here used as a stitching device and unlikely to be adversative. Best left untranslated.

περι "about" - ABOUT, CONCERNING. The preposition here expresses reference / respect. Jesus may well be saying that the destruction of the temple / Jerusalem will be in the lifetime of "this generation", but his point is that the exact "day or hour" is no known, cf. v30. "As for the day or hour", Cassirer.

ημερας εκεινης "that day" - THAT DAY [OR THE HOUR]. This is an Old Testament technical term often used for a day of divine judgment. In this setting, it refers to the destruction of the temple / Jerusalem, and by implication, the parousia. The addition of the "hour" emphasises the New Testament theme of the unexpected and sudden coming of the Son of man.

οιδεν [οιδα] perf. "knows" - [NO ONE] KNOWS. The clarity of "no one knows" should put an end to predictive speculation, although there are still many believers who enjoy this fruitless pastime. Given that not even "the Son" knows the date, we are best to leave it as an unknown.

ουδε ... ουδε "not even" - NEITHER [THE ANGELS IN HEAVEN *know*], NOR [THE SON *knows*]. Coordinative construction. This is the only time the shortened title "the Son" is used in Mark. Marcus suggests that it has "a subordinationist ring." Some commentators regard this phrase as an addition to the text.

ει μη "but" - EXCEPT [THE FATHER]. Introducing an exceptive clause, expressing a contrast by designating an exception.

v33

ii] In the next saying Jesus makes the point that "the disciples' ignorance of the date of the Parousia is not an excuse for being unprepared, but a reason (*γαρ*) for unceasing vigilance", Cranfield.

αγρυπνειτε [*αγρυπνεω*] pres. imp. "be alert!" - [BEWARE] BE WAKEFUL, ALERT, VIGILANT As opposed to sleepy. The question is, of course, in what sense is the believer to be alert, on the lookout, "on guard", "vigilant", prepared - prepared for an unexpected and sudden return of Christ. As noted above, keeping watch to our faith is the likely answer, but there are numerous other suggestions, usually in the terms of faithfulness. "Keep your eyes open, keep on the alert", Phillips.

γαρ "-" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the disciples should be alert; "for you do not know when the crucial moment will come", Barclay.

ποτε adv. "when" - [YOU DO NOT KNOW] WHEN [THE TIME IS]. Temporal adverb serving to introduce a temporal indirect question. "You don't know the timetable", Peterson.

v34

iii] A short teaching parable on watchfulness, v34-35. The parable illustrates vigilance, watchfulness, being alert, v33. Being on guard, being alert, watching, is not just describing expectant waiting, but rather standing ready and prepared for the master's return. The master leaves his house in the care of his servants. Each has their assigned task which is to be faithfully executed. The door-keeper is to keep watch, waiting to open the door at the master's return. The master can return at any time, so there is no possibility for safe-slacking. He can return at any time during the four watches of the night. If he comes unexpectedly, don't be found sleeping. So, the point of the parable is "watch" - be prepared for the Master's return. See "Interpretation" above for the content of watchfulness.

This teaching unit may have been constructed from different sources, so Nineham, but is best read as a unified whole. The unit teaches that the future belongs to God such that "every present moment is transformed and renewed in

the light of that future since it becomes the very moment in which God may surprise men by his coming", Anderson.

The syntax of v34: The main verb does not appear until well into the sentence; "a man commanded." In between we have:

- An adjective which limits "man", "a man away on a trip";
- A clause made up of two adjectival participles limiting "a man on a trip", "who had left his house and *gave responsibility for it* to his slaves commanded";
- A clause in apposition to the previous clause, but without a verb, lit. "the authority to each his work" = "*having given* authority to each *slave to administer* his work / business."

Finally, we come to the main clause, "a man commanded the door-keeper" The sentence concludes with a dependent statement (ἵνα + subj.) expressing what the man commanded the door-keeper to do, namely, "that he keeps watch" = "keep watch."

ὡς "*it is like*" - AS, LIKE. Comparative. Serving to introduce a simile / parable. "As / like" = "the coming of the Son [of Man] is like the situation where"

ἄνθρωπος [ος] "**a man**" - A MAN. Serving as the subject of a rather complex sentence, although making a simple point.

ἀφεις [αφιημι] aor. part. "**going away**" - HAVING LEFT [THE HOUSE OF HIM ON A JOURNEY]. The participle, as with "having given", is adjectival, attributive. He commissions his slaves to look after his affairs; "having left his property and given its management to his servants", Weymouth.

τοῖς δούλοις [ος] dat. "**servants**" - [AND HAVING GIVEN AUTHORITY] TO THE SLAVES, SERVANTS [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object.

ἕκαστῳ adj. "**each**" - [*and having given* THE WORK OF HIM] TO EACH [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object. This third clause stands in apposition to the second; "[And having given] to each one his special duty", Weymouth.

τῷ θύρῳ [ος] "**the one at the door**" - [AND HE COMMANDED] TO THE DOOR-KEEPER, PORTER. Dative of indirect object. A particular slave with a special job. This person guarded the entrance of the courtyard to a wealthy home or combined homes.

ἵνα + subj. "**to [keep watch]**" - THAT [HE SHOULD KEEP WATCH, BE ALERT]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the "man" commands "the one at the door" to do. The doorkeeper is to keep watch. "Commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch", NRSV.

v35

This next sentence covers v35 and 36. The link between the verses is not always preserved, as with NIV. Verse 36 begins with the negative **μη**, a **ίνα μη** + subj. construction, a negated purpose clause, "lest", as ESV, but not "lest he comes suddenly", but "lest he find (**εύρη**, subj.) you asleep." The participle **ελθων** is then obviously adverbial, probably temporal, "when he comes suddenly." "Therefore, keep watch lest he find you sleeping when he comes suddenly."

ουν "**therefore**" - THEREFORE. Inferential; drawing a logical conclusion.

γρηγορειτε pres. imp. act. "**keep watch**" - YOU BE ALERT, WATCH. Like the guard we must keep watch (for the coming of a thief or the return of the master. Note the echoes of a number of end-time parables in this illustration), cf., v37. Be prepared for the coming of the Son of Man. Regarding watchfulness as *keeping watch to your faith*.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why we need to "keep watch", because we do not know the hour or the day when

ποτε "**when**" - [YOU DO NOT KNOW] WHEN. Introducing a temporal indirect question.

της οικιας [α] gen. "[**the owner**] of the house" - [THE LORD] OF THE HOUSE [COMES]. The genitive is adjectival, of subordination; "the master over / who lords it over the house."

ή "**whether**" - EITHER [LATE IN THE DAY] OR [MIDNIGHT] OR [CROWING] OR [EARLY]. A disjunctive correlative construction. Used 4 times so "either or or or" Here identifying the four Roman watches of the night.

v36

ελθων [ερξομαι] aor. act. part. "**if he comes**" - [LEST] HAVING COME. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, "when he comes, ...", rather than conditional, as NIV.

εξαιφνης adv. "**suddenly**" - SUDDENLY, IMMEDIATELY. Modal adverb. Note again the stress on a sudden return.

μη εύρη [εύρισκω] aor. sub. act. "**do not let him find**" - HE FINDS [YOU]. Probably not a subjunctive of prohibition, as NIV, but expressing a doubtful assertion / negated purpose clause, usually expressed by **ίνα μη**, "lest"; see v35 above.

καθευδοντας [καθευδω] part. "**sleeping**" - SLEEPING. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "you" standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "you". There is

vigilance / watching, or sleeping - a being prepared, or unprepared. "He finds you asleep", Moffatt.

v37

iv] A final saying sums up the theme of watchfulness, v37. Cranfield suggests it sums up the whole discourse from v5 onward. As already noted, "being alert" is best understood as maintaining faith in Christ and this because Christ's coming (best understood as a coming in judgment) will consume all who are without faith. Other suggestions have been offered, eg. Marcus suggests an attitude of eschatological vigilance which keeps an eye on the signs of the time. He also suggests an eye to "the eschatological drama of Jesus life, which is about to unfold in the gripping conclusion of the gospel." Edwards suggests a constant readiness in obedience, "Christian are to be about their masters work" - legalism is alive and well! Hurtado runs the line that believers are to be "on the job", whatever that means!

ὃ **"what"** - [AND] WHAT [I SAY]. Nominative subject.

ὑμῖν dat. pro. **"to you"** - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object, "watch" being the direct object.

πᾶσιν dat. adj. **"to everyone"** - [I SAY] TO ALL, EVERYONE [KEEP AWAKE, BE ALERT, WATCH OUT, TAKE HEED, BE VIGILANT]. Dative of indirect object. "What I say to you [apostles]" is widened to "everyone", all disciples in all ages. "Stay at your post. Keep watch", Peterson.

14:1-11

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

4. Victory, 14:1-15:39

i] The anointing

Synopsis

Mark introduces the passion narrative by contrasting the devotion of an unnamed woman, with the deceitfulness of the religious authorities along with the disloyalty of one of Jesus' disciples. It is now Wednesday, two days before the Passover and Jesus' crucifixion. In the afternoon, the Chief priests and scribes meet to plan a secret arrest of Jesus away from public gaze. That evening, while Jesus is eating in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman breaks open a jar of perfumed oil and sets about pouring it over his head. Some of those present comment that the ointment could have been sold and the money given to the poor, but Jesus points out it is an act of great kindness - "she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial." Following the meal, Judas leaves and goes to the chief priests to plan Jesus' arrest, and this on the promise of payment.

Teaching

Be reminded! The way of salvation is by reliance on the substitutionary death of Jesus.

Issues

i] Context: See Mark 1:1-8. Victory, 14:1-16:8: As David overcame Goliath, so Jesus the Son of God overcomes Satan upon the cross of Calvary. With the enemy destroyed, the prisoners are released from their bondage of sin and death, and the king enters his rest. The new age has dawned, the kingdom has come with power.

A number of commentators have noted Mark's careful construction of the passion narrative, cf., Marcus. Mark presents two main narratives followed by a conclusion:

Jesus and his disciples, 14:1-52;

Jesus and his opponents, 14:53-15:47;

Conclusion - the resurrection, 16:1-8.

Each of the two main scenes has three sub-scenes, the first sub-scene a three-scene sandwich, is followed by two lots of two.

France makes particular note of this first Markan "sandwich" built around the Passover: v1a, the Passover is coming, and v12ff, preparing for the Passover. Within the Passover festival and its sacrificial meal, there sits "the extravagant love and loyalty of one of the least of his followers."

ii] Structure: *The anointing*:

- A¹. The plot against Jesus, v1-2;
- B. The anointing, v3-9;
- A². The treachery of Judas, v10-11.

Note how the anointing is emphasised by this Markan sandwich

iii] Interpretation:

From Mark's account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem onward, we are presented with the theme of Jesus' knowledge and determination to comply with the divine will - Jesus' death is framed within the sovereign will of God, which fact he prophesies and sets his face toward. Mark draws out this theme in his account of the anointing of Jesus, setting the story within the religious authorities' plot to kill Jesus and the compliance of Judas to that end. The devotion of the woman is set within the plotting of the *righteous* and the betrayal of a disciple - faith and treachery.

The substantive truth revealed in the story is found in v9. The exact intent of Jesus' words is somewhat unclear due to the Gk., but the point seems to be that, along with the gospel, what this woman did will also be proclaimed and so serve as a reminder from her of the way of salvation, namely, of reliance on the substitutionary death of Christ.

iv] Synoptics:

The plan to arrest Jesus, v1-2: Matt.26:1-5, Lk.22:1-2, Jn.11:45-53.

The anointing at Bethany, v3-9: Matt.26:6-13, Lk.7:36-50, Jn.12:1-8.

Judas plans to betray Jesus, 10-11: Matt.26:14-16, Lk.22:3-6.

The story of the anointing is recorded in all four gospels. Matthew's account is very similar to Mark's, while both John and Luke present interesting differences to that of Mark's account. Luke sets the story during Jesus' ministry rather than at the Passover, and it is set in the house of Simon the Pharisee, not Simon the man with a skin disease. The woman is "a sinner" rather than just "a woman", and she weeps on Jesus' feet, dries them with her hair and then anoints his feet, rather than anoints his head with oil. Jesus is critical of Simon rather than just generally angry, and forgives the woman rather than defends her. John, on the other hand, says that the event took place six days before the Passover, not two, and that the woman is Mary of Bethany. John says that the ointment weighed a pound, and that it was Jesus' feet which were anointed rather than his head, and that Judas is the one who gets angry rather than "some who were there" (disciples??). Unlike Luke, John records the two sayings referring to Jesus' burial and the poor, but reverses Mark's order.

These fascinating differences can probably be put down to differences in the source tradition along with the particular intent of the author. Brown suggests that two similar stories were carried in the oral tradition, a repentant woman who weeps at Jesus' feet (Luke) and a woman who anoints Jesus' head, and that there has been some melding of the stories during their transmission. This seems very likely. Such an idea always touches on the issue of scriptural authority, but it seems best to accept that in the end, scripture is inspired such that the truth revealed by the different authors is God's word to us.

v] Homiletics: *Grasp the moment*

At some point in our life, a moment will present itself when we can transcend the normal, when we can act in a way that defines the rest of our life. Of course, most of us miss the moment, and so we are left with "if only!"

She did the right thing at the right moment. The unnamed woman who anointed Jesus remains a mystery to us. We know nothing much about her - she but passed Him by. The disciples were blind to the gathering storm, blind to what she was doing, but somehow she understood that Jesus was about to die the death of a common criminal where anointing for burial is not an option.

This woman's anointing of Jesus is an act of selfless love toward her saviour, an act of faith, generosity, acceptance, recognition,, an act, says Jesus, that will be retold throughout time. In the midst of deception and disloyalty we find an act of dedication to Christ and his cross.

We're not able to repeat the good work of this unnamed woman, but she does, in a sense, remind us of the one good work that is acceptable to God, and that is reliance on the cross of Christ - faith in Jesus for salvation. We do well not to ignore such an important reminder.

Text - 14:1

The countdown, v1-11: i] The plot by the religious authorities, v1-2. The die is cast in that the religious authorities have decided to act against Jesus, planning to seize him and put him to death. They are aware of Jesus' popularity and so plan to arrest him away from public gaze. All they need is the opportunity. Mark tells us that it is the Wednesday before the commencement of the Passover on Thursday evening.

δε **"now"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, identifying a step in the narrative; paragraph marker.

το πασχα "the Passover" - [IT WAS] THE PASSOVER. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. Probably here the passover meal is meant, prepared on the afternoon of 14 Nisan and eaten between sunset and midnight of 15 Nisan.

τα αζυμα [ος] "the feast of / festival of unleavened bread" - [AND] THE UNLEAVENED BREAD. "Feast of" implied. Celebrated between 15 and 21 Nisan and by now virtually part of the Passover festival.

μετα + acc. "were only [two days] away" - AFTER [TWO DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition. The timing here is difficult to work out, given that the new day begins at sunset and that a phrase like this could mean "tomorrow / the next day" (the count can include today). It probably means "tomorrow evening". Counting to the feast of Unleavened Bread is further complicated because the first day of the feast is sometimes reckoned as 14 Nisan, the killing of the lambs. None-the-less, the day of the anointing is likely to be Wednesday, Nisan 13.

εζητουν [ζητω] imperf. "were looking / scheming" - [AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE SCRIBES] WERE SEEKING, SEARCHING. The imperfect giving a durative sense, "a purpose entertained for some time", Taylor, although the imperfect is sometimes used when providing background information.

πως + subj. "for some [sly] way" - IN WHAT WAY / HOW. The interrogative particle serves to introduce a dependent statement of perception expressing what looking for, namely, "looking for a way to", Zerwick.

κρατησαντες [κρατω] aor. part. "to arrest" - HAVING SIZED, TAKEN HOLD OF, GRASPED [HIM]. Usually treated as an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the subjunctive verb "to kill"; "how to arrest him by stealth and kill him", ESV. Decker suggests it is more likely adverbial, so possibly temporal, "before they kill him."

εν + dat. "-" - IN, BY [DECEIT, GUILF]. Possibly instrumental, expressing means; "through, by means of" = "by some clever manoeuvre" = "were scheming", TNIV; "the chief priests and scribes plotted how they might arrest and execute Him through treachery", Berkeley. Yet, adverbial, expressing manner is also possible, as NIV, i.e., the authorities were intent on arresting Jesus, but in a way that would not cause them any embarrassment.

αποκτεινωσιν [αποκτεινω] aor. subj. "kill him" - THEY MIGHT KILL him. Deliberative subjunctive.

v2

γαρ "but" - FOR [THEY WERE SAYING]. More reason than cause; serving to introduce an explanation for their "guile"; "And this is what they said", Cassirer. This intention is evidenced in the choice of the imperfect verb **ελεγον**, "they were saying."

μη "not" - NOT. The sentence is elliptical, "*we will not arrest him at the feast*". Given that the negation **μη** is used in prohibitions, they may be saying "*do not arrest him at the feast*"

εν + dat. "during [the feast]" - IN [THE FEAST, FESTIVAL]. Probably temporal, as NIV, although a local sense is possible; "in the presence of the festival crowd", Jeremias. The authorities do not want Jesus arrested during the festival proper, the afternoon of 14 Nisan through to 21 Nisan, obviously due to the crowd, many of whom view Jesus at least as a prophet. Judas provides the opportunity to arrest Jesus at the commencement of 14 Nisan.

μηποτε "or" - LEST. This conjunction stands in for **ἵνα μη** + subj. (here with the fut. ind.) and so forms a negated purpose clause, "lest"; "It must not be during the festival, to make sure that (in order that) there is no uproar among the people", Cassirer.

του λαου [ος] gen. "**the people**" - [THERE WILL BE A DISTURBANCE, TUMULT, CONFUSION] OF THE PEOPLE = CROWD. The genitive is adjectival, verbal, subjective, "*by the crowd.*" Decker suggests a genitive of source / origin, "*from among the crowd.*" "Because the people will riot", CEV.

v3

ii] The anointing of Jesus, 3-9. The scene is a meal in Bethany at the home of Simon the Leper. His full name is given to distinguish him from the others named Simon in the gospel. We know nothing more about him, nor are we even sure if Jesus is staying with him, or is just having a meal at his home.

Having set the scene, Mark focuses on the woman and her act of love. She destroys the seal of the perfume bottle, indicating her intention to use all of its contents. The perfume is probably pistachio nut oil with a splash of spikenard essential oil. There is a ripple of disapproval - a grumble here and there, an unfriendly stare. Mark underlines their *hisses*, not so much to expose their hypocrisy, but rather to emphasize the woman's devotion. Her critics conclude that the oil is extremely valuable and could have been sold and used for a more legitimate purpose. Interestingly, Matthew says it was the disciples who reacted this way, while John says that it was Judas. Mark doesn't really specify, since his focus is on the woman.

Jesus defends her action, calling it a "good work", a righteous act. It is true, her loving kindness toward Jesus could have been redirected toward the poor, but she has seized the moment. In the midst of growing hostility toward Christ she expresses loving devotion. Her anointing of Jesus anticipates his approaching death, a death where the proper anointing of the body prior to burial will not be performed, given that Jesus will be treated as a common criminal.

Jesus then raises the stakes by telling those present, of whom most were probably disciples, that the significance of this unnamed woman's action is so profound that the story of her anointing of Jesus will be carried alongside the gospel, and in its telling it will serve as a reminder from her. Her story will define the "good work" necessary for salvation, namely, a dependence on the cross of Christ.

οντος [εμι] gen. "**while [he] was**" - [HE] BEING. The genitive participle and its genitive subject forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. So also "reclining", together serving to form two coordinate genitive absolute constructions. Interestingly, the presence of **αυτου**, "he", subject in agreement with the participle, a construction also paralleled in "he reclining", is the same **αυτου**, "he", of the main clause, "she poured [it on] his head", which means that technically the two participial constructions are not absolute.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [BETHANY]. Local, expressing space / sphere.

Σιμωνος [ων ονος] "**of a man known as Simon**" - [in = at the house] of simon [the leper]. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. Simon is a common name and would often carry a distinguishing descriptor. Obviously, Simon is not a leper at present, as he would not be able to host a meal if he was. He may have been a leper, or the descriptor may be a nickname like scar-face. Then again, the home may just be known as Simon the Leper's home, Simon having long departed the scene. It is not unusual for homes in a small village to retain the name of the original inhabitants. (Of course, such a name would not feature in the real-estate sales brochure! Such a property would likely sell to someone from out of town. You can just hear the greeting, can't you? "Oh! you bought Simon the Leper's home!!!!" Oops - it's back on the market!)

κατακειμενου [κατακειμαι] gen. part. "**reclining at the table**" - [HE] RECLINING. The second genitive absolute participle; "while he was in Bethany in the house of Simon the Leper, [and] while he was reclining at table [having a meal]," The word indicates they were in an eating position, lying on cushions around a low coffee-style table. France suggests an evening meal before the commencement of the passover festival.

ηλθεν [ερχομαι] aor. "**[a woman] came**" - [A WOMAN] CAME. John has Mary of Bethany as a guest, but Mark, in agreement with Luke, has the woman coming in from outside. See "Synoptics".

εχουσα [εχω] pres. part. "**with [an alabaster jar]**" - HAVING [AN ALABASTER]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "woman"; "a woman who had"

μυρου [ον] gen. "**of very expensive perfume**" - OF OINTMENT. The first of four attributive modifiers which limit by describing **αλαβαστρον**, "alabaster jar."

This, the first genitive, may be classified idiomatic / of content; "a jar *full of* ointment / *containing* ointment." Such a perfumed oil would be expensive, even up to a year's wage for a labourer.

ναρδου [ος] gen. "**made of [pure] nard**" - OF [PURE, GENUINE / LIQUID, EXPENSIVE] SPIKENARD. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / of material, limiting ointment; "made of spikenard", as NIV" Taylor suggests that the adjective **πιστικης** is "pure", but Cranfield says it is likely to refer to the base oil of the perfume, usually pistachio nut oil, used to dilute the spikenard and make it usable, so "liquid nard."

συντριψασα [συντριβω] aor. part. "**she broke**" - HAVING BROKEN, CRUSHED. Probably just an attendant circumstance participle, "a woman came and she broke the jar ...", or temporal, "and after she broke the jar ..." Probably just broke the seal of the jar, but possibly something more dramatic, so Gundry: "breaking the flask makes it henceforth unusable and therefore dramatizes the completeness of the outpouring; not a drop is held back."

αλαβαστρον [ος] "**alabaster jar**" - THE ALABASTER. A long tube-like flask of the type sometimes called a tear-bottle; it might have been made of alabaster, but more probably of glass", Sherman E Johnson.

κατεχεεν [καταχεω] aor. + gen. "**poured the perfume on**" - SHE Poured, Poured down, Poured over *it*. Anointing is a general courtesy performed for a guest, although this is more a drenching than an anointing. Jesus explains the anointing in terms of an anointing for death. There is every indication that the woman understands it in these terms. Matthew agrees with Mark on what part of the anatomy Jesus is anointed.

της κεφαλης [η] gen. "**[his] head**" - OF THE HEAD [OF HIM]. Genitive of direct object after the **κατα** prefix verb "to pour over - "of what (head) the liquid is poured over", BAGD. Elliott argues that the anointing is messianic such that the woman is hailing Jesus as the King-Messiah, cf. 2 Kings 9:1-13, but it is usually understood as an anointing for death and burial, so Gundry, France, ...

v4

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

τινες pro. "**some of those present**" - CERTAIN. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. Some of the disciples? Probably "some of the guests at the meal."

ησαν αγανακτουντες [αγανακτεω] pres. part. "**were saying indignantly**" - WERE BEING UNWILLING / ANGRY, INDIGNANT. "Growling", Gundry. A periphrastic imperfect construction, possibly used to accentuate the duration of the action. The action "saying" is implied; "some of the guests were annoyed at what she had done", Barclay.

προς + acc. "**to [one another]**" - WITH/TO [THEMSELVES] = INWARDLY. Here expressing association. "Were vexed / disturbed in themselves", or "commented / glanced indignantly one toward another."

εις τί + acc. "**why**" - TO = FOR [WHAT]. Here εις expresses purpose + the interrogative τί; "why?"; "for what reason, purpose?", BAGD. "What is the point", Barclay.

του μυρου [ον] gen. "**[this waste] of perfume**" - [THIS RUIN] OF THE OINTMENT. The genitive is adjectival, usually treated as verbal, objective, but it could be taken as attributed, "why this wasted perfume?" The context dictates that it is the perfume that is wasted, so "why this waste", Cassirer.

γεγονεν [γίνομαι] perf. "-" - BECOME = TAKEN PLACE, HAPPENED. The perfect expresses a past act with ongoing consequences; "for what purpose has this waste occurred?"

v5

γὰρ "-" - FOR, BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the anointing was so wasteful.

το μυρον [ον] "**it**" - [THIS] OINTMENT. Properly taken as nominative, thus functioning as the subject of the sentence, although read as accusative by TH and thus serving as the subject of the two infinitives which together serve as the subject of the sentence (a neuter noun has the same ending for both the nominative and accusative case).

πραθηναι [πιπρασκω] aor. inf. "**sold**" - [WAS ABLE] TO BE SOLD. The infinitives, "to be sold" and δοθηναι, "to be given", are complementary, completing the sense of the verb "was able." "This perfume might have been sold", Moffatt.

επανω + gen. "**for more than**" - OVER, ABOVE, MORE THAN. Variant missing in some manuscripts probably due to not being present in John's account, cf., Metzger. In this case the "three hundred denarii" is not governed by this preposition.

δηναρτων τριακοσιων gen. "**a year's wages**" - THREE HUNDRED DENARII. Genitive of measure / price. The NIV dynamic equivalent is better than "three hundred silver coins", CEV.

τοις πτωχοις dat. adj. "**to the poor**" - [AND TO BE GIVEN] TO THE POOR. The adjective serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object after the verb "to give."

ενεβριμωντο [εμβριμαομαι] imperf. "**they rebuked [her] harshly**" - [AND] THEY WERE REPROACHING, WARNING, EXPRESSING ANGER TOWARD. Probably in the sense of gestures of reproach and disapproval, along with verbal murmurings and hisses. The more generous the act the more guilty an onlooker feels, thus requiring guilt-dissipation, ie., speck removal.

αυτη dat. pro. "her" - HER. Dative of direct object after the εν prefix verb "to rebuke."

v6

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a move in subject from the guests to Jesus; "but Jesus said."

αφετε [αφιημι] aor. imp. "leave [her] alone" - [JESUS SAID] LEAVE, LEAVE ALONE, LEAVE SOMEONE ALONE. "let go, tolerate", BAGD. "Stop giving her a hard time", Boring.

κοπους [ος] "bothering" - [WHY DO YOU CAUSE] TROUBLES, DIFFICULTIES. Accusative direct object of the verb "to cause"; "why do you cause trouble for her?"; "Why distress her?", Barclay.

αυτη dat. pro. "her" - TO HER? Dative of indirect object / interest, disadvantage.

καλον εργον "[she has done] a beautiful thing" - [SHE HAS WORKED] A GOOD, NOBLE, WORTHY, WORK. The phrase "a good work" implies something more than a kindness. In Jewish circles, a good work was viewed by the rabbis as an honourable deed, done under God, of superior character to alms-giving. In Christian circles, it is "an act of Christian ministry that did not have the pietistic and moralistic flavour of being a do-gooder", Boring.

Given the context, it is likely that we have here a saving "good work", an outward expression of faith / reliance on the saving work of Christ on the cross, see v9. Her actions certainly do express self-giving love, but above all, are directed toward what Christ is about to do on the cross for her and the rest of broken humanity. It is for this reason that her actions go hand in hand with the communication of the gospel, serving as a reminder from her.

Of course, other interpretations are possible, eg., Danker suggests that Psalm 41 lies behind the incident. Christ represents the righteous suffering poor and the woman has recognized him and so anoints him as an act of love toward God's broken one; "she has done a beautiful deed / a noble act of love."

εν "to [me]" - IN, ON [ME]. Reflecting Aramaic usage, expressing reference / respect.

v7

γαρ "-" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they should leave her alone to perform her act of love, namely, "because you always have the poor with you" Jesus is raising the issue of time, not of compassion. Poverty will never cease and compassion toward the poor must never cease, but Jesus will not always be present in the flesh.

παντοτε adv. "**always**" - [YOU HAVE] AT ALL TIMES. Temporal adverb; "You will always have the poor with you", CEV.

μεθ [μετα] + gen. "**with**" - [THE POOR] WITH. Expressing association.

ε̇αυτων ref. pro. "**you**" - YOURSELVES. The 3rd. person used for 2nd.

ε̇υ ποιησαι "**[you can] help**" - [AND YOU ARE ABLE] TO DO GOOD. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "you are able", while the adverb **ε̇υ** functions as an improper object. This colloquial use, "you did good", is only used here in the NT, but appears a number of times in the LXX, eg. **ε̇υ σε ποιησω**, "I will do good to you", Gen.32:9. "You will be able to do good to them whenever you wish", Cassirer.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - TO THEM. Dative of interest, advantage, "do good for them", although an accusative variant **αυτους** exists to serve as the proper object.

ο̇ταν + subj. "**any time [you want]**" - WHENEVER [YOU WISH]. Introducing an indefinite temporal clause. The reference to the poor is often used to justify ignoring their plight, but this is not Jesus' intention. They will always need our attention, but there will be occasions when other priorities will need to be addressed. This is one such occasion.

παντοτε adv. "**[you will not] always [have me]**" - [BUT/AND ME NOT] ALWAYS [DO YOU HAVE]. Temporal adverb. An obvious reference to Jesus' departure.

v8

ο̇ εσχεν εποιησεν "**she did what she could**" - WHAT SHE HAD SHE DID. The verb **εσχεν**, "had", is probably taking the sense "was able" with the assumed infinitive **ποιησαι**; "what she was able *to do* she did." "She has done all that she had it in her power to do", Barclay.

μυρισαι [μυριζω] aor. inf. "**she poured perfume**" - TO ANOINT [THE BODY OF ME]. The infinitive here is unwieldy and the clause compressed. It probably functions as an object complement of the assumed object "[my] death" of the main verb **προελαβεν**, "she has anticipated"; "she has anticipated *my death*, anointing my body with a view to my burial."

προελαβεν [προλαμβανω] aor. "**beforehand**" - SHE PREPARED BEFOREHAND, ACTED AHEAD OF TIME, ANTICIPATED. Of taking action before it is necessary to do so, MM.

εις "to prepare for" - TO, TOWARD. Here final, expressing purpose / end-view, "with a view to my burial", but possibly reference, "with respect to my burial."

ενταφιασμον [ος] "my burial" - THE BURIAL. Possibly the preparation for the burial (laying out the body), MM, although BAGD suggests the burial itself.

v9

This verse raises a difficult question. In what way is the anointing linked to the preaching of the gospel? Jeremias suggests that the "gospel" referred to in this verse concerns "the proclamation of the final victory of God", while the preaching refers to the shout of the angel on the last day as he announces the victory. On that day her act of love will be recounted before the throne of God and stand to her favour; "this deed of hers will also be recounted, as her memorial to me", Phillips. This is a very original interpretation and overcomes the nagging question as to why the anointing should be integrally linked to the gospel and recounted throughout the centuries. In the end, the notion that the anointing serves as a reminder to God for the woman's account is questionable. Gundry takes a straightforward approach to the words when he says "that alongside the gospel itself, what the woman has done will be talked about throughout the world with the result that she will be remembered." Boring suggests that the story "serves as a vehicle for the proclamation of the good news of God's saving act in Christ."

The sense will always be illusive, but if we take εις to express purpose, and the genitive αυτης as subjective, then the sense may be that whenever the gospel is communicated throughout the world, this woman's visible act of faith in the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus, will serve as (the purpose of) a reminder from her - a reminder that we need to do what she has done, namely, rest in faith on the cross of Christ. When our life is set on the cross, as Philip Yancey reminds us, there is nothing we can do to make God love us more, and nothing we can do to make him love us less.

αμην δε λεγω υμιν "I tell you the truth" - TRULY I SAY TO YOU. A statement used to reinforce the following words. "You may be sure", CEV.

οπου εαν + subj. "wherever" - WHEREVER. Introducing an indefinite local clause.

εις "throughout" - [THE IMPORTANT NEWS MAY BE PROCLAIMED = COMMUNICATED] INTO [THE WHOLE WORLD]. Local, here used instead of εν, so "in the world", possibly distributive, "throughout the world."

και "also" - AND = ALSO. Here adjunctive; "that which / what she herself / this one did will be spoken of also."

λαληθησεται [λαλεω] fut. pas. "will [also] be told" - [WHAT THIS woman DID] WILL BE SPOKEN. "Will also be recounted", Phillips.

εις "in" - TO = FOR. Here final / telic, expressing purpose / end view, "with a view to", but possibly reference, "with respect to."

μνημοσυνον "memory" - A REMINDER, MEMORIAL. "A reminder" in the sense of "an event in the past called into the present by its effects", Mann. Her act of love may serve as a reminder to God (Jeremias, see above), but better, serves as a reminder to us. "What she has done will be told too, and it will serve a reminder."

αυτης gen. pro. "of her" - OF HER. Usually taken as an objective genitive, Zerwick has "as a memorial to her"; "as a memorial for her", Marcus, who quotes numerous examples of this sense in funerary inscriptions. On the other hand, it could just be descriptive, idiomatic / source, agent, where the actions of the woman will be spoken / preached to serve as (**εις**, telic - purpose) a reminder from her. That she is unnamed better serves a role performed as an example. Her actions define the "good work" necessary for salvation, namely a recognition of / dependence on / devotion to the substitutionary death of Christ. This approach has much in its favour, although it is depreciated by Gundry.

v10

iii] Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Jesus, v10-11. From the devotion of an unnamed woman, Mark takes us back to real life. The authorities are seeking to arrest Jesus secretly and one of his own disciples is looking for the best time and place for them to do their dirty deed. Mark doesn't tell us why Judas is out to get Jesus, although the offer of money points to a motive of greed, cf., Matt.26:15a.

και "then" - AND. Coordinative.

Ισκαριωθ "Iscariot" - [JUDAS] ISCARIOT. An identifier for the man Judas, possibly a family name, but more likely of a place, "Judas, *the man from the village of Karioth*."

ὁ εἷς "- " - THE ONE. The substantive adjective "one", **εἷς**, is used for the general, **τις**, "someone / a certain person." The article **ὁ**, serving as a nominalizer, is absent in some manuscripts, increasing the indefinite nature of the phrase. Possibly even derogatory; "that person."

των δωδεκα gen. "of the twelve" - OF THE TWELVE. The genitive is adjectival, partitive; "that one (namely Judas), who was one of the twelve." The definite article underlines the one betrayer, Judas, as against the rest of the disciples.

ινα + subj. "to [betray]" - [WENT TOWARD THE CHIEF PRIESTS] THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order to deliver him over to them."

αυτοις dat. pro. "to them" - [HAND OVER, BETRAY, DELIVER OVER HIM] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object. "He went to the Chief Priests and offered to help them arrest Jesus", CEV.

v11

οἱ δε **"they"** - BUT/AND THEY. The article could be taken with the participle "having heard", but then the resulting substantive sits awkwardly with the main verb "they rejoiced." So, it is likely that οἱ serves as the subject of the main verb and is used with δε to indicate narrative transition, a change in subjects from Judas to the religious authorities.

ακουσαντες [ακουω] aor. part. **"to hear"** - [THEY REJOICED, WERE GLAD] HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, best taken as temporal; "they were glad when they heard it."

επηγγειλαντο [επαγγελλομαι] aor. mid. **"promised"** - [AND] PROMISED. In the middle voice the verb "announce / proclaim" becomes "promise".

δουναι [διδωμι] aor. inf. **"to give"** - TO GIVE. The infinitive forms an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they "promised". There is no indication that Judas has asked for money, but rather that the authorities have offered it in response to their joy. They now have an opportunity to arrest Jesus before the commencement of the festival.

αυτω dat. pro. **"him"** - HIM [MONEY]. Dative of indirect object; "give money to him."

και **"so"** - AND. Consecutive use here, as NIV, BDF 442 [2]; "and as a result."

εζητει [ζητω] imperf. **"he watched"** - HE WAS SEEKING, WATCHING FOR. Judas was "working out / considering / thinking" how he might betray Jesus. The religious authorities were seeking an opportunity to arrest Jesus and Judas was seeking an opportunity to betray Jesus.

ευκαιρωσ adv. **"opportunity"** - CONVENIENTLY, OPPORTUNELY. Adverb of manner, although here more temporal, "an opportune time", LN. "Judas started looking for a good chance to betray Jesus", CEV.

πως + subj. **"to [hand him over]"** - HOW [HE MIGHT BETRAY HIM]. The adverb πως, with the deliberative subjunctive, forms an unstated interrogative clause; "how they might conveniently betray him", AV.

14:12-25

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

4. Victory, 14:1-15:39

ii] The last supper

Synopsis

It was the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread when Jews traditionally share in the Passover meal of roast lamb, unleavened bread, condiments and wine, to celebrate Israel's escape from their slavery in Egypt. Jesus had made arrangements for the use of an upper room in Jerusalem and he discretely has his disciples make preparations for their meal together. By this stage, the religious authorities were determined to end Jesus' disruptive ministry and so secrecy was essential. This explains the rather strange meeting with the man carrying a water jar.

That evening, Jesus and his disciples arrive at the room for the meal. While eating, Jesus points out that one of their number will betray him; "woe to that man ... it would have been better if he had not been born." Continuing on with the meal, Jesus takes some bread and wine, and after giving thanks he distributes it to his disciples as symbols of his body broken and blood poured out "for many." Jesus will not taste the fruit of the vine again until the kingdom comes in glory.

Teaching

Jesus' death is the means by which the redemptive significance of the Passover is realised "for many".

Issues

i] Context: See Mark 14:1-11.

ii] Structure: *The Last Supper*

Preparation for the last supper, v12-16;

The last supper, v17-31.

iii] Background:

The Passover was celebrated on 14 Nisan (March / April), with the Passover meal eaten that evening, 15 Nisan (the new day begins at sunset). The meal also coincided with the commencement of the feast of unleavened bread, 15-21 Nisan. John, in his gospel, has Jesus crucified on the feast of Passover, but the synoptic gospels place the Passover before Friday, possibly the Thursday, with the meal on Thursday evening. It is assumed that John is making a theological statement, but it is known that the Qumran

sect and others celebrated the Passover before the official date, in this case, the Tuesday evening. This would give a more realistic time-frame for the betrayal and trial before the crucifixion on Friday. The date is held to be 33AD.

The provision of an upper room is probably an example of the tradition whereby residents of Jerusalem opened their homes for pilgrims to celebrate the Passover. No fee was usually charged.

The book of Acts refers to communal meals in the Jerusalem church, fellowship meals later called *love feasts* - joyful celebrations of grace. There is some debate as to whether these were a version of the Lord's supper. It seems likely that the early church, with its Jewish heritage, continued to celebrate the Passover as a separate feast, but now with its redemptive significance focused on Christ. Just as the day of rest, the Sabbath, slowly moved to Sunday (the day of resurrection, new life / rest in Christ), so there was a merging of the communal fellowship meals with the redemptive celebration of the Passover producing the service we have today - the Mass / Eucharist / Holy Communion.

iv) Interpretation:

As noted in the Synopsis, preparations for the supper are done discreetly due to the hostile environment in Jerusalem. Clearly Jesus has made arrangements for the use of an upper room for the Passover meal, and this explains the instructions regarding the "man carrying a jar of water" (women's work!) and what to say. It is possible that Mark regards the incident as an example of supernatural foresight on the part of Jesus, but the incident itself is probably not miraculous. The meal proper begins with Jesus identifying the source of his coming betrayal, and then, taking a loaf of bread, he gives thanks and shares it with his disciples saying "take it [eat this bread], it is [εστίν, "is" = represents / means / symbolises] my body [my body offered up as a sacrifice]." Then he takes a cup of wine (definitely not grape juice!!!!) and, sharing it with the disciples, says "this [this cup of wine] is [represents / means / symbolises] my blood [my sacrifice] of the covenant [for the realisation / fulfilment of the covenant / agreement made between God and his people] which is poured out [offered up] for many [for his people / Israel = believers]."

So, the Lord's Supper is framed by the Passover festival which marks the salvation of God's people from their slavery in Egypt, and their ultimate inheritance of the Promised Land. In an example of classic Biblical theology / typology, Jesus applies the historic redemption of Israel to the spiritual redemption of the new Israel (Mk.12:9), and their inheritance of "the kingdom of God." This redemption / salvation / escape for the new

Israel is fulfilled in Christ's sacrifice, his passion, the "cup", 10:38, 14:36, "for the many", Mk.10:45, 14:24. To remember / celebrate this event, Jesus replaces the Passover meal with a new meal, this time with symbols of bread and wine.

History of interpretation: Numerous shades of meaning have been drawn from the Lord's Supper and applied in Christian worship. They can be roughly classified under three heads: Roman, Calvinist and Zwinglian.

The Roman position, known as transubstantiation, promotes the view that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ through the liturgy of the church. Grace is conveyed in the eating and drinking of the consecrated elements.

The Calvinist position, evident in the Anglican / Episcopalian liturgy, promotes the view that the bread and wine spiritually become the body and blood of Christ for the person who consumes the elements with faith; "feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving." Grace is conveyed in an eating and drinking by faith.

The Zwinglian position, adopted by most conservative Protestant denominations, promotes the view that the eating and drinking of the elements is a practical expression of remembering / believing in the atonement. Grace is conveyed through faith / remembering.

v] Synoptics:

Judas' betrayal of Jesus, v10-11: Matt.26:14-16, Lk.22:3-6.

The Lord's Supper, 12-21: Matt.26:17-25; Lk.22:7-14, 21-23; Jn.13:21-30.

Matthew and Mark's account of the Last Supper are very close. Luke's account, on the other hand, looks rather jumbled. In fact, 22:19b-20 is often regarded as a later inclusion, but this is unlikely. Examining how Luke handles the account, compared to Mark, is quite informative.

What Luke does is record the Passover meal itself, the sharing of the cup and Jesus' statement that he will not again share this celebration until the full realisation of the kingdom, v15-18. We then have the sharing of the bread and wine where Jesus interprets its meaning, v19-20. Luke draws out the redemptive significance of the bread with "this is my body which is given for you", while virtually restating Mark's words for the wine; "the cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood", cf., Isa.53:12, the sacrifice of the suffering servant is that which realises the Passover redemption - a shift from Egypt to Calvary.

It is worth noting that Paul, a friend and colleague of Luke, records the same redemptive emphasis in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 - "this is my body

which is for you. Both Paul and Luke include the words "do this in remembrance of me", which, given the context, assumes a repeated doing / remembering.

v] Homiletics: *The Lord's Supper*



For a time, as a young child, I was sent to the Congregational church Sunday School in Killara. It is now a Uniting church. I remember the minister taking my class inside the church and telling us about the special service they held once a month after the regular morning service. To attend this

service, you had to be a full member of the church. It all sounded very special to me. My mother attended the morning church service from time-to-time, but she never attended the special service.

I enjoyed my time at the Killara Congregational Church, but for some reason we drifted to the Anglican church. Embarrassment may have been the cause. I know my mother had something to do with cleaning out the earn with sand-soap prior the visit of the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, to open the new hall. It was a special brew of tea that day!

The interaction of culture and history has shaped the celebration of the Lord's Supper and produced a rich diversity of traditions. Setting aside the specifics of each tradition, it is possible to find a common focus. So, when we join together to celebrate the Lord's Supper what should we focus on?

When Christians meet, they do so in the knowledge that when two or three are gathered together in Jesus Name, Jesus is spiritually present with them. So, as we gather, recognising the presence of the Lord in our midst, we bow in confession of our sins, and then, in recognition of God's grace of forgiveness, we respond in adoration. As we continue in worship we consider God's Word, we confess our faith, and we pray. All these elements are usually present in any service of worship, but in the Lord's supper we have an added special element.

In the Lord's Supper we focus on what Jesus has done for us; we remember calvary, we remember that Jesus gave his very self, his very being, as a sacrifice for our sins. There is no way we can ever understand

how Jesus bears in his own body the curse of our corruption. Yet, this he does for us and so we, like the children of Israel bound in slavery in Egypt, are set free, released from our bondage and blessed with eternal life. Just as the Israelites of old celebrated the Passover meal and remembered that they were once slaves, but now set free, so we gather and celebrate the Lord's Supper and remember that we too were once slaves, but are now set free.

So, as we eat the bread and drink the wine, remembering that Jesus gave his life that we may have life, and in that remembering, that act of faith on our part, the gift of life is confirmed to us. In the knowledge of God's grace extended to us, we respond in thanksgiving and look forward to that day when we will share with Jesus the new wine of eternity.

Next time you take the bread and wine, remember all that Jesus has done for you.

Text - 14:12

Jesus celebrates the Passover, v12-25: i] Preparations for the Passover, v12-16. In Mark's timing it is Thursday, the feast of Passover. The disciples want to make arrangements for the Passover meal that evening and so they raise the issue with Jesus. Given that the new day begins at sunset, the meal falls on the first day of the Festival of Unleavened bread. Both festivals celebrate Israel's escape from their slavery in Egypt. Jesus has obviously made prior arrangements for the meal and so he sends his disciples from Bethany, where they are staying, into Jerusalem to prepare for the meal. They meet the man carrying the water jar, just as Jesus said, and are taken to an upstairs room furnished and ready for their meal together.

τη πρωτη ημερα dat. "**on the first day**" - [AND] ON THE FIRST DAY. The dative is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

των αζυμων [ος] gen. "**of the Festival of Unleavened Bread**" - OF UNLEAVENED BREAD. The genitive is adjectival, partitive, although assuming "festival", the genitive would be idiomatic / identification, "*the festival known as Unleavened Bread.*"

οτε "**when**" - WHEN. Temporal conjunction introducing a temporal clause.

εθουον imperf. "**it was customary to sacrifice**" - [THE PASSOVER *lamb*] WAS BEING SACRIFICED, SLAUGHTERED. Indefinite plural. "The Passover", accusative, with the nominative subject "they / people", durative / iterative (repeated action); "they used to sacrifice", Zerwick.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - [THE DISCIPLES OF HIM SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

που + subj. "**where**" - WHERE. The interrogative particle introduces an indefinite local clause. Presumably they are still in Bethany and so the disciples are asking where in Jerusalem Jesus wants them to go and make preparation for the Passover meal. Note Jesus' answer, v13, "go into the city." Presumably Jesus has organised the room for the meal beforehand.

απελθοντες [απερχομαι] aor. part. "**to go**" - HAVING GONE. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to prepare"; "to go and prepare."

ινα + subj. "**for [you to eat]**" - [WE MAY PREPARE] THAT [YOU MAY EAT THE PASSOVER]? Introducing a purpose clause; "in order that."

v13

και "and so" - AND. Coordinative.

των μαθητων [ης ου] gen. "**[two] of [his] disciples**" - [HE SENDS TWO] OF THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**[telling] them**" - [AND SAID] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

εις "into" - [GO] INTO [THE CITY, TOWN]. Spatial. As already noted, Jesus is obviously in Bethany and is telling his disciples to go into Jerusalem to make arrangements for their participation in the Passover meal.

βασταζων [βασταζω] pres. part. "**carrying**" - [AND A MAN WILL MEET YOU] CARRYING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "man", serving to introduce a relative clause; "a man who is carrying a jar of water." It would be unusual for a man to be doing what was considered as *women's work*, although a slave would do *women's work*. It seems likely that this was a prearranged signal rather than a miraculous example of foreknowledge, so France, Edwards, It can be argued that Mark sees it as miraculous, serving "to emphasise the foreknowledge and authority of Jesus", Boring, and maybe he did, but he is true to his source and just records the arrangements without comment. Note the similarity of this story with Jesus' arrangement of a colt for his procession into Jerusalem, cf., the wording 11:2 / 14:13. Secrecy seems the likely reason for these arrangements, possibly keeping the site for the Passover meal secure from not only the religious authorities, but Judas as well.

υδατος [ωρ τος] gen. "**of water**" - [AN EARTHEN VESSEL, PITCHER, JAR] OF WATER. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / content. "Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water", NJB.

υμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - Dative of direct object after the **απο** prefix verb "to meet, encounter."

αυτω "**him**" - [FOLLOW] HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow after."

v14

όπου εαν + subj. "-" - [AND] WHEREVER [HE ENTERS]. Introducing an indefinite local clause; "wherever he enters say to the proprietor", Berkeley.

τω οικοδεσποτη [ης ου] dat. "[say] to the owner of the house" - [SAY] TO THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE. Dative of indirect object. "Householder", REB.

ότι "-" - THAT [THE TEACHER SAYS]. Introducing a dependent statement, indirect speech.

που "where" - WHERE. The interrogative particle serves to introduce a dependent statement expressing what "the Teacher" says / asks / wants to know, namely, "whether / if the guest room has been prepared where"

το καταλυμα [α ατος] "[my] guest room" - [IS] THE GUEST QUARTERS [OF ME]. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. Guest quarters, or a large dining room, later described as **αναγαλιον μεγα** "a large upstairs room", often a living room, or banqueting room, accessed by an external staircase or internal ladder. Jesus calls it **μου**, "my [room]", probably in the sense of the room he has arranged for his use - that it "implies Jesus' authority", Marcus, "a hint of messianic authority", Nineham, is a bit of a stretch. It seems unlikely that the owner of the room was a disciple since the word "teacher" could apply to any sectarian leader. "The teacher wants to know if you have a room where he can eat the Passover meal with his disciples", CEV.

όπου + subj. "**where**" - WHERE [I MAY EAT THE PASSOVER]. Introducing a indefinite local clause.

μετα + acc. "**with**" - WITH [THE DISCIPLES OF ME]. Expressing association.

v15

ύμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - [AND HE WILL SHOW] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

εστρωμενον [στρωννου] perf. pas. part. "**furnished [and ready]**" - [A LARGE UPSTAIRS ROOM] HAVING BEEN FURNISHED [READY]. The participle, with the adjective "ready", is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the large upstairs room", "which is prepared and ready." This verb takes the sense "to spread, strew" and so is understood to mean "furnish"; "He will show you a big upstairs room, with everything ready, and with the couches spread with rugs. There make all the necessary preparations for us", Barclay.

ήμιν dat. pro. "**for us**" - [AND THERE PREPARE *the passover meal*] FOR US. Dative of interest, advantage; "prepare the meal for us there", Cassirer.

v16

καθως "just as" - [AND THE DISCIPLES WENT OUT AND CAME INTO THE CITY AND FOUND *everything*] AS, LIKE, JUST AS. Comparative.

αυτοις dat. pro. "[Jesus had told] them" - [HE SAID] TO THEM [AND THEY PREPARED THE PASSOVER]. Dative of indirect object.

v17

ii] Jesus prophesies his betrayal, v16-21. Jesus shows no surprise with regard his revelation that he is about to be betrayed by one of his disciples. Such is in accord with scripture, v21a, and thus in the plan and foreknowledge of God. The scripture is not cited, but an allusion to Psalm 41:9 is evident in v18b.

γενομενης [γινομαι] gen. aor. part. "**when [evening] came**" - [AND EVENING] HAVING COME. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "evening" for a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - [HE COMES] WITH [THE TWELVE]. Expressing association / accompaniment. Note that only the apostles are present for the Passover meal.

v18

ανακειμενων [ανακειμαι] gen. pres. part. "**while they were reclining**" - [AND THEY] RECLINING [AND EATING, SAID]. The genitive participles "reclining" and "eating" with the subject "them" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. "Reclining" is the normal posture for a meal, so for us, "sitting"; "when they had taken their places at the table", Barclay. By this stage, an eating in haste, ready to flee, was not the way the Passover meal was consumed, cf., Ex.12:11.

αμην λεγω υμιν "**truly I tell you**" - TRULY I SAY TO YOU. The phrase always serves to introduce an important statement.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus says to his disciples.

εξ [εκ] + gen. "**of [you]**" - [ONE] FROM [YOU]. The preposition here serves in the place of partitive genitive.

παραδωσει [παραδιδωμι] fut. "**will betray**" - WILL BETRAY, DELIVER OVER [ME]. The verb takes the sense "to hand over" and is often used of God handing over Israel to her enemies, or of Israel's enemies being handed over to her. The Suffering Servant is handed over to death, Isa.53:12.

ο εσθλων [εσθλω] pres. part. "**one who is eating [with me]**" - THE ONE EATING [WITH ME]. The participle serves as a substantive. Cf., Ps.41:9.

v19

λυπεσθαι pres. pas./mid. inf. "**they were saddened**" - [THEY BEGAN] TO BE SORROWFUL, GRIEVED, DISTRESSED, SAD. This, and the infinitive "to say", is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin"; "they began to be sorrowful and to say", ESV. Describing a reaction of "grief, distress, anxiety,

shock, dismay - the word has all these connotations", Boring. "Ambiguity provokes soul-searching in each disciple. The announcement provokes grief and protests", Edwards.

κατα "[one] by [one]" - [AND SAY TO HIM ONE] ACCORDING TO [ONE]. The preposition here "is used as an adverb distributively", Taylor, cf., BAGD **εἰς** p231, 5e, for the Semitic construction "one by one." "One after the other", Cassirer.

μητι "[surely you] don't [mean me]?" - NOT [I]? Gundry argues that the negation here is used in a question expecting a negative answer, as NIV, but it is possible that it expresses a negative protest, "Certainly not me!"

v20

των δωδεκα gen. adj. "of the twelve" - [AND HE SAID TO THEM, ONE] OF THE TWELVE. The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being partitive.

ὁ εμβαπτομενος [εμβαπτω] pres. part. "one who dips bread" - THE ONE DIPPING. The participle serves as a substantive, standing in apposition to "one". It has been suggested that the article serves to particularise this "one" as if to identify a certain person. This seems unlikely. The articular participle is referring to one of those present for the meal and is not identifying any particular person. So not "that particular person who is eating with me now." The dipping refers to the custom of holding a piece of the flat bread between the fingers and dipping it into a common bowl of source or relish, a common dish in the centre of the table, a dipping bowl. The custom is still practised in Eastern countries.

ἐν "-" - [INTO THE] ONE [BOWL]. Variant reading, emphatic; "into the same bowl." Opinion on originality is divided, eg. Marcus in favour, France against.

μετ [μετα] + acc. "with" - WITH [ME]. Expressing association. Unlike John who has Judas leaving the meal at this point, Mark has him present throughout the whole meal.

v21

μεν δε "..... but ..." - INDEED, BUT Adversative comparative construction; "on the one hand but on the other hand [woe to that man]"

ὅτι "-" - FOR. Possibly recitative, introducing a statement, or expressing reason, but probably not cause. That Judas is about to betray Jesus is not so much because the Son of Man, as the Suffering Servant, must die as a sacrifice, it is "is due to the fact that the Son of Man has been ordained to die", Culy. Judas has chosen to take part in the unfolding events that will lead to messiah's death rather than being preordained to play this role. The interplay of God's sovereign will

and human free-will is a classic debate brought into sharp relief in Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

του ανθρωπου [ος] gen. "[Son] of Man" - [THE SON] OF MAN. The genitive is adjectival, of relationship. A messianic title favoured by Jesus referencing Daniel's Son of Man, the man who attains divine sovereignty at the right hand of the Ancient of Days, cf., 2:10

υαγαι [υαγω] pres. "will go" - GOES. A very old metaphor for death used in the ancient Near East.

καθως "just as" - AS, LIKE. Comparative, expressing alignment, in alignment to the scriptures. "As it is written" expresses "divine purpose or foreordination", Edwards.

περι + gen. "about [him]" - [IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN] ABOUT, CONCERNING [HIM]. Expressing reference / respect; "with reference to, concerning, about."

τω ανθρωπω [ος] dat. "[woe] to [that] man" - [BUT/AND WOE] TO [THAT] MAN. Dative of interest, disadvantage. The disadvantage could be a curse, the pronouncing of judgment, "woe" = "a curse to / be upon that person", but better expressing deep sadness, sorrow, "a cry of commiseration", TH; "alas" = "how terrible it will be for that person."

δι [δια] + gen. "-" - THROUGH [WHOM THE SON OF MAN IS BETRAYED]. Expressing agency, "by", although more correctly intermediate agency, "through", given that God, rather than Judas / Satan, ultimately does the handing over. The preposition υπο would have better expressed ultimate agency, "by", if that were intended.

καλον adj. "it would be better" - BETTER, GOOD. Here used in the comparative sense "better", as NIV, and serving as a predicate nominative, "it would be better."

αυτω dat. pro. "for him" - TO HIM. Dative of interest, advantage, "for him".

ει + ind. "if" - IF [THAT MAN HAD NOT BEEN BORN]. Introducing a conditional clause 2nd. class where the proposed condition is assumed not to be true; "if, as is not the case, [this man had not been born] then [it would be better for him]"; αυ is missing from the apodosis. "That man would be better off if he had never been born", CEV.

v22

iii] Jesus explains the meaning of the shared bread and wine, v22-25. It was usual, during a Passover meal, to explain the significance of Israel's escape from their slavery in Egypt. Jesus does this, but applies the redemptive significance of the Passover to himself.

Taking a loaf of flat bread, Jesus brakes it and passes it to the disciples. As they eat, Jesus explains that the bread symbolically represents the offering of his

body as a sacrifice. The new Israel is saved from the bondage of sin and death through the sacrifice of Christ. Mark assumes a repeated remembering of Jesus' *Passover*, while Luke makes it specific by adding "do this in remembrance of me". Jesus then takes a cup of wine and passes it to the disciples. As they drink, Jesus explains that the wine symbolically represents the offering, the pouring out, of his life-blood as a sacrifice. This sacrifice not only renews God's covenant with humanity, his promise of life in all its fullness, but actually realises it, fulfils it right now. Jesus adds that the new wine of heaven will not be shared until the full realisation of God's long-promised kingdom. Only then will Jesus share the new wine with his disciples. So, there will always be a sense where the shared bread and wine looks forward to the messianic banquet.

So, in line with the interpretative words offered at the Passover meal, Jesus offers new interpretive words for the celebration of Israel's redemption from slavery / Egypt. The redemptive significance is now focused on Christ's offering of himself, a sacrifice of his body and blood.

εσθιοντων [εσθιω] gen. pres. part. "**while they were eating**" - [AND THEY] EATING. The genitive participle and its genitive subject forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

λαβων [λαμβανω] aor. part. "**Jesus took [bread]**" - TAKING [BREAD *and* HAVING BLESSED *it*]. Along with "giving thanks / blessing", attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to break / break into pieces." The "bread" is probably flat unleavened bread, so Jeremias. The "giving thanks / blessing" is not a consecration of the bread for special use, but a statement of praise or thanksgiving to God for the gift of food; a grace which those present would affirm by saying "Amen". The common grace of the time went something like "blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the world, who brings forth bread from the earth." So also the cup, with the words "..... creation of the fruit of the vine."

αυτοις dat. pro. "**[gave it] to his disciples**" - [HE BROKE *it* AND GAVE *it*] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object. "Gave" in the sense of "distributed".

λαβετε [λαμβανω] aor. imp. "**take it**" - [AND SAID] TAKE, RECEIVE. Matthew's additional word "eat" is assumed by Mark. The sense is "participate in", although the means of participation is unstated, as are the benefits. The intended sense of our participation in Christ's death, with the means, namely faith, and the benefits, namely life, are left for apostolic reflection in the epistles.

τουτο pro. "this" - THIS. It is interesting that the close demonstrative pronoun "this" is neuter, while bread is masculine. Edwards suggests that the use of neuter serves to point away from bread itself to Jesus' body.

εστιν [ειμι] pres. "**is**" - IS. The verb to-be here may carry the sense "means"; "this represents my body", Williams, "symbolises", France. Edwards suggests

that the original Aramaic would have been "this, my body." The supplied verb to-be does not help the nuance of the phrase which is more like "this bread *means* / *conveys* by body."

το σωμα [α ατος] "[my] **body**" - THE BODY [OF ME]. Jeremias, in *Eucharistic Words*, suggests that it is likely that the Aramaic word for "flesh" lies behind the Gk. word "body"; "the bread that I give is my flesh" - even stronger, "this is my corpse", Gundry. Edwards suggests that rather than "flesh" the Aramaic behind "body" is likely to be "self / being" = "my person"; "his self-offering for his disciples." That Jesus is referring to his sacrifice is certainly supported by Luke's / Paul's added words "which is given for you", including **ὑπερ πολλων**, "on behalf of many" for the wine, both references to Jesus' death, but of itself, Mark's words say little more than "that they (the disciples) somehow become participants in Jesus' own destiny, but this saying does not specify how this is to be", Boring.

v23

λαβων [λαμβανω] aor. part. "**then he took**" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to give", "he took and gave", or adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

ποτηριον [ον] "**a cup**" - A CUP. "A cup containing wine", TH. It is interesting to note that reports of the Passover meal at the time refer to individual cups and yet Mark clearly describes the use of a common cup for the last supper.

ευχαριστησας [ευχαριστω] aor. part. "**and when he had given thanks**" - *and* HAVING GIVEN THANKS. The participle is usually treated as adverbial, temporal; "he also took a cup and after thanking God he gave ...", Moffatt. If temporal, and this is supported by many commentators, eg., Schweizer, then it is obvious that Jesus' words do not affect the nature of the wine itself, given that the disciples have already drunk the wine before Jesus offers his words of interpretation. "A gracing", Jeremias, with the same meaning as **ευλογησας** in v22. "Each verb explains the other", Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words*.

εξ [εκ] + gen. "**from [it]**" - [HE GAVE TO THEM AND EVERYONE DRANK] FROM [IT]. Expressing source / origin, as NIV. "They all drank some of its contents", TH.

v24

Note Luke's wording: "this cup *of wine*, which is poured out for you, *is* the new covenant in my blood." The preposition **εν**, "in", is probably instrumental, "by means of." Luke's "new" covenant probably reflects later usage, serving to emphasise Jesus' renewal of the covenant through his atoning sacrifice. There is only one covenant (the promise of life through faith), one agreement between God and his children, renewed on many occasions and finally realised in Jesus.

ΤΟΥΤΟ "this" pro. - [AND HE SAID TO THEM] THIS. The demonstrative pronoun refers to the contents of the cup rather than the cup itself; "This cup of wine."

ΕΣΤΙΝ "is" - IS. See above; "this means my life-blood", Barclay.

ΤΟ ΑΙΜΑ [α αιτος] "[my] blood" - THE BLOOD. Predicate nominative of the verb to-be. In Semitic thought "blood" represented the life-force of an animal. The cup of wine means / represents Jesus' life poured out in sacrifice.

της διαθηκης [η] gen. "**of the covenant**" - OF THE COVENANT [OF ME]. The function of the genitive is not overly clear, more idiomatic than anything, but technically we may classify it as adjectival attributed, "the covenant of blood" = "the covenant which is established / ratified / renewed / realised through the life-blood which was poured out / offered in sacrifice by Christ." Decker suggests purpose, "the reason for Jesus' death was to provide the basis of the covenant." Luke gives us a clearer sense of Jesus' interpretive words, but Mark is bound by the phrase "blood of the covenant", Ex.24:8, cf., Jer.31:31-34. Unlike the bread, the benefit from Christ's inevitable death / the shedding of his blood, is spelled out, namely the covenant / agreement of God with his people - "you will be my people and I will be your God" - a community bound by divine grace "inaugurated by a sacrifice, and the blood shared among the people", France. "This is Mark's only reference to 'covenant'. While it is not a major theological category for him, the imagery places Jesus' death within the framework of God's eschatological saving event in which God's covenant with Israel is not nullified or superseded, but eschatologically renewed", Boring.

ΤΟ ΕΚΧΥΝΟΜΕΝΟΝ [εχυννω] "**which is poured out**" - *the blood* BEING POURED OUT. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the blood", "the blood which is being poured out". Semitic idiom for death; "poured out" = "died".

ὑπερ "for [many]" - ON BEHALF OF [MANY]. Here expressing advantage / benefit, "on behalf of, for the sake of", although Decker argues for substitution, "in place of." The pouring out for the many alludes to the ministry of Isaiah's Suffering Servant and thus of Christ's shed blood, of redemption through his vicarious death. Note the link with 10:45, of the Son of Man's ministry intent "to give his life as a ransom for many", although **αντι** instead of **ὑπερ**. The **πολλων**, "many", is probably reflecting Semitic idiom where there is no word for "all" in the plural. The pouring out of Christ's life-blood is inclusive, it is for "all in contrast with one", Nineham; cf., MHT I, "many" = a group in its entirety.

v25

The significance of this statement is unclear. It gives the last supper an eschatological frame, a frame which is reflected in the liturgy of the church. Of course, Jesus may be saying little more than "We'll meet again some day soon....", but it is usually viewed with more significance; "when the fellowship

of the parousia commences, this memorial table-fellowship ends", Dibelius. The "memorial" looks forward to the messianic banquet which will be celebrated at the time of the full realisation of the eschatological kingdom.

ὅμιν dat. pro. "**[truly I tell] you**" - [TRULY I SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object. The phrase serves to underline the following statement.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech expressing what Jesus wants to tell his disciples.

οὐκετι ου μη + subj. "**[I will] not [drink again]**" - [NO LONGER] NO NO [MAY I DRINK]. An unusual package of three negative serving to introduce a subjunctive of emphatic negation; "I will never ever drink wine again."

εκ + gen. "**from**" - FROM. Expressing source / origin.

της αμπελου [ος] "**of the vine**" - [THE FRUIT] OF THE VINE. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / producer, product; "the fruit *produced by* a grape vine."

έως + gen. "**until**" - UNTIL [THAT DAY]. This construction serves to introduce a temporal clause, future time, of the transit of time up to a point.

όταν + subj. "**when**" - WHEN. This construction serves to introduce an indefinite temporal clause, treated as definite, as NIV.

καινον adj. "**new**" - [I DRINK IT] NEW. "This will be not merely a restoration of the status quo; rather, the wine will be **καινον** and the situation will be that of the kingdom of God", France.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN. Local, expressing space.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [THE KINGDOM] OF GOD. For "the kingdom of God" see Mk.1:15. The genitive may be treated as adjectival, possessive, although where the emphasis falls on dominion rather than domain, then verbal, subjective, would be a better classification.

14:26-52

Entering the promised land, 11:1-16:8

4. Victory, 14:1-15:39

iii] Gethsemane

Synopsis

The meal concluded, Jesus and his disciples sing a Psalm and then leave the upper room. They pass through the city gate, across the Kidron valley and up to the Mount of Olives. On the way, Jesus tells his disciples that they are about to abandon him. Of course, Peter protests, as do they all, but it is even worse for Peter; he will deny Jesus.

At an olive grove named Gethsemane, Jesus is driven to prayer. Leaving the other disciples outside the grove, Jesus takes Peter, James and John with him to share in this time of prayer together. Jesus is overcome with agony, aware of what is about to happen. He moves aside to pray by himself. From the beginning Jesus was tempted to find another way to realise the kingdom apart from his sacrifice, and so he prays that the removal of the cup suffering, "yet, not what I want, but what you want." Three times Jesus is overtaken in prayer, and three times he returns to find the disciples sleeping. On the third occasion, Jesus announces that "my betrayer is at hand."

Under the authority of the Sanhedrin, an arresting party, led by Judas, reaches Jesus and the disciples. Judas kisses Jesus, as is the custom of a disciple greeting his Rabbi, and this serves as the signal to mark Jesus out in the dull evening light. One of the disciples tries to resist. John tells us that it was Peter, who, having drawn his sword, cuts off the ear of one of the arresting party. Jesus protests his treatment as a common criminal, given that daily he is to be found teaching in the Temple. With Jesus taken into custody, the disciples flee the scene.

The episode concludes with Mark's account of a young man who follows the arresting party and is nearly arrested himself. Many commentators take the view that this is Mark's way of saying that he was an eyewitness to the arrest of Jesus.

Teaching

The Son of Man is handed over to the powers of darkness for the sake of those entrapped in darkness.

Issues

i] Context: See 14:1-11.

ii] Structure: *Gethsemane*:

Jesus prophesies that the twelve will desert him, v26-31;

Jesus suffers in prayer, v32-42;

The arrest of Jesus, v43-50;

The flight of the young man, v51-52.

iii] Interpretation:

Jesus' prediction of the scattering of the prophetic fulfilment of the scattering of the sheep, v26-31, serves as the last part of a Markan sandwich covering v17-31. This sandwich effectively contrasts the grace evident in the Lord's Supper with the graceless behaviour of the disciples.

A. Jesus predicts his betrayal, v17-21;

B. The last supper, v22-26;

A² Pride comes before a fall, v27-31.

"It is .. not the worthy for whom Jesus lays down his life, but precisely the unworthy - even cowardly and unfaithful followers. The sandwich illustrates the truth of Romans 5:8, 'God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us'", Edwards.

Mark now draws out the cost of Jesus' mission to the unworthy. Before detailing the physical cost, the painful humiliation of the cross, we are given a glimpse into the psychological cost. Jesus' mission to the unworthy, the lost and broken children of God, must be according to the will of God the Father; Jesus must now submit to that will.

Mark portrays the internal struggle that Jesus goes through as a struggle of the human will, with that of the divine will. The human will, evident in the disciples' inability to even stay awake with Jesus, along with Jesus' own doubts and fears, is overshadowed by Jesus' ultimate determination to submit to the Father's will. It is in that determination to submit to suffering and death that the unworthy are made worthy of God's affectionate love.

iv] Synoptics:

Jesus predicts Peter's denial, v27-31: Matt.26:31-35; Lk.22:31-34; Jn.13:36-38. There is alignment between Mark and Matthew, less so with Luke.

Gethsemane: v32-42: Matt.26:36-46; Lk.22:39-46. It is more than likely that a written, rather than oral, tradition lies behind Mark's account, a tradition employed by all three synoptic gospels.

Jesus' arrest, v43-52: Matt.26:57-68; Lk.22:54-55, 63-71; Jn.18:13-14, 19-24. Again, eye-witness testimony is evident behind the account.

Text - 14:26

Gethsemane, v26-52. i] A prophecy of failure and denial, v26-31.

ὕμνησαντες [ὕμνεω] aor. part. "**When they had sung a hymn**" - [AND] HAVING SUNG A PSALM. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV. Possibly the Passover Psalm 114 / 115.

εις + acc. "**to**" - [THEY WENT OUT] INTO. Expressing the direction of the action and arrival at; obviously direction toward here. Pilgrims were supposed to reside in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, but by this time near was good enough.

των ελαιων [α] gen. "**of Olives**" - [THE MOUNT] OF OLIVES. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / identification; "the hill *known as* Olives." This hill is some two kilometres outside the city wall.

v27

Jesus quotes from Zechariah 13:7, predicting the coming flight of the disciples in the face of his arrest and execution.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - [AND JESUS SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "-" - THAT [ALL YOU WILL BE SCANDALISED, OFFENDED, ENSNARED]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of direct speech. The sense of the verb **σκανδαλισθησεσθε** is unclear and is translated in numerous ways. The NIV "fall away" is quite strong, as if the disciples will lose their faith; "fall from your faith", NIB. "Their courage will fail and they will abandon him", TH, is more likely; "there are none of you whose courage will stand the test", Barclay.

οτι "**for**" - BECAUSE [IT IS WRITTEN]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they will be scandalised.

διασκορπισθησονται [διασκοριζω] fut. pas. "**will be scattered**" - [I WILL STRIKE, SMITE = SLAY THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP] WILL BE SCATTERED, dispersed. Mark uses a fut. ind. while in the LXX and MT it is an imperative. "The sheep shall be scattered far and wide", Cassirer.

v28

Jesus promises that the shepherd will be reunited with the scattered flock in Galilee following his resurrection.

μετα το + inf. "**after**" - [BUT] AFTER THE [TO BE RAISED]. This preposition with the articular infinitive forms a temporal clause, subsequent time.

προξω [προαγω] fut. "**I will go ahead of**" - I WILL GO BEFORE, PRECEDE [YOU]. Cranfield gives three possible ways of understanding the word here, opting for the third: A literal sense, "walking in front of", so Weiss; A metaphorical sense, "Jesus will lead the disciples in the sense that it will be in obedience to his

instructions"; A grammatical sense, "go somewhere earlier than someone", so also Decker.

εις + acc. "**into**" - INTO [GALILEE]. Expressing the direction of the action.

v29

Peter, ignoring Jesus' words about a promised reunion, separates himself from the disciples, claiming that others may lose courage, but not him.

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE [PETER]. Transitional, indicating a step in the discourse, a move from Jesus to Peter.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [SAYS] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ει + ind. "**[even] if**" - [AND = EVEN] IF, *as is the case*, [ALL = EVERYONE LOSES HEART]. Introducing a 1st., class conditional clause where the proposed condition is assumed to be true.

αλλ [αλλα] "-" - BUT [I WILL NOT]. This adversative introduces the apodosis of the conditional clause, establishing a contrast between the protasis and the apodosis.

v30

σοι dat. pro. "**you**" - [AND JESUS SAID TO HIM, TRULY, TRULY I SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object. The adverb "truly" always proceeds an important statement from Jesus.

ὅτι "-" – **that** - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of direct speech expressing what Jesus says.

πριν ἢ "**before**" – BEFORE [THE COCK, ROOSTER CROWS]. Idiomatic temporal construction. Common in Koine Gk. The rooster crowing twice may well be an idiomatic term for dawn, but it may well be a literal crowing twice before Peter disowns Jesus. One interesting theory is that the term is used of the sounding of the *gallicinium* trumpet at the end of the third watch in a Roman garrison - the change of guard at 3am.

συ pers. pro. "**you yourself**" - YOU [TODAY, THIS NIGHT, WILL DENY ME THREE *times*]. Emphatic use of the personal pronoun; "even you."

v31

Peter affirms his allegiance, and the other disciples join in. Ironically, in a few hours' time, they will all be running for the hills.

ὁ δε "**but**" – BUT/AND HE [EMPHATICALLY, VEHEMENTLY, HE SAID]. Transitional, indicating a step in the discourse, a move from Jesus to Peter.

εαν + subj. "**even if**" - IF. Introducing a 3rd. class conditional clause where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true; "if, *as may be the case*, *then* by no means will I deny you."

συναποθανειν [συναποθνησκω] aor. inf. "**to die with**" - [IT IS NECESSARY ME] TO DIE TOGETHER WITH. The infinitive, and its accusative subject **με**, "me", serves as the subject of the impersonal verb "it is necessary."

σοι dat. pro. "**with**" – TO YOU. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb "to die together with" / of association, "with you."

ου μη + fut. "**never**" – NOT NOT = IN NO WAY, NEVER EVER [WILL I DISOWN, RENOUNCE, DENY YOU, BUT/AND AND = ALSO LIKEWISE, IN THE SAME MANNER, SAID ALL]. Emphatic negation, usually formed with a subjunctive, but here a future tense. "Even if I had to suffer death by your side, I shall never disown you', and all the others spoke in the same way", Cassirer.

v32

ii] Jesus suffers in prayer, v32-42. Jesus now experiences the full psychological force of his impending handing over by God to the powers of darkness. He would have the disciples support him in his time of testing, but they continue to display all the failings which make his sacrifice necessary.

ερχονται [ερχομαι] pres. "**They went**" - [AND] THEY ARE COMING. The use of the historic / narrative present tense indicates narrative transition / a new paragraph.

εις + acc. "**to [a place]**" - [AND THEY CAME] TO, INTO [A PLACE, FIELD, PLOT OF LAND, ESTATE, OF WHICH THE NAME GETHSEMANE (olive grove, oil press)]. Spatial, expressing the direction of the action and arrival at. Gethsemane is probably a walled olive grove with oil press and was situated on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives. Obviously Judas knew the site and assumed Jesus would be there, and of course, Jesus knew that Judas knew.

τοις μαθηταις [ης ου] gen. "**disciples**" - [AND HE SAID] TO THE DISCIPLES [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object.

εως + subj. "**while [I pray]**" - [SIT DOWN HERE] UNTIL [I PRAY]. Temporal construction, "until", **εως** (usually **εως αν**) + subj., as here, expressing future action with respect to the main verb, although usually translated here to express action occurring at the same time as the main verb, "while", as NIV, usually **εως** + ind.. With the aorist, "until I finish praying", TH.

v33

Luther suggested that Jesus took the three disciples along to keep him company, but as Cranfield notes, the purpose (in Mark's account of the incident) "is actually to make more inescapably clear the fact of his aloneness."

μετ [μετα] + gen. "**with [him]**" - [AND HE TAKES PETER AND JAMES AND JOHN] WITH [HIM]. Expressing association.

εκθαμβεισθαι [εκθαμew] pres. mid. inf. "to be deeply distressed" - [AND HE BEGAN] TO BE DEEPLY DISTRESSED, ALARMED [AND TO BE TROUBLED, ANXIOUS]. The infinitive, as with "to be troubled", is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin." "To be greatly distraught", Brown; "full of terror and distress", Weymouth.

v34

αυτοις dat. pro. "[he said] to them" - [AND HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ἕως + gen. "to the point of [death]" - [THE SOUL OF ME IS VERY SAD, DISTRESSED] UP TO [DEATH, REMAIN HERE AND STAY AWAKE]. Here serving as a spatial preposition; "up to, as far as, to the point of". Although Jesus' περιλυπος, "extreme sorrow, distress" may be prompted by the thought of his coming death, we are best to follow Decker who suggests the phrase "to the point of death" is an idiomatic, expressing the depth of one's sorrow. But why this emotion? "Sorrow", seems unlikely; better "a soul wrenching distress, anguish", even bordering on "fear", so Luther. Given the content of Jesus' prayer, it seems likely that Jesus is being overwhelmed in a final contest with the powers of darkness, tempted to find another way, a way other than the cross. "Now, in the garden, Satan returns in force and in all his majesty as the prince of this world, to avenge his earlier defeat; and Jesus sees now in appalling immediacy, the full cost of his steadfast obedience", Cranfield. "My heart is tortured. Stay here and keep vigil with me."

v35

In his prayer, "Jesus is not of course setting himself against God's purpose (note, 'if it were possible'), but expressing his dread of the necessity of the suffering that God's *hour* lays upon him", Anderson. The coming "hour" is a "cup" of suffering / wrath which fills Jesus with dread. Mark clearly views it as salvic, but other than 10:45, 14:24, he doesn't exegete "the mystery of God's saving act in the weakness and death of the truly human Jesus of Nazareth", Boring.

προελθων [προερχομαι] aor. part. "going [a little] further" - [AND] HAVING GONE BEFORE [A LITTLE, HE WAS FALLING, PROSTRATING *himself*, UPON THE GROUND AND WAS PRAYING]. Adverbial, best treated as temporal; "then he went forward a little, and fell on the earth, praying", Moffatt. Note that the adjective μικρον, "little", is used as a local adverb, spatial, expressing a short distance, "some [short] distance further", Cassirer. Note also the use of the imperfect verbs, "having fallen" and "praying", probably indicating the provision of background information rather than serving to emphasise durative aspect.

ὅτι "that" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus prayed. Possibly introducing an epexegetic clause, or even final expressing purpose, but unlikely.

εἰ + ind. "if" - IF, *as is the case*, [IT IS POSSIBLE, CAN BE DONE *then*]. Introducing a 1st. class conditional clause where the proposed condition is assumed to be true.

ἀπ [ἀπο] + gen. "from [him]" - [THE HOUR MIGHT PASS AWAY, PASS BY] FROM [HIM]. Expressing separation, "away from." The word **ώρα**, "hour", is used to identify a critical moment in time - "the hour might pass by" = "he might not have to face this terrible crises", Barclay; "ordeal", Phillips, cf., Dan.11:35, 40, 45, etc. Jesus views this critical moment as a **ποτηριον**, "a cup", a cup of divine judgment, wrath. Both words are being used here as "metaphors for the passion in its deeper redemptive significance", Lane.

v36

As Cranfield notes, the force of Jesus' prayer is not upon the possible setting aside of "the cup", but his willingness to set his lips to it in accord with the divine will

ἀββα "Abba, [Father]" - [AND HE SAID] ABBA [FATHER]. Nominative of address, equivalent to a vocative. Used of an intimate address by an adult to their father, but not a child to their father; not "Daddy", rather, "O my dear Father." This term would not be normally used of an address to God.

σοι dat. pro. "for you" - [ALL THINGS *are* POSSIBLE] TO YOU. Dative of interest, advantage; "for you." "You are able to do all things."

το ποτηριον [ον] "cup" - [TAKE AWAY, REMOVE / CAUSE TO PASS BY THIS] CUP. Accusative direct object of the verb "to take away." Metaphorically, the word "cup" is used of both suffering and divine wrath related to the end of the age, cf., Dan.11:40,45; see "hour" above. Both "hour" and "cup" "do not refer to Jesus' impending arrest, but to his messianic destiny as 'the ransom for many' and 'the handing over of the Son of Man to sinners' in order to redeem sinners", Edwards.

ἀπο + gen. "from [me]" - FROM [ME]. Expressing separation; "away from."

ἀλλ ἀλλὰ "yet but" - BUT [NOT WHAT I WILL] BUT [WHAT YOU *will*]. The first is used to express a contrast, and the second serves within a counterpoint construction; "not, but" Note the use of the emphatic personal pronouns **ἐγώ**, "I", and **σύ**, "you".

v37

Jesus has co-opted his closest disciples to share in prayer with him and so help strengthen his resolve as he faces the temptation of flight. Even this service

is beyond the three. Three times they fail, just as Peter will deny Jesus three times. In the end, Jesus stands firm and the disciples flee.

καθευδοντας [καθευδω] pres. part. "**sleeping**" - [AND HE COMES AND FINDS THEM] SLEEPING. The participle serves as the complement of the direct object "them", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "them".

τω πετρω [ος] "**to Peter**" - [AND HE SAYS] TO PETER. Dative of indirect object.

γρηγορησαι [γρηγορω] aor. inf. "**keep watch**" - [SIMON, YOU ARE SLEEPING! YOU WERE NOT STRONG] TO STAY AWAKE [ONE HOUR]! The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the negated verb "to be strong." The modern Gk. text has two questions, but of course, the semicolons are not part of the original text, but were added later to aid reading. Gundry argues that Jesus' words to Peter are not questions, but statements; "And he says to Peter, 'Simon, you are sleeping! You weren't strong enough to keep awake for one hour!'" This approach to the text solves the problem caused by the negation **ουκ**, prompting the answer "yes" if the clause is read as a question.

v38

ινα + subj. "**so that [you will not fall]**" - [STAY AWAKE, WATCH AND PRAY] THAT [YOU MAY NOT COME]. The NIV opts for a purpose clause, so Edwards, France, but it is likely that the construction here introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the disciples should pray for, so Gundry, Moule, Decker

εις + acc. "**into [temptation]**" - INTO [TEMPTATION, TEST, TRIAL]. Metaphorical use of the prepositional phrase "come into" =" succumb to", Gundry, or reference / respect, "with respect to" Probably "temptation", rather than "test" or "trial, so" the temptation to sleep on the job, rather than support Jesus in prayer. The disciples' intention is to pray with Jesus, but their commitment is flimsy.

μεν δε "....., **but** ..." - *on the one hand*, [THE SPIRIT IS WILLING] **BUT** *on the other hand* [THE FLESH IS WEAK]. An adversative comparative construction. "Spirit" and "flesh" are "here presented as distinct and antithetical elements of man's nature", TH. "I know that you mean well and that you want to do the right thing, but human nature is frail", Barclay.

v39

απελθων [απερχομαι] aor. part. "**[he went away]**" - [AND AGAIN] HAVING GONE AWAY, DEPARTED [HE PRAYED]. Attendant circumstance participle

expressing action accompanying the verb to pray; "he went away and prayed", ESV.

εἰπων [λεγω] aor. part. "-" - HAVING SAID [THE SAME WORD]. Adverbial, instrumental, expressing means; "using the same words as before", Cassirer.

v40

ελθων [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**when he came back**" - [AND AGAIN] HAVING COME, RETURNED. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV; "Then he returned", Moffatt.

καθευδοντας [καθευδω] pres. part. "**sleeping**" - [HE FOUND THEM] SLEEPING. Object complement, as v37.

γαρ "**because**" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Jesus found them sleeping again, because they were tired.

καταβαρυνιομενοι [καταβαρυνω] pres. part. "**[eyes were] heavy**" - [THE EYES OF THEM WERE] BEING WEIGHED DOWN. The present participle and the imperfect verb to-be forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, possibly emphasising durative aspect. "They could not keep their eyes open", Phillips.

τί + subj. "**what [to say]**" - [AND THEY DID NOT KNOW] WHAT [THEY MIGHT ANSWER, REPLY TO HIM]. This construction introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect question, expressing what the disciples would have asked, if expressed, in response to Jesus finding them asleep again; "What will we say to him?" "And they did not know what excuse to give him", Berkeley.

v41

Satan's "hour" is at hand and the time for prayer, and also sleeping on the job, is over. "The hour has come" is explained in the statement "The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." It is the "hour", that fateful moment in human history, when God the Father delivers the Son of Man, the messiah, into the hands of sinful men / the heathen / Satan for his victorious humiliation.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [AND HE COMES THE THIRD *time* AND SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

το λοιπον adj. "**still [sleeping]**" - [SLEEP] THE REMAINING [AND REST]. The accusative articular adjective is adverbial, "still, meanwhile", BDAG. The two verbs may be imperative, "from now on, do sleep and take your rest", Cassirer, but are usually taken as indicative, either as a question, as NIV, or a statement, "you can sleep on now and have your rest. It is all over", NJB, or an exclamation, or even better, a rebuke; "*Here they are, my loyal disciples*, still sleeping and having a nice little rest. Enough is enough! The time is up"

απεχει [απεχω] pres. "**Enough!**" - GET, BE OFF [THE HOUR HAS COME]. The sense is unclear, either with, or without, "the hour has come". Cranfield suggests the following, with the first the most probable:

- "It is sufficient", "Enough of this", possibly a rebuke, or better an indication that the time for sleeping is over and that the Son of Man's time is at hand; "It is settled", Lane.

- A technical commercial sense - Judas has received the money, or just "it is paid up."

- Reading the variant **το τέλος** with **απεχει** = "it is ended / it is finished."

- Possibly used for the Aramaic word meaning "presses", or "is faraway" = "the end is pressing", "the hour has come", or with **το τέλος**, "the end is far away."

εις + acc. "**into [the hands]**" - [THE SON OF MAN IS BETRAYED] INTO [THE HANDS OF SINNERS]. Expressing the direction of the action and arrival at; metaphorical. For "Son of Man" see 2:10.

v42

Moule give weight to "Let us go forward!" "Jesus sees the situation as a great campaign - the battle of the kingdom of God. His friends are summoned to 'advance' like soldiers entering battle. But is it a battle in which Jesus will not use physical force, but only the weapon of loyalty to God's will."

παραδιδους [παραδιδωμι] pres. part. "**betrayor**" - [GET UP, ROUSE *yourself* LET US GO, BEHOLD] THE ONE BETRAYING [ME HAS DRAWN NEAR, COME NEAR]. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to draw near." "My betrayer has arrived", Peterson.

v43

iii] The arrest of Jesus, v43-50. Away from the crowds and with Judas as their guide, the religious authorities are able to arrest Jesus quietly and dispose of him with the least amount of fuss.

λαλουντος [λαλεω] gen. pres. part. "**just as he was speaking**" - [AND IMMEDIATELY, HE STILL] SPEAKING. The genitive participle, with its genitive subject **αυτου**, "he", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal; "and immediately, while he was still speaking", ESV. Reinforced by the temporal adverbs, "immediately" and "still".

των δωδεκα gen. adj. "**of the twelve**" - [JUDAS, ONE] OF THE TWELVE [APPEARS, COMES = ARRIVES]. The adjective serves as a noun, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. "One of the twelve" stands in apposition to Judas. Note the historic / narrative present tense verb "to appear", most likely used to indicate narrative transition / a new paragraph.

μετ [μετα] + gen. "**with [him]**" - [AND] WITH [HIM A CROWD] WITH [SWORDS AND STAFFS, CLUBS]. Expressing accompaniment / association; "accompanied by a mob with swords and cudgels", Moffatt. Rather than "a mob", probably "a force", Rieu, a lightly armed mixed force of temple police and officials. The "swords" used by the local authorities at this time were long knives, rather than Roman swords.

παρα + gen. "**sent from**" - FROM BESIDE [THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE SCRIBES AND THE ELDERS]. Here expressing source / origin. Identifying those authorising Jesus' arrest; the three representative groups of the Sanhedrin.

v44

δε "now" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

ὁ παραδιδους [παραδιδωμι] pres. part. "**the betrayer**" - THE ONE DELIVERING OVER, BETRAYING [HIM HAD GIVEN A SIGN, A SIGNAL TO THEM]. The participle serves as a substantive.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. The participle is adverbial. Decker suggests it is instrumental, expressing means, "by means of a prearranged signal."

ὅν αν + subj. "**the one**" - WHOMEVER [I MAY KISS, HE IS *jesus*, SEIZE = ARREST HIM AND LEAD *him* AWAY *under guard* SAFELY = SECURELY]. Introducing an indefinite relative clause, which here serves as an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Judas was **λεγων**, "saying".

v45

ελθων [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**going**" - [AND] HAVING COME [IMMEDIATELY HAVING APPROACHED]. The participle, as for "having approached", is adverbial, temporal. With the temporal adverb "immediately", we have something like "And when he come *to where the disciples were gathered*, he then immediately went up to Jesus and said, 'Rabbi.'"

αυτω dat. pro. "**Jesus**" - HIM [HE SAYS, RABBI, AND HE KISSED HIM]. Dative of direct object after the **προς** prefix verb "to approach, come to." As is the customary greeting, the kiss is on the cheek. Gundry argues for foot or hand, but Decker suggests this is unlikely. In the Western tradition, we offer the right hand to indicate we haven't got a dagger in it - obviously we are less trusting than our Eastern friends!

v46

οί δε "-" - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

αυτω dat. pro. "**[seized] Jesus**" - [THEY PLACED UPON] HIM [THE HANDS AND SEIZED = ARRESTED HIM]. The **επι** prefix verb "to place on" takes a dative of

direct object. The phrase "to place hands upon" is idiomatic for "to seize / grab hold of."

v47

των παρεστηκοτων [παριστημι] gen. perf. part. "**of those standing near**" - [BUT/AND ONE] OF THE ONES HAVING STOOD BY. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. The variant **τις**, "a certain person", if original, may indicate that Mark knows who it was, but is not saying, so Lagrange. John 18:10 identifies the person as Peter.

σπασαμενος [σπαω] aor. mid. part. "**drew**" - HAVING DRAWN OUT [THE SWORD, HIT THE SLAVE, SERVANT OF THE HIGH PRIEST AND TOOK AWAY = CUT OFF THE EAR OF HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to hit, strike." Taylor suggests "the lobe of the ear." John tells us that the servant's name is Malchus - a common Nabatean name.

v48

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "-" - [AND] HAVING ANSWERED [JESUS SAID TO THEM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; redundant. Typical idiomatic construction serving to introduce speech, often with a dative of direct object, as here.

ως "-" - AS, AS IF, LIKE. The comparative serves to introduce a comparative clause; "you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as if you are coming out against a thief / robber" = "as if you were out to arrest a brigand", Barclay.

επι + acc. "-" - UPON = AGAINST [A THIEF DO YOU COME OUT]. Here this spatial preposition expresses opposition, "against". Possibly a statement rather than a question; "It is with swords and cudgels in hand that you have come out to apprehend me, *yet* every day", Cassirer.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - *armed* WITH [SWORDS AND CLUBS]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

συλλαβειν [συλλαμβανω] aor. inf. "**to capture me?**" - TO SEIZE, TAKE HOLD OF, APPREHEND [ME]? The infinitive here is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to arrest me"

v49

If the authorities wanted to apprehend Jesus, he was always in easy reach. The incongruity of this arrest, only serves to show its illegality. Yet, its illegality serves to fulfil the scriptures. As for what scriptures, certainly Zech 13:7, possibly also Exod.24:8, Isa.53:12 and numerous references in the Psalms.

καθ ἡμεραν "**Every day**" - ACCORDING TO DAY. Distributive use of the preposition **κατα**. Idiomatic; "daily, every day."

προς + acc. "**with [you]**" - [I WAS] TOWARD [YOU IN THE TEMPLE]. Here expressing association, "with, in company with."

διδασκων [διδασκω] pres. part. "**teaching**" - TEACHING [AND YOU DID NOT ARREST ME]. The function of this participle is not overly clear, but adverbial, temporal is likely; "I was within your reach as I taught you in the temple", NEB. Cranfield notes that it was unlikely that the temple police were students of Jesus in the temple, but the point is clear enough.

αλλ [αλλα] "**but**" - BUT [*all this is happening*]. The ellipsis further emphasises the adversative "but".

ἵνα + subj. "-" - THAT [THE SCRIPTURES MAY BE FULFILLED, COMPLETED]. Here introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that the scriptures might be fulfilled." Such "justifies the manner of Jesus' arrest", France. Some commentators argue that the construction here is recitative, introducing a dependent statement, expressing a wish, so Zerwick #415, as NIV; "But let the scriptures be fulfilled", ESV, NRSV,

v50

αφεντες aor. part. "**deserted**" - [AND] HAVING ABANDONED, LEFT [HIM, ALL = EVERYONE FLED]. Usually treated as an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "to flee", as NIV; "they all left him and fled", ESV. Moffatt's approach is more technical, treating it as adverbial, temporal; "then they left him and fled." Decker always approaches seemingly attendant participles with a similar precision. He makes the point that two separate actions are necessary to properly identify a participle as attendant on a verb, but he does note, certainly with αφιημι, that the rule does not always apply in Koine Gk. Probably the issue is overly technical, but as a rule of thumb, where precision is required, simply follow Moffatt's translation of a participle.

v51

iv] The flight of the young man, v51-52. Mark adds a rather strange account of a young man who has arrived on the scene and now follows the arresting party. The officers attempt to take hold of him, but he escapes, leaving his σινδων, "a length of fine linen cloth", behind. This would normally be draped around a χιτων, "tunic", but he is not wearing a tunic, and so runs away naked.

Mark's purpose in recording this event is illusive. It is possible that the young man is Mark and that this is Mark's way of saying "I was there." Yet, there is not even a hint in the pericope to suggest that the young man is the author of gospel, or that he is Mark. It is though, "a reasonable guess that the young man was someone who might be known to Mark's readers and could corroborate the story of his undignified escape through the olive groves", France. Gundry argues that

Mark uses the story to pre-empt the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus is wrapped in a **σινδων** and he will leave his garment behind. At least the incident of the young sympathiser's flight highlights the paltry efforts of the disciples to stand with their master at his time of need.

περιβεβλημενος [περιβαλλω] perf. mid. part. "**wearing**" - [AND A CERTAIN YOUNG MAN] HAVING BEEN WRAPPED AROUND WITH, CLOTHED WITH [A LINEN CLOTH UPON *his* NAKED *body*]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "young man"; "who wore nothing but a *sindwn* / linen wrap."

αυτω dat. pro. "**Jesus**" - [WAS FOLLOWING] HIM [AND THEY TOOK HOLD OF HIM]. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb "to follow along with."

v52

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, a move from being seized to escaping, minus his **σινδων**.

γυμνος adj. "**naked**" - [HE FLED] NAKED, LIGHTLY CLOTHED. The phrase **επι γυμνου**, "upon his naked body", v51, an "odd expression" says Cranfield, is missing in some texts. If the phrase is not read, then **γυμνος** here would mean "lightly clad, without an outer garment", BDAG, ie., the young man was left wearing only his **χιτων**, "tunic", his undergarment.

καταλιπων [καταλειπω] aor. part. "**leaving**" - HAVING LEFT BEHIND [THE LINEN CLOTH]. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his flight; "but he, letting the linen cloth go, fled away naked", Cassirer.

14:53-72

Entering the Promised Land, 11:1-16:8

4. Victory, 14:1-15:39

iv] Peter's denial

Synopsis

Having arrested Jesus, he is brought before an informal meeting of the Sanhedrin in the palace of the high priest. Peter follows at a distance, and enters the courtyard, and sits beside the fire with some of the arresting officers.

Inside the palace, Jesus is facing interrogation, subject to the testimony of false witnesses with regard to the desecration of the temple. The problem facing the authorities is that there is little agreement between the witnesses. Frustrated by the proceedings, the high priest tries to get Jesus to incriminate himself, as to his messianic credentials. Jesus is quite happy to comply, given the fact that he has openly revealed himself in the temple since arriving in Jerusalem. A messianic word on the coming of the Son of Man is enough for the high priest and his friends, and so they condemn Jesus to death. The guards then set about assaulting him.

Meanwhile, Peter, still warming himself by the fire in the courtyard, is confronted by a servant who suggests that he was "with the Nazarene." Peter denies the suggestion and moves to the entrance of the palace, but again she tells those standing at the entrance that Peter is "one of them." Peter again denies the claim. A little later, those standing around, again call Peter out; "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean" - his rough dialect has given him away. With curses, Peter swears that he isn't with Jesus. At that moment the cock crows a second time and Peter melts in tears.

Teaching

Unlike the sinners he comes to save, the testimony of the Son of Man does not falter in the face of suffering.

Issues

i] Context: See 14:1-11.

ii] Background: *The trial of Jesus*. Jesus' trial falls into two parts, ecclesiastical and civil. There are two parts to the ecclesiastical trial:

The first ecclesiastical trial is an informal, and probably illegal, meeting of representatives of the Sanhedrin gathered in the palace of the high priest. Probably still the residence of Annas, the former high priest, recognised as such by many of the people, but not the Roman authorities. Caiaphas, the official high

priest, is also obviously present, and both probably lead the questioning of Jesus. For it to be a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin, it would need to meet between sunrise and sunset, but this meeting was in the middle of the night. There is also an improper use of witnesses, reliance on self-incrimination and physical assault. By means of this sham trial, Jesus is found guilty of the charge of blasphemy.

The second part of the ecclesiastical trial involves an early morning gathering of the Sanhedrin in the temple precincts to confirm Jesus' conviction of blasphemy. The problem facing the religious authorities is that they have no authority to execute a person for blasphemy. If they had the evidence for his desecration of the temple, then they could have him stoned to death, but on this issue, the witnesses do not agree. The authorities therefore have to depend on a civil trial with the trumped-up charge of treason.

The first part of the civil trial before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, is held early morning. Pilate quickly realises that this a religious dispute, not civil, and that he is being used by the religious authorities to do their dirty work. So, Pilate sends Jesus on for Herod to judge the case, but Herod is too cunning to get involved in a religious dispute between the religious authorities and the people. As far as he is concerned, the matter is outside his jurisdiction. Jesus is returned to Pilate, who recognising that the problem is not going to go away, decides to placate the religious authorities with a charge of treason against Jesus, and sentences him to crucifixion.

iii] Structure: *The trial and Peter's denial*:

Peter in the courtyard, v53-54;

The trial before the high priest, v55-65;

The charge of desecrating the temple;

The issue of messianic identity.

The threefold denial of Jesus by Peter, v66-72.

iv] Interpretation:

Again, Mark provides us with one of his sandwiches, "infusing the two stories and allowing them to play upon each other according to a favourite stylistic device of the gospel", Anderson. "It is a study in witnessing under pressure, in how to do it and how not to do it", France. "Jesus makes *the good confession* and is a model for Christians under duress. Peter is a negative example of those who crumble under pressure", Boring

Edwards, in a similar vein, proposes that the interwoven stories convey the theme of "bearing witness under persecution." Edwards notes that the word "witness" appears seven times in various forms throughout the passage, indicating the importance of the theme. The Markan sandwich sets Peter up as a foil for the one who, in the face of suffering, gives a true

testimony, and so provides a model for those disciples who accept the call to bear witness "before councils and kings", 13:9. So, Mark "creates a sermon without words on the meaning of bearing witness under persecution", Edwards.

Gundry also makes the point that Peter's denials and the rejection of Jesus by the Sanhedrin, serve as "a double apologetic appeal to Jesus' predictive power." A fulfilment theme is certainly evident in the passage.

As Marcus notes, central to the passage is "the most Christologically freighted statement in the Gospel." Jesus accepts the title Messiah, but then, he hasn't really been hiding his claim to messiahship, not since his arrival in Jerusalem. Such claimants are not rare in the religious life of Israel, although *εγω ειμι*, "I am" (variant *συ ειπας*, "you have said it") is a bit in-your-face. But Jesus goes on immediately to claim the status of Daniel's coming *Son of Man*, claiming to be the one vindicated by God, the triumphant and exalted one, who comes to the Ancient of Days and is enthroned at his right hand in power and glory. If Jesus wasn't already guilty of blasphemy in the eyes of religious authorities, he certainly is now.

v] Synoptics:

At the high priest's palace, v53-65: Matt.26:57-68; Lk.22:54-55, 63-71; Jn.18:13-014, 19-24.

Peter's denial, v66-72: Matt.26:69-75; Lk.22:56-62; Jn.18:15-18, 25-27.

When it comes to the trial and execution of Jesus, the gospel narratives are in general agreement. Interesting small differences appear, but they are of little consequence. So, for example: All four gospels have a slave girl challenging Peter on the first occasion, but in Matthew and Luke the second challenge comes from a man; Mark has the cock crowing a second time, while the other gospels have it crowing only once after the third denial (there is a variant text with "the second time" missing); Matthew has two false witnesses to Mark's "many".

Text - 14:53

The trial and Peter's denial of Jesus, v53-72: i] Peter in the courtyard, v53-54.

προς + acc. "**to [the high priest]**" - [AND THEY LED AWAY JESUS] TOWARD [THE HIGH PRIEST AND GATHER TOGETHER ALL THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE ELDERS AND THE SCRIBES]. Spatial, expressing direction toward.

v54

αυτω dat. pro. "[followed] him" - [AND PETER FROM AFAR FOLLOWED] HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow."

ἕως εσω εις "right into" - UP TO INSIDE INTO [THE COURTYARD OF THE HIGH PRIEST]. This spatial idiomatic prepositional construction expressing movement up to a point inside, takes the sense "right into", as NIV and most translations.

ἦν συγκαθημενος + gen. "he sat with" - [AND] HE WAS SITTING WITH [WITH THE SERVANTS, ASSISTANTS AND WARMING HIMSELF]. The present participle, as with the participle "warming himself", with the imperfect verb to-be, forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, possibly emphasising durative aspect. Repeating the sense of the συν prefix verb "to sit with" with the preposition μετα, "with", is stylistic. The servants / assistants are probably members of the temple guard, and possibly also temple officials (vergers).

προς το φως "at the fire" - TOWARD THE LIGHT. This idiomatic phrase takes the sense "at the light of the fire", MM.

v55

ii] The trial before the high priest, v55-65. The proceedings deal first with the charges brought against Jesus. The false testimony is likely to focus on the desecration of the temple, since this is the one crime that the Jewish authorities had the right to execute someone, and this by stoning. As v59 indicates, there is conflicting testimony on what Jesus said about the temple, and so the charge cannot be substantiated.

κατα + gen. "against [Jesus]" - [AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND WHOLE COUNCIL WERE SEEKING A WITNESS] AGAINST [JESUS]. The spatial preposition here expresses opposition. "The chief priests and the whole council tried to find someone to accuse Jesus of a crime", CEV. "The council", high council = the Sanhedrin.

εις το + inf. "so that they could put [him] to death" - INTO THE = IN ORDER [TO PUT TO DEATH HIM AND THEY WERE NOT FINDING *any ground to charge him*]. This construction serves to introduce a final clause expressing purpose; "in order to have him put to death", Moffatt; "hand him over to be executed."

v56

γαρ "-" - FOR, BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the authorities were not finding *any ground to charge him*, because the witnesses did not agree.

κατ [κατα] + gen. "against [him]" - [MANY WERE TESTIFYING FALSELY] AGAINST [HIM AND = AND YET THE TESTIMONIES WERE NOT EQUAL (the same,

consistent, alike)]. The spatial preposition here expresses opposition, as NIV. "Plenty of people were willing to bring in false charges, but nothing added up, and they ended cancelling each other out", Peterson.

v57

ανασταντες [ανιστημι] aor. part. "**Then [some] stood up**" - [AND CERTAIN, SOME] HAVING STEPPED UP [WERE BEARING FALSE WITNESS AGAINST HIM]. The NIV opts for adverbial, temporal, but possibly attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the verb "to step up"; "Some got up and bore false witness against him", Moffatt. The imperfect verb "to bear false witness" is possibly inceptive, "began to bear false witness." Most of the imperfect verbs in this passage may well just indicate the provision of background information.

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Adverbial, modal, expressing manner, "saying", or instrumental, expressing means, "by saying"; redundant.

v58

Jesus may have said something like this, although it is probably not drawn from 13:2. The derisive words directed to Jesus on the cross may also reflect the statement made by Jesus, 15:29. Cranfield suggests that "made with hands" and "not made with hands" are later interpretive glosses added by the early church to give the proper sense of Jesus' words. Note also how John seeks to correct the record in 2:19-22.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependant statement of direct speech expressing what the false witnesses were saying.

ημεις "**We**" - WE [WE HEARD]. As with **εγω**, "I", following, an emphatic use of the personal pronoun.

αυτου gen. pro. "**him**" - HIM. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to hear."

λεγοντος [λεγω] gen. pres. part. "**say**" - SAYING. Genitive complement of the genitive direct object "him", standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the object "him".

οτι "-" - THAT [I WILL DESTROY, DEMOLISH, TEAR DOWN THIS TEMPLE, SANCTUARY MADE WITH, BY HANDS (ie., spiritual)]. Here introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what the witnesses claim to have heard Jesus say.

δια + gen. "**in [three days]**" - THROUGH [THREE DAYS I WILL BUILD ANOTHER NOT MADE WITH HANDS]. Temporal use of the preposition, "through *in time*" - "throughout, during, after."

v59

οὕτως adv. "**even then**" - [AND NOT] SO [THE TESTIMONY OF THEM WAS EQUAL]. Adverb of manner drawing a logical conclusion; "thus even so, even in this manner / way". "But even so their evidence conflicted", Phillips.

v60

αναστας [ανιστημι] aor. part. "**then [the high priest] stood up**" - [AND THE HIGH PRIEST] HAVING STOOD UP [INTO MIDST, QUESTIONED JESUS]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV. The επι prefix of the verb "to question" probably intensifies, so "interrogated".

λεγων [λεγω] "-" - SAYING. Redundant attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to ask, question", "questioned and said" / adverbial, either modal, expressing manner, "saying", or instrumental, expressing means, "by saying."

ουχ ... ουδεν "[**are you**] **not**" - NOT [DO YOU ANSWER] NOTHING [*as to* WHAT THESE *witnesses*]. This negation assumes an affirmative answer in a question. The double negation is emphatic; "Do you make no reply?", Rieu.

σου gen. pro. "**you**" - [TESTIFY] OF YOU. The verb "to testify against" usually takes a dative of direct object, but here the genitive "you" is adverbial, reference / respect, so "what these witnesses testify concerning you", so Decker.

v61

Jesus' refusal to engage on the charge of desecrating the temple, and the problem of conflicting evidence, forces the high priest to try and gain some admission from Jesus that would support a charge of blasphemy.

ο δε "**but**" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, a change in subject from the high priest to Jesus.

ουκ ... ουδεν "**no [answer]**" - [AND HE DID] NOT [ANSWER] NOTHING [AGAIN]. An emphatic use of the double negative.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - [THE HIGH PRIEST WAS ASKING HIM AND SAYS] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

συ pro. "**[are] you**" - YOU [ARE YOU THE CHRIST]. Emphatic by position and use. The high priest's question seeks an admission from Jesus, as to his claim to messiahship; "Are you God's Christ / Messiah / Anointed One?"

του ευλογητου [ος] gen. adj. "**the Blessed One**" - [THE SON] OF THE BLESSED *one*? The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, relational. "Blessed One" is viewed by most commentators as a reverential avoidance of the use of the holy name of God by the high priest. "Son of" serves as a messianic identifier. So, the phrase "the Son of the Blessed" is a title for the

messiah which stands in apposition to ὁ χριστος, "the Christ." The phrase is similar to "The Son of God" (a messianic title used more frequently in Matthew, Luke and John than Mark), a title which makes no claim to a filial relationship with God the Father.

v62

By combining Psalm 101:1 and Daniel 7:13-14, Jesus claims for himself divine authority and sovereignty; he is no messiah in the terms of a political revolutionary. The high priest has no mere man standing before him. The two-part allusion is describing the same status. The Son of Man is "sitting", he is "at my right side, until I make your enemies into a footstool for you", Ps.101:1. And the Son of Man is "coming", "presented to the Ancient of Days", "crowned king and given power and glory", Dan.7.13-14. The eschatological sense of the word "coming" always confuses because it is so often seen in the terms of movement rather than acting - a "coming" is an act of reigning. Both "sitting" and "coming" describe the same activity, that of judging and blessing with divine authority - the act of reigning on high at God's right hand.

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change again in subject.

εγω ειμι **"I am"** - [JESUS SAID] I AM. The variants "you say that I am", or "these are your words not mine", probably derive from Matthew 26:64. Jesus openly admits to his messianic claim. Many commentators argue that the messianic secret operative up to this point, but it seems more likely that from the moment of his climactic entry into Jerusalem, Jesus has not attempted to hide his messianic status. So, Jesus openly answers the high priest's question, an answer which is not overly provocative. In fact, a clear "Yes", or "No" on this matter is required of Jesus to maintain dignity before God. Having answered in the affirmative, Jesus would be expected to go on and provide proof of his claim, but instead of that, he broadens his messianic claim.

του ανθρωπου [ος] **"[you will see the Son] of Man"** - [AND YOU WILL SEE THE SON] OF MAN. The genitive is adjectival, relational; see 2:10. How the high priest "will see" Jesus' messianic enthronement is not explained. France sees it in terms of vindication. Religious Israel will get to witness the unfolding of the universal sovereignty of the risen Jesus powerfully illustrated in the demise of Jerusalem and the temple, and the unstoppable growth of the Christian church.

καθημενον [καθημαι] pres. mid. part. **"sitting"** - SITTING. As with the participle "coming", this participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "Son", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the "Son".

εκ + gen. **"at [the right hand]"** - FROM [THE RIGHT]. Expressing separation, "one from the right." This is the position of power and authority.

της δυναμεως [ις εως] gen. "**of the Mighty One**" - OF THE POWER. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. Just as with "the Blessed One", this term serves as a respectful title for God, a title that refrains from using the divine name.

μετα + gen. "**on [the clouds]**" - WITH [THE CLOUDS]. Expressing association. Note that the LXX of Dan.7:13 has "upon", and in Mark in 13:26 εν, "in, on", with just "clouds" and no "heaven".

του ουρανου [ος] gen. "**of heaven**" - OF HEAVEN. The genitive is adjectival, possibly idiomatic / local; "the clouds *which are located in / found in* heaven", even possessive, "belonging to heaven." Given that Mark's reference to Dan.7:13 in 13:26 has no referenced to heaven, it is likely that the genitive is just attributive, "heavenly clouds." Daniel's imagery seems to describe the Son of Man coming (processing to his enthronement) with / on / in clouds to the Ancient of Day in heaven and that these clouds are heavenly like. The heavenly cloud may even represent the shekinah glory, the cloud denoting the divine presence.

v63

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, change in subject again, here back to the high priest.

διαρρηξας [διαρηγγυμι] aor. part. "**tore**" - [THE HIGH PRIEST] HAVING TORN [THE TUNIC OF HIM SAYS]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "Then the high priest tore his cloths and cried", Moffatt. The act of tearing one's clothes expresses grief or distress, here, what was presumed to be a blasphemous statement.

τί pro. "**why**" - WHAT [STILL, FURTHER]. Interrogative pronoun; "What further witnesses do we need?" ESV.

μαρτυρων [υς ρος] gen. "**witnesses**" - [NEED] OF WITNESSES [DO WE HAVE]? The noun χρεια, "need", when expressing a need of someone or something, takes a genitive of what or who is needed, here "witnesses".

v64

The informal gathering of religious leaders gives their legal opinion, one that will be confirmed later in the morning at the official gathering of the Sanhedrin.

της βλασφημιας [α] gen. "**the blasphemy**" - [YOU HEARD] THE BLASPHEMY. Genitive of direct object after to verb "to hear."

ὕμιν dat. pro. "**[what do] you [think]?**" - [WHAT SEEMS, APPEARS] TO YOU? The verb φαινω takes a Dative of direct object when expressing the sense "to have the appearance, seem", as here (often + inf.); "What seems to you *to be our response to this claim?*" = "What think you?"

ειναι [ειμι] pres. inf. "-" - [BUT/AND THEY ALL CONDEMNED HIM] TO BE [LIABLE, GUILTY]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement

of indirect speech expressing their condemnation, namely, that he is guilty of death.

θανατου [ος] gen. "**of death**" - OF DEATH. The adjective **ενοχον**, "liable, guilty, deserving" takes a dative, or genitive complement, as here, specifying the punishment, "liable to death / deserving of death", Zerwick.

v65

The slapping and spitting serve to demonstrate the rejection of Jesus' claims by the religious authorities. The blindfolding, and asking who struck him, possibly reflects the view that the messiah was able to operate without sight.

εμπτυειν [εμπτυω] pres. inf. "**to spit at**" - [AND CERTAIN, SOME BEGAN] TO SPIT UPON. As with "to cover", "to strike", and "to say", the infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin." "Some of them spat on him", Barclay.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM [AND TO COVER THE FACE OF HIM AND TO STRIKE HIM]. Dative of direct object after the **εν** prefix verb "to spit upon."

αυτω dat. pro. "**to him**" - [AND TO SAY] TO HIM [PROPHECY]. Dative of indirect object.

ελαβον [λαμβανω] aor. "-" - AND THE SERVANTS (temple guards) TOOK. In the sense of "took him into custody, took hold of him."

παπισμασιν [α ατος] dat. "**beat [him]**" - WITH BLOWS [HIM]. The dative is adverbial, modifying the verb "to take, receive", so the guards received him, took hold of Jesus violently, "the guards beat him" = "worked him over", Decker.

v66

iii] The threefold denial of Jesus by Peter, v66-72. The resolve of Jesus in the face of humiliation is now contrasted with Peter's failure to honour his Lord. Peter denies any knowledge of Jesus.

οντος [ειμι] gen. pres. part. "**While [Peter] was**" - [AND PETER] BEING [BELOW IN THE COURTYARD]. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "Peter", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. The fact that Peter is **κατω**, "below, beneath", in the courtyard indicates that the action in the palace is above (a second story???) the action in the courtyard.

των παιδισκων [η] gen. "**[one] of the servant girls**" - [ONE] OF THE SERVANTS, MAIDSERVANTS / SLAVE-GIRLS [OF THE HIGH PRIEST COMES]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. The girl is probably some sort of domestic servant, rather than a slave, so Swete. The genitive "of the high priest" is adjectival, possessive, expressing a dependant status, "employed by."

v67

ιδουσα [ὄραω] aor. part. "**When she saw**" - [AND] HAVING SEEN [PETER]. The participle, as with "having looked at", is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

θερμαινομενον [θερμαινω] pres. mid. part. "**warming himself**" - WARMING HIMSELF. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "Peter", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "Peter". Decker classifies it as adjectival, attributive.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - [*and* HAVING GAZED CLOSELY AT] HIM [SHE SAYS]. Dative of direct object after the εν prefix verb "to gaze directly at." The verb implies that the woman has taken careful note of Peter and somehow recognizes that he has been with Jesus.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - [YOU AND = ALSO WERE] WITH [THE NAZARENE, JESUS]. Expressing association / accompaniment. "Jesus" stands in apposition to "the Nazarene." It is unclear whether the woman's words are dismissive of Jesus, but they are often taken that way, as NIV.

v68

There is nothing unusual about Peter's denial; this form of words is common in rabbinical law.

ὁ δε "**but**" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from the woman to Peter.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - [HE DENIED] SAYING. Redundant attendant circumstance participle / adverbial - modal, instrumental, ...

ουτε ουτε "[**I do**]'t [**know**] **or**" - NEITHER [DO I KNOW] NOR [UNDERSTAND]. A negated correlative construction. The sense is probably "I neither know nor understand what you are saying", but the words can be taken in a number of ways depending on punctuation. So for example, "I don't understand! What (τί) are you saying?"

συ pro. "**you're**" - YOU [WHAT YOU ARE SAYING, AND HE WENT OUTSIDE INTO THE ENTRYWAY, AND A ROOSTER CROWED]. Emphatic by position and use. The statement, "a rooster crowed", is not found in a number of manuscripts. Cranfield suggests it was dropped in alignment with Matthew, or even to "make the denial seem a little less shameful."

v69

ιδουσα [ὄραω] aor. part. "**When [the servant girl] saw**" - [AND THE MAIDSERVANT] HAVING SEEN [HIM]. The participle is adverbial, probably best treated as temporal, as NIV.

λεγειν [λεγω] pres. inf. "said" - [BEGAN] TO SAY [AGAIN]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin."

τοῖς παρεστῶσιν [παριστημι] dat. pres. part. "to those standing around" - TO THE ONES HAVING STOOD BY (those present). The participle serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of direct speech expressing what the girl said.

ἐξ [εκ] + gen. "of [them]" - [THIS *man* IS] FROM [THEM]. The preposition is used in place of a partitive genitive. The sense is "belongs to them."

v70

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE [HE WAS DENYING *it*]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject. Cranfield suggests that the imperfect verb "to deny" is iterative, expressing repeated denials; "again he repeatedly denied it", Barclay. Yet, as Gundry notes, the imperfect is often used with speech because of its durative nature.

μετα + gen. "after" - [AND] AFTER [A LITTLE *time elapsed*]. Temporal use of the preposition, giving the sense "a little later / shortly afterwards."

οἱ παρεστῶτες [παριστημι] perf. part. "those standing near" - [AGAIN] THE ONES STANDING BY. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to say." The sequential adverb παλιν, "again" = "once more."

τῷ Πέτρῳ [ος] dat. "to Peter" - [WERE SAYING] TO PETER. Dative of indirect object. Mark has again used an imperfect verb, possibly inceptive, "began to say", but probably again just reflecting an appropriate tense for speech.

ἐξ [εκ] + gen. "[one] of [them]" - [TRULY = CERTAINLY YOU ARE *one*] FROM [THEM]. The preposition serves as a partitive genitive; "you are *one* of them."

γαρ "for" - BECAUSE [AND = INDEED YOU ARE A GALILEAN]. Variant addition "the speech of you is like." Introducing a causal clause explaining why those standing by think that Peter is a follower of Jesus. Peter's rough country accent is giving him away; "You've got 'Galilean' written all over you", Peterson.

v71

αναθεματιζειν [αναθεματιζω] pres. inf. "to call down curses" - [AND HE BEGAN] TO CURSE [AND TO SWEAR]. This infinitive, as for "to swear", is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin." "To curse" is to call down *anathema* on someone for lying before God, while "to swear" is to assert the truth of something before God. It is unclear to whom Peter addresses his curses, i.e., the object is unstated. So, are the curses directed to himself, or the bystanders, or even Jesus (so France, Marcus, taking the verb as transitive rather than reflective)? If what Peter has said is not true, then a curse on Peter; if

it is true, then a curse on the bystanders. Of course, such curses and oaths are often little more than crude reinforcements of the truth of a person's words, reinforcements which usually indicate that the words are not true - "methinks thou protesteth too much". Note that Luke leaves out the "reinforcements"!

ὅτι "- " - THAT [I DO NOT KNOW THIS MAN WHO YOU SPEAK]. Introducing a dependent statement of direct / indirect speech. "Peter began to call down curses on himself and swear that he did not know the man they meant", Rieu.

v72

"Peter's bold denials give way to remorse", France.

ἐκ δευτέρου "**a second time**" - [AND IMMEDIATELY THE COCK, ROOSTER CROWED] FROM A SECOND. The preposition here is adverbial, idiomatic sequential, "for a second time" = "again."

ὡς "- " - [AND PETER REMEMBERED THE WORD] AS [JESUS SPOKE TO HIM]. Variant relative pronoun, **οὗ**, "which Jesus spoke to him." Obviously not here as a comparative, "like", possibly temporal, "when Jesus spoke to him", but more likely recitative, introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Peter remembered, "that = how Jesus had said to him"

ὅτι "- " - THAT [BEFORE A COCK CROWS TWICE, THREE *times* YOU WILL DENY ME]. Introducing an object clause, dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus had said.

επιβαλῶν [επιβαλλῶ] aor. part. "**he broke down**" - [AND] HAVING THROWN UPON, [HE WAS CRYING]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, "then" The sense of this verb is unclear, but "throwing himself on the ground", MM, is probably the best of many possibilities - "Peter cast all restraint away and wept", Rieu; "he flung himself out and wept", Barclay; "and as it came home to him he burst into tears", Cassirer; "and he broke down and wept", Phillips; "so Peter started crying", CEV; "and he burst into tears", REB; "he collapsed in tears", Peterson, The point is clear enough!

15:1-20

Entering the Promised Land, 11:1-15:39

4. Victory, 14:1-16:8

v] The trial of Jesus before Pilate's tribunal

Synopsis

Early on the Friday morning, after sunrise, the Sanhedrin meets to officially confirm Jesus' conviction of blasphemy. Jesus is then led off to face Pilate, the Roman governor. The religious authorities have had to cook up a charge against Jesus which is political in nature, given that Pilate is unlikely to get involved in matters of religious observance. Obviously the charge is sedition, given that Pilate asks Jesus whether he is "the king of the Jews." Luke, in 23:2, actually outlines the charge laid against Jesus. Jesus' answer to the charge is unclear, and presumably unclear to Pilate as well, since he pushes Jesus to answer the charge. Jesus' answer is probably "The words are yours" - Jesus is a king, but not a king as Pilate understands the word ("my kingdom is not of this world", Jn.18:36). Other than his noncommittal reply, Jesus has nothing more to say.

Pilate has obviously read the political posturing of the religious authorities and attempts his own political manoeuvre - two can play at this game! Nothing is known of Barabbas, nor the custom of releasing a prisoner as a gesture of grace on a high feast day. None-the-less, Mark records this manoeuvre by Pilate, a manoeuvre that backfires. Presumably Barabbas, "a notorious prisoner" according to Matthew, and in prison for leading a riot in Jerusalem (obviously against Roman authority), according to Luke, is favoured by the people. So, the gathered crowd, assisted by the chief priests, call for the release of Barabbas, and the crucifixion of Jesus.

Pilate hands Jesus over to be flogged and crucified. Taken back to the "Praetorium", Jesus is flogged and then subjected to a bit fun. Dressed in a soldier's red robe, and with a diadem of thorns on his head, the soldiers kneel before him and hail him "king of the Jews." The humiliation complete, Jesus is led away for crucifixion.

Teaching

Humiliation leads to vindication, and ultimately salvation.

Issues

i] Context: See 14:1-11. In Mark's account of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, we are presented with a set of five units, each identified temporally:

15:1-20;

15:21-32;

15:33-41;
15:42-47;
16:1-8.

ii] Background: *Pontius Pilate*. Pilate was the fifth Roman governor of Palestine, holding the official title of Prefect. His official residence was in Caesarea, but on important occasions, the Roman governor came to Jerusalem and stayed in Herod's palace on the Western side of the city. Pilate held the position from AD 26-37. He was appointed by the emperor Tiberius and was removed from office by Caligula after violently putting down a Samaritan uprising. Pilate had, over his tenure, acted impulsively in dealing with the religious and political aspirations of the people of Palestine. As Josephus writes, he was "inflexible, stubborn and cruel."

Mark's account of Pilate's dealings with Jesus may well reflect the time of his writing; the mid 60's when Nero was emperor. The trial and execution is performed under Roman authority, but Mark highlights the part the Jewish authorities play in Jesus' death, along with the attempts by Pilate to free him. Pilate's willingness to comply with the decision of the religious authorities may seem like weakness, but it is more likely down to cunning. As Edward's puts it, "in the case of Jesus, he responds with a combination of instinct and calculation typical of his office. Judging Jesus to be unworthy either of a stand on principle, or of a show of force, Pilate opts to stand down, thus consigning Jesus to a routine crucifixion."

iii] Structure: *The secular trial of Jesus*:

Pilate examines Jesus, v1-5;
Jesus or Barabbas, v6-15;
The mockery of Jesus, v16-20.

iv] Interpretation:

The five-part conclusion to Mark's gospel contrasts guilt with innocence / weakness with strength / humiliation with vindication. The downside dominates to the middle of the third unit, to the moment when the curtain of the temple is torn from top to bottom and the soldier standing beside the cross utters the words "Truly this man was the Son of God." From this moment on, we are confronted with innocence, strength and vindication.

The vindication of messiah, and thus the salvation of mankind, is preceded by humiliation, both before the religious authorities, and the secular authorities. Jesus is "handed over" (by God / under the will of God), and in similar fashion his people will be "handed over." He, "who in his

testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession" (1Tim.6:13), precedes those who in similar fashion will make their good confession.

Marcus makes a point of the parallelism evident in the account of Jesus' trial before the high priest, and his trial before Pilate. "The same inimical power that masterminded Jesus' condemnation by the Jewish authorities is now bringing about his condemnation by the Gentiles in a strikingly similar manner. Behind that power of evil, however, lies the overarching will of God."

v] Synoptics:

Jesus' trial before Pilate, v1-15: Matt.27:1-2, 11-14; Lk.23:1-5; Jn.18:28-38. Again, there is substantial agreement between the synoptic gospels. Note Matthew's addition of the dream of Pilate's wife, Pilate's hand-washing, and the death of Judas. These stories complicate the account of Jesus' death, an intrusion avoided by Mark. Luke also provides the actual charge laid before Pilate, Lk.23:2.

The mocking of Jesus, v16-20: Matt.27:27-31; Jn.19:2-3. Again, there is substantial agreement between the synoptic gospels. Note Luke's record of Jesus' confrontation with Herod Antipas, Lk.23:6-12, , and the case for Jesus' innocence, v13-16, and Matthew's emphasis on the people's acceptance of their guilt, Matt.27:24-26.

Text - 15:1

The trial of Jesus, v1-20: i] Pilate examines Jesus, v1-5. The Jewish authorities, unable to execute Jesus themselves, hand him over to the Roman governor on what amounts to a trumped-up charge - Jesus is no political aspirant. Pilate soon realises the nature of the charge.

The opening verse is problematic. Does it refer to the meeting held at the palace of the high priest, or a second meeting held after dawn in the temple precinct, an official meeting of the Sanhedrin to ratify the verdict of blasphemy against Jesus? The reading **συμβουλιον ἔτοιμασαντες** gives the sense "having prepared (reached) a decision" and would refer to the informal gathering of the Sanhedrin. The preferred reading is **συμβουλιον ποιησαντες**, "having held a council (consultation)", presumably referring to an official gathering of the Sanhedrin after dawn to confirm the decision of the earlier informal gathering; See Cranfield.

ποιησαντες [ποιεω] aor. part. "**made [their plans]**" - [AND IMMEDIATELY EARLY, IN THE MORNING, THE CHIEF PRIESTS WITH THE ELDERS AND SCRIBES AND ENTIRE COUNCIL] HAVING MADE = HELD [A COUNCIL, CONSULTATION]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "Then, as soon as it was morning, the high priests held a council meeting with"

δησαντες [δεω] aor. part. "so they bound [Jesus]" - HAVING BOUND [JESUS THEY CARRIED *him* OFF = LED *him* AWAY]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "after binding Jesus they led him off and handed him over to Pilate", Moffatt.

πιλατω [ος] dat. "to Pilate" - [AND DELIVERED *him*] TO PILATE. Dative of indirect object.

v2

των Ιουδαιων gen. adj. "of the Jews" - [AND PILATE QUESTIONED HIM. ARE YOU THE KING] OF THE JEWS? The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, idiomatic / subordination; "king *over* the Jews."

ο δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "-" - [AND] HAVING ANSWERED [HE SAYS TO HIM]. Redundant attendant circumstance participle, "answered and said" / adverbial, modal, expressing manner, "saying", or instrumental, expressing means, "by saying."

συ λεγεις "you have said so" - YOU SAY. Jesus' answer to Pilate is not as strong as his εγω ειμι, "I am", to the high priest, 14:62. It is probably something like, "Yes, but" The issue lies with the meaning of "king of the Jews." We most likely have here a secular version of Jesus messianic claims, packaged by the Jewish authorities for Pilate. So, yes, Jesus is Israel's king, messiah, about to be crowned on the cross, such that from humiliation may come glory, vindication, and salvation. Yet, Jesus is not a king as a Roman official would understand a king; "If you like to put it so", Barclay. None-the-less, many commentators and translators have taken the response as an unequivocal "Yes", so Goodspeed; "Certainly", Moffatt; "I am", Weymouth,

v3

κατηγορουν [καταγορευω] imperf. "accused" - [AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS] WERE ACCUSING [HIM]. The imperfect may be inceptive, "began to accuse him", but again, possibly just used for speech, even backgrounding.

πολλα adj. "many things" - MANY, MUCH. Either as a substantive, accusative complement of the direct object "him" standing in a double accusative construction, as NIV, so Decker, or an adverbial accusative modifying the verb, "accused him much = strongly", so Gundry, i.e., a vigorous accusation. Although there is a technical issue here (see Decker), a vigorous accusation is more likely than a package of charges. There is only one charge against Jesus, his claim to kingship, and Jesus is unwilling to address it, and so the chief priests are pressing it home to Pilate.

v4

ὁ δε "so" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject; again in v5.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - [AND PILATE AGAIN QUESTIONED HIM] SAYING. Redundant attendant circumstance participle / adverbial, modal, expressing manner, "saying", or instrumental, expressing means, "by saying."

ποσα pro. "how many things" - [DO YOU NOT ANSWER ANYTHING? LOOK] MUCH, MANY. Again, Gundry argues for an adverbial accusative, "how much", rather than a substantive, "how many things." The chief priests are pressing home their charge of sedition - Jesus' messianic claim with respect to Roman authority (which claim has nothing to do with secular authority).

σου gen. "you of" - [THEY BRING A CHARGE AGAINST] YOU. Genitive of direct object after the κατα prefix verb "to bring a charge against."

v5

ὅστε + inf. "-" - [BUT/AND HE JESUS NO LONGER ANSWERED NOTHING] SO AS [TO AMAZE PILATE]. This construction serves to introduce a consecutive clause expressing result; "Jesus, however, would not utter a word in reply, with the result that Pilate was greatly surprised", Cassirer.

v6

iii) Jesus or Barabbas, v6-15. Pilate concludes that Jesus is not really guilty of any secular crime and so "decided it would be politically expedient to deal with the case in terms of the paschal amnesty", Lane. First, in v6-7, Mark provides some background information, the paschal amnesty, v6, and the notorious prisoner, Barabbas, v7.

δε "now" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

κατα "at the festival" - ACCORDING TO [FESTIVAL HE WAS RELEASING]. The preposition here is adverbial, distributive; "at each celebration of this festival", Decker. The imperfect verb "he was releasing" carries durative force; "he used to release a prisoner for them", NRSV.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [ONE PRISONER] TO THEM [WHOM THEY WERE ASKING *pilate for*]. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage. The adjective "one" may be intended as an indefinite pronoun, "any one", "someone", TH; "any one prisoner of whose life they begged of him", Rieu.

v7

Nothing is known of the revolt, or of Barabbas, but Jewish nationalism constantly prompted revolts against Roman authority. Anyway, it seems he had a popular following.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative to a new point.

ὁ λεγομενος [λεγω] pres. pas. part. "**a man called**" - ONE BEING CALLED [BARABBAS]. The participle serves as a substantive, with "Barabbas" its nominative complement; "At the time there was a prisoner named Barabbas", CEV.

ἦν ... δεδεμενος [δεω] perf. pas. part. "**was in prison**" - WAS HAVING BEEN BOUND. The participle could be treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting "Barabbas"; "Now there was a man called Barabbas who was kept in custody, along with the rebels", Cassirer. Yet, TH, Decker, take it as verbal, "in accordance with Markan style." So, the perfect participle with the imperfect verb to-be forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction; "Now, the man called Barabbas was bound with the insurrectionists", TH.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - WITH [THE REBELS]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

εν + dat. "**in [the uprising]**" - [WHO HAD COMMITTED MURDER] IN [THE REVOLT, UPRISING]. Temporal use of the preposition; "during the revolt."

v8

Pilate probably has his office in the military headquarters within the fortress of Antonia, rather than in Herod's palace, part of which was used as a residence for the governor. Pilate deals with Jesus within his headquarters, and then in his dealings with the public, he moves to a paved outdoor area.

και "-" - AND. Possibly consecutive here, "And so"

αναβας [αναβαινω] aor. part. "**came up**" - HAVING COME UP. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to begin"; "And the crowd came up and began to ask *Pilate*", ESV. The movement of the crowd is probably toward the Praetorium, the military headquarters, up toward the entrance where Pilate would be sitting to adjudicate the matter of the paschal amnesty.

αιτεισθαι [αιτω] pres. mid. inf. "**asked**" - [THE CROWD BEGAN] TO ASK *pilate*. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to ask."

καθως "-" - AS, LIKE [HE WAS DOING]. Comparative; "they began to ask *him to do just like* he was doing *on previous years* for them" = "The crowd began asking him to do them his customary favour", Rieu.

αυτοις "**to do for them**" - TO THEM. Dative of interest, advantage.

v9

Pilate makes his suggestion on who to release, but the crowd, supporters of Barabbas, had probably made up their minds days before.

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject.
 αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [PILATE REPLIED] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.
 λεγων [λεγω] "-" - SAYING. Redundant attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to reply, answer", "answered and said" / adverbial, manner or means.
 απολυσω [απολυω] aor. subj. "**to release**" - [DO YOU WISH] I SHOULD RELEASE. Deliberative subjunctive.
 ὑμιν dat. pro. "**to you**" - TO YOU [THE KING OF THE JEWS]. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage. For the genitive "of the Jews", see v2.

v10

γαρ "-" - FOR, BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Pilate has asked the question.
 ὅτι "-" - [HE WAS KNOWING] THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependant statement of perception expressing what Pilate knew. The imperfect verb "to know" is obviously used to indicate the provision of background information.
 δια + acc. "**it was out of [self-interest]**" - BECAUSE OF, ACCOUNT OF [JEALOUSY, ENVY THE HIGH PRIESTS HAD HANDED *him* OVER TO THEM]. Causal use of the preposition.

v11

The chief priests make sure the crowd doesn't shift from their favoured freedom fighter.
 οἱ δε "**but**" - BUT/AND THEY [THE CHIEF PRIESTS INCITED THE CROWD]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Pilate to the chief priests.
 ἵνα + subj. "-" - THAT. The *hina* here may be adverbial, introducing a final clause expressing purpose, "in order to release for them Barabbas instead", on the other hand, it may introduce an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they incited the crowd *to say*, namely, "that Pilate release Barabbas to them instead".
 μαλλον adv. "**instead**" - RATHER [HE MIGHT RELEASE BARABBAS]. This adverb of manner takes the sense here of "rather", "instead", "on the contrary."
 αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage, "for them."

v12

Pilate's question assumes the innocence of Jesus. See Lk.23:22 for a more definite statement.
 ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE [PILATE]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "-" - [AGAIN] ANSWERING, REPLYING [WAS SAYING TO THEM]. Redundant attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say", "answered and said" / adverbial, manner or means.

ουν "then" - THEREFORE. Drawing a logical conclusion.

ποιησω [ποιεω] aor. subj. "**[what] shall I do**" - [WHAT DO YOU WILL *that*] I SHOULD DO. Deliberative subjunctive.

ὄν acc. pro. "**with the one**" - WHOM [YOU CALL KING OF THE JEWS]. This pronoun serves as the object of the verb "to do", the accusative being adverbial, reference / respect; "what shall I do with respect to whom." It is also the accusative object of the verb "to call", "you call whom", with the "the king of the Jews" standing in apposition / accusative complement, standing in a double accusative construction.

v13

οἱ δε "-" - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional, indicating a change in subject, here, back to the crowd. Also for v14 and v15. "They shouted back 'Crucify him.'"

παλιν adv. "-" - [THEY CRIED OUT] AGAIN, [CRUCIFY HIM]. The sequential adverb "again" doesn't quite work here, although, given that the crowd has previously asked for Barabbas, they do again shout out something. BDAG provides five possible meanings of the word in this context. The word is probably used to express the second time the crowd shouted at Pilate, but Brown's suggestion that it means "back" is worth considering, "They shouted back, 'Crucify him'", Goodspeed.

v14

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [BUT/AND HE PILATE WAS SAYING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

τί γαρ "why" - FOR WHAT [EVIL DID HE DO? BUT/AND THEY ALL THE MORE THEY CRIED OUT, CRUCIFY HIM]. This construction is used to introduce a question, "Why", or "What"; nicely expressed "Why, what crime has he committed?" Decker.

v15

βουλομενος [βουλομαι] pres. mid. part. "**wanting**" - [BUT/AND HE PILATE] DESIRING. The participle is adverbial, best treated as causal; "because he wanted to please the crowd."

ποιησαι [ποιεω] aor. inf. "**to satisfy**" - TO DO, MAKE [THE SUFFICIENT THE CROWD]. The infinitive may be classified as complementary, completing the sense of the participle "willing, wanting, wishing", but also to introduce a

dependant statement of perception expressing what Pilate was desiring, namely, to please the crowd. The phrase "to make sufficient" is regarded as a Latinism, "to satisfy", BAGD.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**to them**" - [RELEASED BARABBAS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage, "released for them."

φραγελλωσας [**φραγελλω**] aor. part. "**he had [Jesus] flogged**" - [AND] HAVING BEAT WITH WHIPS, SCOURGED *him*. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "after he had scourged him", Moffatt. The whip, a Roman *flagello*, is made up of strips of leather with attached lead pieces. The whipping is part of the punishment, but note in John where Pilate may use it to gain sympathy for Jesus from the crowd.

ινα + subj. "-" - [HE HANDED JESUS OVER] THAT = IN ORDER THAT [HE MIGHT BE CRUCIFIED]. Here introducing a final clause expressing purpose.

v16

iii] The mockery of Jesus, v16-20. The soldiers have a bit sport at Jesus' expense. This obviously takes place inside the military headquarters, the Praetorium, presumably the fortress of Antonia.

οι δε "-" - BUT/AND THEY [SOLDIERS LED AWAY HIM INSIDE THE COURTYARD]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject, from Pilate to the soldiers.

ο εστιν "**that is**" - WHICH IS [THE PRAETORIUM, AND THEY CALL TOGETHER THE WHOLE MILITARY UNIT]. Explanatory, although the courtyard is in the Praetorium, it's not the Praetorium itself, the governor's military headquarters. The military unit, "cohort", **σπειραν**, a *cohors* = one tenth of a legion, amounts to 600 men, so obviously **ολην**, "whole", is somewhat of an exaggeration. Still, the whole regiment should be present for the crowing of a king!

v17

Matthew describes the robe as a "scarlet military cloak", but for Mark, Jesus wears the purple of a king, the *purpura regum*.

πορφυραν [**α**] "**a purple robe**" - [AND THEY CLOTHED, DRESSED, HIM] PURPLE. Accusative complement of the direct object "him", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about "him"; "they dressed him in a purple robe."

πλεξαντες [**πλεκω**] aor. part. "**then twisting together**" - [AND THEY PUT ON HIM] HAVING BEEN WOVEN, PLAITED [MADE OF THORNS = A THORNY CROWN]. The NIV treats the participle as adverbial, temporal. Moffatt, "a crown of thorns which they had plaited", treats the participle as adjectival, but it is nominative, as

is often the case with an adverbial participle, and "thorny crown" is accusative. Note that the *περι* prefix verb "to put on" takes a dative of direct object.

v18

ασπαζεσθαι [*ασπαζομαι*] aor. inf. "[**they began**] to call out to [**him**]" - [AND THEY BEGAN] TO GREET [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to begin."

χαιρε [*χαιρω*] pres. imp. "**Hail**" - GREETING [KING OF THE JEWS]. The imperative of the common form of greeting, "Welcome", in Latin *Ave*, is used for a mock salutation, so "Hail". For the genitive "of the Jews", see v2.

v19

καλαμω [*ος*] dat. "**with a staff**" - [AND THEY WERE BEATING THE HEAD OF HIM] IN = WITH A STICK, STAFF. The dative is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, "by means of a staff."

αυτω dat. pro. "[**spit on**] **him**" - [AND THEY WERE SPITTING ON] HIM. Dative of direct object after the *εν* prefix verb "to spit on."

τιθεντες [*τιθημι*] pres. part. "**falling on**" - PUTTING = BENDING [THE KNEES THEY WERE BOWING BEFORE HIM]. Barclay treats the participle as attendant on the verb "to bow before", "they knelt down and offered him a mocking homage", but an adverbial function may well be intended, probably modal, expressing manner, "and with bended knees they did him homage", Berkeley.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - Dative of direct object after the *προς* prefix verb "to bow before."

v20

οτε "**when**" - [AND] WHEN. Adverbial conjunction introducing a temporal clause.

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - [THEY RIDICULED] HIM. Dative of direct object after the *εν* prefix verb "to mock."

την πορφυραν [*α*] "**the purple robe**" - [AND TOOK OFF HIM] THE PURPLE [AND CLOTHED HIM THE GARMENTS OF HIM]. Accusative complement of the direct object "him", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about "him." So also "the garments." "They disrobed him of the purple robe and they clothed him with his garments."

ινα + subj. "**to [crucify him]**" - [AND THEY LEAD AWAY HIM] THAT [THEY MIGHT CRUCIFY HIM]. Here introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order to crucify him."

15:21-39

Entering the Promised Land, 11:1-16:20

4. Victory, 14:1-15:39

vij The crucifixion of Jesus

Synopsis

Jesus, with two other prisoners, sets out for Golgotha guarded by a small detachment of soldiers; probably three (or nine if it is three per prisoner). Jesus is exhausted and is unable to carry his cross-member any longer, so the Roman guard coopts a passerby to carry it. His name is Simon and he is from Cyrene in North Africa (modern day Tripoli). The population of North Africa is substantially Greco-Roman so he is not necessarily an African by race; nor is he necessarily a Jew. Anyway, in Mark's source tradition the family is well known.

The place of crucifixion is most likely a skull-shaped feature outside the North wall of the city. Prior to execution, wine mixed with Myrrh to dull the pain, is offered to the prisoners. This is probably a charitable act for prisoners about to be executed, performed by local Jerusalemites rather than by the soldiers. Anyway, Jesus declines the offer. Jesus had promised that he would not drink of the vine until the day of glory, but his words are surely metaphorical, cf., 14:25. So, Jesus is crucified, along with two bandits (in tradition their names were Dysmas and Gestas). While the prisoners are dying in agony, the soldiers get to divide up the remaining possessions of the prisoners in a game of chance.

As is the custom, the charge brought against Jesus is inscribed on a chalk board above the cross, "The King of the Jews." Those passing by hurl abuse at Jesus. Interestingly, some repeat the charge originally brought against Jesus, namely, his desecration of the temple. Even religious officials join in; "He saved others, but he can't save himself."

From twelve noon to around 3pm, a strange darkness covers the land. Theories abound, an eclipse, a dust storm, but we can't be sure what happened. Finally, Jesus utters the opening words from Psalm 22 *Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani*. It is unclear why Jesus would feel that the Father God has deserted him, but maybe it's the load of human sin that Jesus bears as a propitiatory sacrifice, a sacrifice that leaves him feeling forsaken. On hearing the word "Eloi", someone thinks that Jesus is calling for Elijah to help him. They offer Jesus a drink and wait for a divine intervention, but Jesus gives out a cry and breathes his last.

Humiliation now becomes vindication. The curtain in the Temple, the curtain that separates the Holy of Holies from the Holy place, is torn from top to bottom. It's as if all that separates broken humanity from the presence of the God is opened

up through the sacrifice of Jesus. Witnessing his death, one of the soldiers makes his confession "Surely, this man was the Son of God"

Teaching

Humiliation leads to vindication, and ultimately, salvation for humanity.

Issues

i] Context: See 15:1-20.

ii] Structure: *The crucifixion of Jesus*:

They crucify him, v21-27;

The mockery of the crucified Christ, v29-32;

The death of Jesus, v33-38;

Mockery, v33-37;

Awe, v38-38.

iii] Interpretation:

The humiliation of messiah leads inevitably to the vindication of messiah, and thus the salvation of mankind - from forsaken to foreordained king, Son of God, or as Marcus puts it, "by mockery, afterward, by sympathy and awe."

The tradition Mark draws on to describe the suffering of the righteous man, the Suffering Servant, reflects the engagement of the apostles and prophets of the early church with the events surrounding the humiliation of the messiah. His humiliation is read in terms already provided by the scriptures; "They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst", Ps.69:21; "They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing", Ps.22:18; "All who see me mock me, they hurl insults, shaking their heads, 'He trusts in the Lord, let the Lord rescue him'", Ps.22:7. See Psalm 22, 69, Isaiah 53, and Wisdom 2.

Yet, for the messiah, Son of God, vindication follows humiliation. Vindication is evident in the renting of the curtain to the Holy of Holies, of access no longer denied. And vindication is evident in the confession of a Roman soldier, the first to confess Jesus as the Son of God. "While Jesus is alive, humanity wills his death; only in his death can humanity see him as the way to life", Edwards.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.27:32-56, Lk.23:26-49, Jn.19:17-30. Again, we have substantial agreement between the synoptic gospels, but it seems more than likely that there would be an abundance of oral tradition available on the passion of Jesus. This would seem to indicate that Mark, or a proto-Mark, has

condensed the narrative from the strands of tradition available to him, which has then served as the prime source for Matthew and Luke (or less likely, that Matthew is the prime source).

Note Luke's additional saying material, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me", 23:27-32, "Father, forgive them", 23:34, and "Father, into thy hands", and also the story of the repentant thief on the cross. Also Matthew, and his expansion on what happened at the moment of Jesus' death - an earthquake and a preemptive resurrection of the dead, 2:51-53.

Text - 15:21

The crucifixion of Jesus, v21-41: i] They crucify him, v21-27. Jesus' inability to carry the cross-member to the place of execution, and the fact that he died so quickly, given that a crucified person lives for days, indicates the severity of his suffering - more psychological than physical!

παράγοντα [παράγω] pres. part. "**was passing by**" - [AND THEY COMPEL, FORCE, REQUISITION] *the one* PASSING BY [A CERTAIN SIMON, CYRENIAN]. The participle serves as a substantive, accusative direct object of the verb "to compel." "A certain Simon" stands in apposition to "a passerby." "Cyrenian" serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "a certain Simon", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about "Simon", namely, that he was "from Cyrene."

ερχομενον [ερχομαι] pres. mid. part. "**on his way**" - COMING [FROM COUNTRY, THE FATHER OF ALEXANDER AND RUFUS]. Although anarthrous, the participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Simon", "who was coming in from the country", ESV.

ἵνα + subj. "**to [carry his cross]**" - THAT [HE MIGHT CARRY THE CROSS OF HIM]. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "in order to carry his cross", although TH suggests it is recitative, indicating the content of the command. Referring to the cross-member, not the upright post. The upright post would be a permanent feature.

v22

The site of the crucifixion is unknown, although Lane suggests that it is most probably "near the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre in an area which lay outside the northern, or so-called second, wall."

επι + acc. "**to**" - [AND THEY BRING HIM] UPON [THE GOLGOTHA PLACE]. Spatial use of the preposition, as NIV; "up to and on". "Golgotha" is in the attributive position so is probably being used as an adjective, idiomatic / local, identification; "the place *which is called / known as* Golgotha."

μεθερμηνευομενον [μεθερμηνευω] pres. pas. part. "[which] means" - [WHICH IS] BEING INTERPRETED. The present participle with the present verb to-be forms a present periphrastic construction. With the relative pronoun ὃ, the construction is a translation formula, as NIV; "which means."

κρανιου [ος] gen. "of the skull" - [THE PLACE] OF THE SKULL. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "place"; "Skull Hill", Phillips. Although often depicted as a hill, the name "skull" may be a metaphorical description of the place.

v23

Tradition refers to the holy woman of Jerusalem offering those about to be executed a narcotic drink, cf., Prov.31:6-7. Myrrh has narcotic properties when concentrated. Of course, Mark may have the Roman soldiers in mind, in which case, the wine is a specially treated tasting wine. Theories abound as to why Jesus refused the drink. Gundry suggests that "the refusal indicates a determination not to sleep on the cross. He will die awake and strong in flesh, just as he prayed awake and strong in flesh."

εσυρμισμενον [συριζω] perf. pas. part. "[wine] mixed with myrrh" - [AND THEY WERE GIVING ("trying to give", conative imperfect??) WINE] HAVING BEEN MIXED WITH MYRRH [TO HIM, BUT/AND HE DID NOT TAKE]. The participle, although anarthrous, is adjectival, attributive, limiting "wine"; "they offered him wine which was drugged with myrrh."

v24

βαλλοντες [βαλλω] pres. part. "they cast lots" - [AND THEY CRUCIFY HIM AND DIVIDE THE GARMENTS OF HIM] CASTING, THROWING [A LOT]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as instrumental, expressing means; "by means of drawing lots."

επ [επι] + acc. "-" - UPON [THEM]. Here spatial, "casting lots over them", metaphorical, or reference / respect, "with respect to" = "for them", ESV.

τις τι + subj. "what each [would get]" - WHO [SHOULD GET] WHAT. Introducing an indefinite indirect question; "casting lots to decide what each should get", Cassirer.

v25

Jesus is crucified at 9am. Note how John has 12 noon. This is a rather major fact to ignore. John is possibly aligning Jesus' crucifixion to the time of the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb, namely, 12 noon, ie., John is making a theological point. Note how in John's chronology, the Passover is celebrated on the Friday, not the Thursday, as in the Synoptic gospels.

δε "-" - BUT/AND [IT WAS THIRD HOUR]. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative. The imperfect verb to-be is used here to indicate background information.

και "when" - AND [THEY CRUCIFIED HIM]. The conjunction και, used to attach a time signature to what it refers to, takes the sense "when", as NIV; BDF #442.2

v26

In line with Roman law, a notice of the charge against Jesus is outlined on the *titulus*, a notice board attached to the upright post. The charge is not detailed in full, but this serves to produce a rather impressive statement, unwittingly proclaiming Jesus' messianic Kingship.

της αιτιας [α] gen. "of the charge" - [AND THE INSCRIPTION] OF THE RESPONSIBILITY, CAUSE. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / identification, "the notice which specified the charges against him."

αυτου gen. pro. "against him" - OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possibly possessive, expressing the possession of a derivative characteristic, here, the charge brought against him, or descriptive, idiomatic, "naming the charge which had been made against him", Cassirer. Usually translated as NIV.

ἦν επιγεγραμμενη perf. pas. part. "read" - WAS HAVING BEEN WRITTEN OVER [him]. The imperfect verb with the perfect participle forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction. "The charge against him was set forth in writing on a placard, which read, *The King of the Jews*", Rieu.

των Ιουδαιων adj. "of the Jews" - [THE KING] OF THE JEWS. The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, idiomatic / subordination; "The King over the Jews."

v27

συν + dat. "with [him]" - [AND] WITH [HIM THEY CRUCIFY TWO ROBBERS, BANDITS, THIEVES]. Expressing association / accompaniment. In this context, the word ληστας, "robbers", may mean "revolutionaries, insurrectionists" (or from the Jewish perspective, freedom-fighters).

εκ "[one] on [his right]" - [ONE] FROM [RIGHT AND ONE] FROM [LEFT OF HIM]. Expressing separation, "away from the right", and taking the sense "on the right side."

v28

This quote from Isaiah 53:12 is not found in the most reliable manuscripts and so is viewed as a later addition. "And the scripture was fulfilled which says, 'he was reckoned with the transgressors'". None-the-less, true enough!

v29

ii] The mockery of the crucified Christ, v29-32. As was the custom, a place of execution was in a public space, here likely beside a road out of the Jerusalem.

οἱ παραπορευομενοι [παραπορευομαι] pres. mid. part. "**those who passed by**" - [AND] THE ONES PASSING BY. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to insult, abuse."

κινουντες [κινεω] pres. part. "**shaking [their heads]**" - [WERE ABUSING, INSULTING, DERIDING HIM] MOVING, SHAKING [THE HEADS OF THEM AND SAYING]. This participle is coordinate with the participle "saying", "shaking ... and (και) saying", and together adverbial, modifying the verb "to abuse" and expressing either manner or means; "People who passed by said terrible things about Jesus. They shook their heads and shouted", CEV.

ουα "So!" - AHA! WELL THEN! Interjection; "an exclamation of scornful wonder", MM.

ὁ καταλυων [καταλυω] pres. part. voc. "**you who are going to destroy**" - THE ONE DESTROYING [THE TEMPLE AND BUILDING *it*]. As with "building", the participle serves as a vocative substantive, together forming a pendant nominal phrase standing in apposition to the subject of the verb **σωσον**, "you save", v30. NIV reads the participle as conative; "You who would destroy the temple", ESV.

εν + dat. "in" - IN [THREE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition **εν**, "Alas for the destroyer of the temple, for the man who builds it up again in three days!", Cassirer.

v30

The original charge directed at Jesus' trial, regarding the desecration of the temple, is unlikely to be common knowledge, so those who taunt Jesus are likely to be officials who were present at the ecclesiastical trial. Their taunt is a repeat of the temptation that has constantly faced Jesus - the way of salvation apart from the cross. Yet, Jesus is not into self-fulfilment; he is a ransom for many. From the perspective of those who taunt Jesus, a true messiah is surely able to save himself; if he can't save himself how can he save others?

καταβας [καταβαινω] aor. part. "**come down**" - [SAVE YOURSELF] HAVING COME DOWN [FROM THE CROSS]. The participle may be attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the verb "to save", and therefore an imperative, as NIV, but it may also be treated as adverbial, temporal, "save yourself having come down ...", or instrumental, expressing means, "save yourself by coming down from the cross"

v31

εμπαίζοντες [εμπαίζω] pres. part, "**mocked him**" - [AND LIKEWISE / LIKEWISE ALSO THE CHIEF PRIESTS] MOCKING. The participle here virtually serves as a finite verb, so best classified as a periphrastic construction with the verb to-be assumed, "*were making fun of him*" = "*made fun of him*"

προς + acc. "**among [themselves]**" - TOWARD [ONE ANOTHER]. Here expressing association, "in company with" = "among themselves" = "exchanged derisive comments", Rieu.

μετα + gen. "-" - WITH [THE SCRIBES]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

σωσαι [σωζω] aor. inf, "**[he cannot] save**" - [WERE SAYING, HE SAVED OTHERS, HIMSELF HE IS NOT ABLE] TO SAVE. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the negated verb "is not able."

v32

απο + gen. "**from [the cross]**" - [LET COME DOWN NOW THE CHRIST, THE KING OF ISRAEL] FROM [THE CROSS]. Expressing separation; "away from." Note that "the King of Israel" stands in apposition to "the Christ." Pilate uses the title "King of the Jews", but the Chief priests use the more natural way to identify the people; they are the people of Israel. For the religious authorities, Jesus is not their king.

ινα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [WE MAY SEE AND MAY BELIEVE *that he is the messiah*]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that"

οι συνεσταυρωμενοι [συνσταυρω] perf. pas. part. "**those crucified with [him]**" - [AND] THE ONES HAVING BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH [WITH HIM WERE REVILING HIM]. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to revile, reproach." With its **συν** prefix, it takes a dative of direct object, and following normal practice, the prepositional prefix is repeated as a standalone preposition. Luke tells us that one the prisoners actually repents. Harmonising the two accounts is not easy. Jerome suggested that "at first both prisoners railed against Jesus, but later, after the cosmic signs, one of them repented and turned to Jesus in faith", Marcus.

v33

iii] The death of Jesus, v33-41. Darkness serves as a portent of Jesus coming death, an "unexplained portent", Moule. Darkness covers the **ολην**, "whole", earth, probably in the sense of the darkness that covered Egypt, covered "the whole of Egypt", so here "the whole of the land of *Judea*." The darkness can't be an eclipse, given that at Passover the moon is full. Suggestions include dark and foreboding clouds, sirocco winds, or a volcanic cloud irruping from somewhere.

γενομένης [γίνομαι] aor. mid. part. "At noon" - [AND HOUR SIXTH] HAVING BECOME. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "hour six" forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal; "When twelve o'clock came", Moffatt.

εφ [επι] + acc. "over [the whole land]" - [IT BECAME DARK] UPON [WHOLE LAND, EARTH]. Spatial, here with the sense "over".

ἕως + gen. "until" - UNTIL [HOUR NINTH]. Introducing a temporal clause, and expressing time up to a point, "until"; "til three o'clock", Moffatt.

v34

In quoting the first verse of Psalm 22, Jesus may be referring to the Psalm as a whole where humiliation ends in vindication. Jesus is obviously not able to quote the whole Psalm, given his present circumstance! None-the-less, it is generally felt that this particular verse addresses his present situation of humiliation. "The burden of the world's sin, his complete self-identification with sinners, involved not merely a felt, but a real, abandonment by his Father. It is in the cry of dereliction that the full horror of man's sin stands revealed", Cranfield.

τη ενατη ὥρα dat. "at three in the afternoon" - [and] in = at ninth hour. The dative is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

φωνη [η] dat. "a [loud] voice" - [jesus cried out] in = with a [loud] voice. The dative is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his crying out, or instrumental, expressing the means.

ὃ εστιν μεθερμηνευομενον [μεθερμηνεω] pres. mid. part. "which means" - which is being interpreted. See v22.

εις + acc. "why" - [god of me, god of me] to [why do you forsake me]. Here the preposition expressing purpose, so with τί the prepositional phrase gives the sense "to what purpose do you forsake me?"

v35

It is possibly that the soldiers standing by are those who act on Jesus' words and offer him a drink, given that οξους refers to the cheap wine drunk by Roman soldiers, so Lane. Who else would have some "cheap wine" handy? These τινες, "certain *people*" mistake Jesus' *Eloi* for Elijah. Would a Jew make this mistake? Still, if Mark wanted us to understand that the soldiers were the ones acting on Jesus' words, then he surely would have said so. The motive for this act is unclear; maybe they just want to keep Jesus alive to see if some divine intervention occurs.

των παρεστηκωτων [παριστημι] gen. perf. part. "of those standing near" - [AND SOME] OF THE ONES HAVING STOOD BESIDE (bystanders). The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive.

ακουσαντες [ακουω] aor. part. "**heard this**" - HAVING HEARD [WERE SAYING, BEHOLD, LOOK, SEE, HE CALLS FOR ELIJAH]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "On hearing this", Moffatt.

v36

δραμων [τρεχω] aor. part. "**[someone] ran**" - [AND CERTAIN = SOMEONE] HAVING RUN, [HAVING FILLED A SPONGE OF CHEAP WINE, HAVING PLACED ON A STICK, GAVE TO DRINK HIM (offered a drink to him)]. As with "having filled" and "having placed", the participle is attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the verb "to give to drink." The genitive "of cheap wine" is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content, "a sponge *full of* sour wine." The dative *καλαμω*, "stick, staff", is local, "on a stick." "Someone ran and filled a sponge with cheap wine and put it on a staff and gave it to him to drink."

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "**he said**" - SAYING. The participle is adverbial, temporal, "and then said", although a redundant participle of saying will often introduce speech as a matter of Semitic form.

ει "if" - [LEAVE *him be*, LET US SEE] IF [ELIJAH COMES]. Here serving to introduce an dependent statement of indirect question; "Let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down", ESV.

καθειλειν [καθαιρεω] aor. inf. "**to take [him] down**" - TO TAKE DOWN [HIM]. Here adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "in order to take him down."

v37

ὁ δε "-" - but/and he. Transitional, indicating a change in subject to Jesus.

αφεις [αφιημι] aor. part. "**with [a loud cry]**" - [JESUS] LETTING LOOSE, RELEASING [A LOUD SOUND, EXPIRED]. Most translations opt for an attendance circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to expire, die"; "Jesus gave a great shout and died", Barclay. The NIV takes the participle as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of Jesus dying. Gundry actually equates the participle with the main verb "to die" such that Jesus' "shout of superhuman strength *was* his last breath." Decker discounts Gundry's point, arguing that he "has overstated the grammatical evidence."

v38

The curtain in mind may be the inner curtain separating the Holy place from the Holy of Holies inside the temple proper, or it may be the curtain that separates the forecourt from the sanctuary. The curtain in front of the Holy of Holies is the one the high priest passes through once a year on the Day of Atonement. It's tearing would imply that "the death of Jesus has opened the way into the presence of God", Cranfield. If the outer curtain is in mind, then this would be a public event and would serve as a "public sign that the rejection of the Messiah by the

leaders of the people discloses a failure in sensitivity to the divine purpose so serious that it seals the disaster of AD 70", Lane, so also France. Edwards also opts for the outer curtain because, as a tapestry portraying a panorama of the heavens, its rending is a rending of the skies, opening heaven to humanity through the death of Jesus. Marcus argues for the inner curtain, in that it is the most theologically significant candidate, aligning to the theology of Hebrews, although not dependent on Hebrews.

και "-" - AND. Possibly expressing result; "and so as a result", so Gundry.

του ναου [ναος] gen. "**of the temple**" - [THE CURTAIN] OF THE TEMPLE. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, or descriptive, idiomatic, "the curtain *that hung in* the temple." Note that the outer curtain was 55 cubits in height according to Josephus.

εις + acc. "**in [two]**" - INTO [TWO]. Spatial, expressing arrival at; "into two pieces."

ἕως + gen. "**to [bottom]**" - [FROM TOP] UNTIL [BOTTOM]. Here spatial, expressing extent reached to κάτω, "below", so "to bottom." The preposition απο, "from", expresses source / origin.

v39

The centurion's confession, if taken at face value, may just be a recognition of Jesus' divinity, "a God", or even "god-like". Of course, for Mark the statement is highly significant. This is the first time someone has confessed Jesus as "the Son of God", and this confession is a consequence of Jesus' passion - his suffering and death. In Matthew's gospel, the confession follows extraordinary signs, but not so in Mark. In Mark, the humiliation of Jesus is revelatory, it becomes "the *window* into the heart and meaning of Jesus, the significance of which is only captured in the confession 'the Son of God'", Edwards. In such, Christ is vindicated.

ὁ παρεστηκως [παρεστημι] perf. part. "**who stood there**" - [BUT/AND THE CENTURION] HAVING STOOD BESIDE. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "centurion", as NIV.

εξ εναντιας + gen. "**in front of**" - BEFORE OPPOSITE [HIM]. An idiomatic expression meaning "in front of."

ιδων [ὀραω] aor. part. "**when saw**" - HAVING SEEN. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

ὅτι "[**how**]" - THAT [HE DIED IN THIS WAY, HE SAID, TRULY, THIS MAN WAS *the SON OF GOD*]. Introducing an object clause / dependant statement of perception expressing what he realised.

θεου [ος] gen. "**[the Son] of God**" - The genitive is adjectival, relational; see 3:11. For Mark, this is the authentic confession of Jesus, the Christ / messiah,

which truth is encapsulated in the gospel, a divine message exegeted by Mark from 1:1 through to 15:39, and providing the "theological bookends of the gospel", Decker. Note that the lack of a definite article before $\nu\iota\omicron\varsigma$ does not imply it is indefinite since "definite predicate nouns which precede the verb usually lack the article", Moule IB, (Colwell's rule), but see Decker for a critique of the rule as it applies here, p.263.

15:40-47

Entering the Promised Land, 11:1-16:8

5. Epilogue

i] The burial of Jesus

Synopsis

Near the place of execution, a group of women gather in support of Jesus in his time of humiliation. Mark tells us that Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger, and Joses the mother of Salome are present, among others. John tells us that the beloved disciple is also present with the women.

It is now late on the Friday afternoon and so it is necessary to see to Jesus' burial before sunset, the commencement of the Sabbath. Also, the law demands that a body should not remain on a tree after sunset, but must be buried, Deut.21:23. At this point, Mark tells us that a godly man, a man "waiting for the kingdom of God", bravely fronts the governor and asks for the body of Jesus. His name is Joseph, from the town of Arimathea. Pilate confirms that Jesus is dead and then gives his permission. Joseph shrouds the body and lays it in a rock tomb, rolling a stone over the entrance.

From a distance, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph, watch this kindness shown Jesus by Joseph.

Teaching

Faithfulness follows the faithfulness of Jesus

Issues

i] Context: See 11:1-11. We now come to the last Markan sandwich, an epilogue to the gospel proclamation that Jesus is the victorious Son of God, a victory realised through the humiliation of a cross. In this sandwich we meet the post-cross response of believers: the bravery of Joseph and the faithfulness of the women.

A¹. The women at the cross, 15:40-41

B. Joseph of Arimathea approaches Pilate, 15:42-46

A². The women visit the tomb, 15:47-16:8

ii] Structure: *The burial of Jesus*:

The women watch from afar, v40-41;

Jesus is buried, v42-47:

Joseph requests the right to bury Jesus, v42-43;

Pilate gives his approval, v44-45;

Joseph lays Jesus to rest, v46;

Two women observe the burial, v47.

iii] Interpretation:

Mark presents us with the gospel / important news concerning Jesus the Son of God, 1:1. This *news* culminates at the cross, and it is there where the first of many proclaim Jesus as the Son of God; Jesus, through his ransom for many, is the saviour of the world.

A fundamental proposition of Pauline theology is that faith in the faithfulness of Christ produces the fruit of love. Mark concludes his gospel with this fruit evident in Jesus' female supporters and in a man called Joseph, from the town of Arimathea.

Mark tells us that the women were followers of Jesus, disciples, and that they provided for him. They came up with Jesus to Jerusalem, and unlike the apostles, did not run away, but stayed with him through his time of humiliation. At the cross, faithfulness flourishes; fear evaporates.

Another example of fear evaporating and faithfulness flourishing, is found in the example of Joseph. Approaching Pilate with a request for the body of Jesus comes with serious danger, let alone the danger of a member of the Sanhedrin having anything to do with Jesus, dead or alive. Yet, he makes the approach and tends to the body of the crucified one. Again, faith in the atoning death of Jesus produces the fruit of faithfulness rather than fear.

iv] Synoptics:

The women watch on: v40-41. Matt.27:56, Lk.23:49, Jn.19:25-27. Luke's "all Jesus' close friends", and John's "the beloved disciple", adds to the presence of the women.

Joseph of Arimathea, v42-47. Matt.27:57-61, Lk.23:50-56, Jn.19:38-42. Matthew condenses the account and Luke adds nothing to it.

Text - 15:40

The burial of Jesus, v40-47: i] The women watch from afar, v40-41. Mark now makes mention of the faithful women who serve Jesus, and do so right to the end.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

θεωρουσαι [θεωρω] pres. part. "**were watching**" - [THERE WERE AND = ALSO WOMEN] LOOKING, OBSERVING [FROM FAR OFF]. The NIV opts for a periphrastic construction, the present participle + the imperfect verb to-be ησαν, producing an imperfect periphrastic. Most translations head toward an adjectival participle, attributive, limiting "women"; "There were also many women who were looking on from a distance."

εν + dat. "**among [them]**" - IN [WHOM]. Here expressing association, "among whom"

και ... και και ... "....., **and**" - BOTH [MARY MAGDALENE], AND [MARY THE MOTHER OF JAMES THE YOUNGER AND JOSES], AND [SALOME]. Establishing a coordinate construction. Note the use of the adjectivizer articles limiting, so specifying the individuals in mind. So, Mary, is the Mary ἡ, the one who comes from the town of Magdala. The other Mary is the Mary ἡ, who is the mother of James. James being referred to is the James του, who is little = shorter or younger. Obviously there is no confusion with Salome.

v41

ὅτε "-" - [WHO], WHEN [IN GALILEE]. The temporal conjunction introduces a temporal clause; "When he was in Galilee", ESV. The preposition εν, "in", is local, expressing space.

αυτω dat. pro. "[**followed**] **him**" - [WERE FOLLOWING] HIM [AND WERE SERVING] HIM. Both uses of the personal pronoun are dative of direct object after the verbs "to follow (as a disciple)" and "to serve, minister to." Note that both verbs are imperfect, probably to indicate the provision of background information.

αἱ συναναβασαι aor. part. "[**women**] **who had come up with**" - [AND MANY OTHERS] HAVING GONE UP WITH [HIM]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "women", "women who came up with him to Jerusalem", ESV. The συν prefix verb "to go up with, travel with, accompany", takes a dative of direct object. The αλλαι πολλαι, "many others", is feminine, so "many other women."

v42

ii] Jesus is buried, v42-47. As well as the faithful women, there is a faithful man, Joseph from the town of Arimathea, a man waiting for the fulfilment of "the kingdom of God", a kingdom realised in the victory of Christ on the cross.

γενομενης [γινομαι] gen. aor. part. "**as evening approached**" - [AND] HAVING BECOME [EVENING ALREADY, SINCE IT WAS PREPARATION, WHICH IS DAY BEFORE THE SABBATH]. The genitive participle with its genitive subject, "evening", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV; "By this time it was evening, and as (causal επει, "and since") it was the day of Preparation (that is [ὅ εστιν], the day before the sabbath)", Moffatt. The sense of "evening" is "late in the afternoon". This means that Joseph has only an hour or two to properly bury Jesus before sunset and the commencement of the Sabbath. Note how Mark explains what is meant by "the day of Preparation" for his Gentile readers.

v43

Propriety may not apply to a common criminal, but for Joseph, it applied to Jesus. The body needed to be properly laid to rest, and this before the commencement of the Sabbath at sunset, and in accord with Deuteronomy 21:23 (that a body not be left hanging on a tree after sunset). A common criminal, upon execution, has no rights, even to a proper burial, and even more so if that person was convicted of treason. So, Joseph is wading into dangerous waters.

ελθων [ερχομαι] aor. part. "-" - HAVING COME. Decker suggests that the participle is adverbial, temporal, but it may just be attendant on the verb "to enter into": "Joseph of Arimathea, a Councillor of good standing who was himself in search of the Kingdom of God, went and made his way boldly into Pilate's presence", Rieu.

απο + gen. "**of [Arimathea]**" - [JOSEPH, THE ONE] FROM [ARIMATHEA]. Usually with the sense "away from", but here replacing **εκ**, expressing source / origin. The town of Arimathea is possibly identified with a site known as Remtis northwest of Jerusalem.

βουλευτης [ης ου] "**member of the Council**" - A [RESPECTED, REPUTABLE, NOBLE (possibly "wealthy")] COUNCILLOR. This nominal phrase stands in apposition to "Joseph", explaining something about Joseph, namely, that he is a respected member of the Sanhedrin.

ην προσδεχομενος [προσδεχομαι] pres. mid. part. "**was [himself] waiting for**" - [WHO AND = ALSO HE = HIMSELF] WAS LOOKING TOWARD [THE KINGDOM OF GOD]. The present participle + the imperfect verb to-be forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, possibly expressing durative action - he was waiting, waiting, waiting. For "kingdom of God", see 1:15.

τολμησας [τολμαω] aor. part. "**[went] boldly**" - HAVING DARING [WENT]. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his going to Pilate, as NIV; "courageously went to Pilate", NAB.

προς + acc. "**to [Pilate]**" - TOWARD [PILATE AND ASKED *him* for THE BODY OF JESUS]. Spatial, expressing movement toward; "He courageously went to see Pilate and asked for Jesus' body"

v44

Only Mark records Pilate seeking to confirm that Jesus is dead.

ο δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject to Pilate.

ει "**to hear that**" - [PILATE WAS AMAZED, ASTONISHED] IF [ALREADY HE HAD DIED]. The conjunction is used here to introduce an indirect question, expressing what Pilate asks himself in his amazement, "has he died already?" Used again

later in the verse to express Pilate's question to the centurion "if already he died" = "has he already died?"

προσκαλεσαμενος [προσκαλεω] aor. mid. part. "**summoning**" - [AND] HAVING SUMMONED [THE CENTURION HE QUESTIONED HIM IF ALREADY HE DIED]. The participle is adverbial, temporal. It is unusual for a crucified person to die so quickly. The whole point of crucifixion is to prolong the punishment. "He then summoned the centurion and asked whether he had been dead for some time."

v45

It is probably true to say that Pilate begrudgingly allows the crucifixion of Jesus and so there is a touch of humanity in his willingness to release the body for burial. Maybe it was a poke in the eye to the religious authorities, much in the same as the charge-notice "The King of the Jews" is somewhat in their face.

γνους [γινομαι] aor. part. "**when he learned**" - [AND] HAVING COME TO KNOW [FROM THE CENTURION]. The participle is adverbial, temporal; "when he ascertained this from the centurion ..."

Ιωσηφ dat. proper "**to Joseph**" - [HE GAVE THE CORPSE] TO JOSEPH. Dative of indirect.

v46

Mark's account is succinct and to the point. We are left with numerous questions, and few answers. Mark doesn't tell us if Joseph had assistants, but obviously he did. We are not told if Joseph prepared the body for burial. Custom demands the body be washed and scented before it is wrapped in a shroud and entombed. The act is allowed on the Sabbath, so we can assume that Joseph acted appropriately. The actual design of the tomb all came down to the wealth of the owner. The wealthier would have a cave like tomb, with a ledge for the body and 1 metre square entrance. A hewn round slab of rock would serve to seal the tomb. All we know is that the stone was "rolled" "against the entrance."

και "**So**" - AND. A consecutive sense is likely, as NIV; "and so"

αγορασας [αγοραζω] aor. part. "**[Joseph] bought**" - HAVING BOUGHT [A LINEN SHEET]. The participle is adverbial, temporal; "After buying a linen sheet", Moffatt.

καθειλων [καθαιρω] aor. part. "**took down**" - [AND] HAVING TAKEN DOWN [HIM, HE WRAPPED *him*]. Possibly also adverbial, temporal, so Decker, but it may also may serve as an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to wrap in"; "he ... took him down and swathed him in the linen", Moffatt. None-the-less, the action is causative, as Lane notes; "he caused the body to be taken down from the cross, linen cloth to be purchased, and the body prepared for burial."

τη σινδοι [ων ωνος] dat. "**the linen**" - Dative of direct object after the εν prefix verb "to wrap in." The linen sheet, length of linen, is properly "a linen shroud."

ἦν λελατομημενον [λατομεω] perf. pas. part. "**cut**" - [AND PLACED HIM IN A TOMB WHICH] WAS HAVING BEEN HEWN, CUT OUT. The perfect participle + the imperfect verb to-be, forms an periphrastic pluperfect construction.

εκ + gen. "**out of**" - FROM [ROCK]. Expressing source / origin.

επι "**against [the entrance]**" - [AND ROLLED A STONE] UPON [THE DOOR = ENTRANCE OF THE TOMB]. Spatial, probably "against".

v47

Two of the women, who had witnessed the crucifixion, take time out to observe the burial of Jesus. Presumably, they observe from a distance, given that Joseph, from their perspective, is no friend of the Christian fellowship.

εθεωρουν [θεαομαι] imperf. "**saw**" - [AND MARY THE MAGDALENE AND MARY THE *mother* OF JOSES] WERE SEEING. The imperfect tense is used to indicate the provision of background information. For the use of the article ἡ for Magdalene, see και v40.

που "**where [he was laid]**" - WHERE [HE HAS BEEN LAID]. Here serving to introduce an indirect interrogative clause.

16:1-8

Entering the Promised Land, 11:1-16:8

5. Epilogue, 15:40-16:8

ii] The Resurrection of Jesus

Synopsis

It was the first day of the week, Sunday, and three of Jesus' disciples, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, headed for Jesus' tomb to prepare his body for burial. They were unable to perform this rite on Friday, and felt they couldn't break the Sabbath on Saturday, but now were free to act. On reaching the tomb they found the entrance stone rolled away and a young man sitting on the right side, inside the tomb, looking very much like an apparition of some kind. Fear took hold of them, but the young man calmed them with the news that Jesus was risen, "he is not here." Instructed to report what they have seen to the apostles, the women scurry away from the tomb, filled with amazement, "because they were afraid."

Teaching

You can't keep a good man down! So, what will you do about that?

Issues

i] Context: See Mark 15:40-47.

ii] Structure: *The resurrection of Jesus:*

The journey of the women to the tomb, v1-4;

Their meeting with the young man / angel, v5-8.

iii] Interpretation:

It's hard to imagine the gospel without a focus on the resurrection of Jesus. In fact, in my ministry circle, the gospel was very much focused on the resurrection; it is because Jesus lives that we may live also - He lives and is Lord. Paul, preaching to Gentiles in Athens at the Areopagus, doesn't even mention the crucifixion of Jesus, but instead, focuses on the resurrection, Acts 17:31. Yet, as if reflecting on Paul's letter's, Mark's focus is on the crucifixion of Jesus, on the atonement, not on his resurrection. Mark bookends his gospel with the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, 1:1 and 15:39, a truth fulfilled at the cross by the one who "gave his life as a ransom for many." For Mark, the empty tomb serves to prompt the reader to action.

In the first two parts of this his last gospel-sandwich, Mark has displayed the faithfulness and bravery of some female disciples and a godly

man. Now he leaves us with three women confronted with the proclamation "He is risen!", and who, when told to proclaim the news, are overcome by fear and amazement, saying nothing to anybody. It's as if Mark is prompting the reader to consider their reaction. Is this going to be our response to the risen Lord - fear, amazement and silence?

Throughout Mark's gospel, the reader stands with Jesus in the face of amazement, disbelief and hostility. We witness it all - the good, the bad and the ugly. We are invited to see at close hand the disciples' painfully slow recognition of Jesus' person, a recognition that ends in betrayal, denial and flight. So, what is our response going to be to this death-denying man? Fear or faith?

Textual criticism: It is clear that the ending known as the *longer ending*, v9-20, as well as the additional material following v8, and v14, is not original. It is drawn from Luke and Acts and is clearly not Markan. Most Bible's print some, or all, of this ending with an explanatory note. Some commentators suggest that the actual ending is lost, possibly accidentally torn off the scroll. Either that, or Mark was interrupted before he was able to finish what he was writing.

Yet, it is not unreasonable for Mark to conclude his gospel where he does. Faith does not come by means of miracles, even the most significant of miracles, a resurrection from the dead. "Faith comes rather through hearing the gospel and personal encounter with the One who was crucified and now raised from the dead", Edwards.

We are left with the women leaving the empty tomb filled with amazement and fear. Throughout the gospel people respond to Jesus in amazement and fear, but only some move to faith. The reader is confronted with an event that will at least prompt amazement and/or fear. Will the reader follow the lead of the those in the gospel who move from amazement / fear to faith?

Note that concluding the text with *γαρ* is somewhat unusual, but the concluding clause *εφοβουντο γαρ*, "for they were afraid", only has two words and *γαρ*, being a postpositive conjunction, must take the second position as a matter of form.

Historical authenticity: The sequential order of events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion are clearly outlined in all four gospels, but the events surrounding Jesus' resurrection do not fit perfectly into one consistent account. This has led some to question the historicity of the resurrection. Yet, it is worth noting that accounts of an amazing event often become somewhat confused. Wellington, Ney and Napoleon give differing

accounts of the battle of Waterloo, but only a fool would suggest it didn't happen.

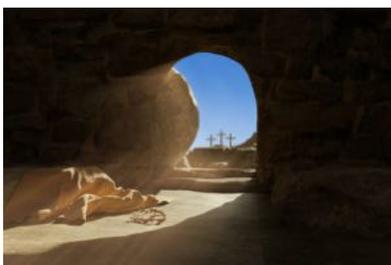
Those with an open mind, who study the source texts, will usually arrive at the obvious conclusion that the tomb was empty, and that on numerous occasions Jesus' disciples believe that they met him following his crucifixion. It is clear that the rag-tag dispirited followers of Jesus believed, without a shadow of doubt, that Jesus had risen from the dead.

iv] Synoptics:

Matt.28:1-8, Lk.24:1-12, Jn.20:1-10.

The account evidences a primitive Semitic oral source which has also influenced John's account of the resurrection. Possible Markan additions to that tradition are evident in v7, underlining the tradition of Galilean appearances (the disjunctive use of *αλλα*), and v8b, the double negative *ουδενι ουδεν*, "[said] nothing to no one" (the secrecy motif), and the consecutive clause, "because they were afraid" (the amazed / fear motif).

v] Homiletics: *Easter Day*



Our flesh and blood tell us that meaning is found in romance, in a career, in learning, in home building, in family and friends, in recreation..... yet none of these things can give meaning and we are fools to believe that they can.

Jesus invites us to undertake a journey toward meaning, toward intimacy with the creator of this whole universe. The journey is undertaken via a cross and empty tomb. There, with the women, we stand looking out through the opening into the sunlight and we hear the message that this Jesus will go before us, will lead us through life. The choice is ours. If we want to know God and be his friend for eternity, then Jesus will take us on that journey into the Father's divine presence. All this freely for the asking.

So, Easter is about life, life eternal, life in all its fullness. Life is what we want, abundant and overflowing, satisfying our deepest desires for meaning, for substance.

Text - 16:1

The resurrection, v1-8: i] The women journey to the tomb, v1-4. It was the first day of the week, Sunday, and three of Jesus' disciples, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Salome, having acquired some spices, head for

Jesus' tomb to properly prepare his body for burial. They were unable to perform this rite on Friday, and felt they couldn't break the Sabbath on Saturday, but now they are free to act. It is dawn, on the first day of the week - Sunday. In their haste, the women had not really prepared themselves for their task, for as they journey to the tomb they begin to discuss how they should remove the stone from the entrance of the tomb. They will obviously need some help, but nevertheless continue on their way.

διαγενομενου [διαγινομαι] aor. part. "**when [the Sabbath] was over**" - [AND THE SABBATH] HAVING PASSED THROUGH. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "the Sabbath", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

Ιακωβου [ος] "**of James**" - [MARY MAGDALENE AND MARY THE *mother*] OF JAMES [AND SALOME]. The genitive is adjectival, relational. The preceding article ἡ, "the", = "the mother", understood, serves as a nominalizer turning the genitive "James" into a nominal construction standing in apposition to "Mary".

ἵνα + subj. "**so that**" - [BROUGHT SPICES] THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "**in order that they might go and anoint him.**"

ελθουσαι [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**they might go**" - HAVING GONE. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to anoint"; "go and anoint."

αλειψωσιν [αλειψω] aor. subj. "**to anoint [Jesus' body]**" - THEY MAY ANOINT [HIM]. Anointing with perfumed oil, olive oil or pistachio nut oil, is not for embalming, but simply to cover the smell of decay during the period of mourning. It would seem likely that Joseph of Arimathea had washed and anointed the body prior to wrapping it in a linen cloth and sealing the tomb and that the two Mary's would have witnessed this and realized that the proper preparation for burial had been fulfilled. So, it is likely that they were about "adding extraordinary honour to him after the completion of his burial", Gundry.

v2

λιαν πρωι adv. "**very early**" - [AND] EXCEEDINGLY IN THE MORNING. The modal adverb "exceedingly" with the temporal adverb "in the morning" gives the sense "very early in the morning."

τη μια dat. adj. "**on the [first] day**" - ON THE ONE = FIRST *day*. The dative is adverbial, temporal. The use of "one" rather than "first" is Semitic.

των σαββατων [ον] gen. "**of the week**" - The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

ανατειλαντος [ανατελλω] gen. aor. part. "**just after**" - [THE SUN] HAVING SPRUNG UP. The genitive participle + its genitive subject forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal; "when the sun had risen", ESV. This could be a time just before dawn, as John 20:1, but implies just after dawn. Note, that we are

not actually told when Jesus rose from the dead, but when the tomb was found empty, namely shortly after dawn on Sunday, the first day of the week, the day having begun at sunset the day before. It is usually assumed that Jesus rose sometime during that night.

επι + acc. "[**they were on their way**] **to**" - [THEY CAME] DOWN UPON [THE TOMB]. Spatial. "They came to the tomb", Barclay.

v3

ελεγον [**λεγω**] imperf. "**they asked**" - [AND] THEY WERE SAYING. The imperfect is often just used as a matter of form for speech, and for providing background information, but it may serve here to indicate a move from narrative (the women were **ερχονται**, "coming", historic / narrative present, v2) to discourse.

προς "-" - TO [THEMSELVES]. Here expressing association, "with, in the company with."

ημιν dat. pro. "-" - [WHO WILL ROLL AWAY THE STONE] FOR US. Dative of interest, advantage; "for us." The woman have failed to consider how they are going to move the stone from the entrance of the tomb. If they were properly prepared, they would have brought along some extra hands. As it is, they now have to trust that someone might be on hand to help them. This rather humorous oversight has already been corrected; the stone **αποκεκυλισται**, "has [already] been rolled away" - divine passive.

εκ + gen. "**away from**" - FROM. Expressing separation, "away from", as NIV.

του μνημειου [**ον**] gen. "**of the tomb**" - [THE ENTRANCE] OF THE TOMB. The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

v4

αναβλεψασαι [**αναβλεπω**] aor. part. "**[but] when they looked up**" - [AND] HAVING LOOKED UP. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV, or modal, expressing the manner of their seeing; "looking up, they saw." The prefix **ανα**, "up", doesn't necessarily imply that the tomb entrance is up high, but that they are looking up from the pathway; "As they looked closer, they saw that the stone, which was a very large one, had been rolled back", Phillips.

οτι "**that**" - [THEY SEE] THAT [THE STONE HAS BEEN ROLLED AWAY]. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they saw.

γαρ "**[which was very large]**" - FOR [IT WAS VERY MUCH GREAT = IT WAS VERY LARGE]. Verses 3 and 4 are one sentence in the Gk. and so it is possible that this causal clause, introduced by **γαρ**, explains why the women were debating over the issue of who would move the stone for them, cf., v3. Its appearance at the end of the verse may indicate a parenthesis; "They said to themselves, 'Who

will roll away the boulder for us at the opening of the tomb?' (for it was a very large boulder). But when they looked, they saw the boulder had been rolled to one side", Moffatt.

v5

ii] The women see an angelic apparition, v5-8. On reaching the tomb, the women find the entrance stone rolled away and inside the tomb they see a young man sitting on the right side, looking very much like an apparition of some kind. Fear takes hold of them. The young man calms them with the news that Jesus is risen; "He is not here." He then instructs them to report what they have seen to the apostles, and so the women scurry away from the tomb, filled with amazement - "because they were afraid."

εισελθουσαι [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "**as they entered**" - [AND] HAVING ENTERED [INTO THE TOMB]. The participle may be treated as adverbial, temporal, as NIV, or just attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the verb "to see"; "they entered the tomb and saw a youth sitting", Berkeley.

περιβεβλημενον [περιβαλλω] perf. mid. part. "**dressed in**" - [THEY SAW A YOUNG MAN] HAVING BEEN PUT ON [A WHITE ROBE]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "youth"; "they saw a young man who was clad in a white robe." The description of a person wearing white robes serves as an identifier of an angel, cf., Acts 1:10-11 - "two men in white robes." Angels are often identified as young man, youthful.

καθήμενον [καθημαι] pres. part. "**sitting**" - SITTING. The accusative complement of the direct object "young man", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the "young man."

εν + dat. "on [the right side]" - ON [THE RIGHT]. Local, expressing space / sphere. In the sense of sitting right inside the tomb, probably where the body was laid.

εξεθαμβηθησαν [εκθαμβεω] aor. pas. "**they were alarmed**" - [AND] THEY WERE EXCEEDINGLY AMAZED. The **εκ** prefix probably intensifies. The amazement / fear motif is underlined by this rather strong word; "they were dismayed", Cassirer.

v6

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject to the young man.

αυταις dat. pro. "**[he said]**" - [HE SAYS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ζηειτε [ζητω] pres. "**you are looking**" - [DO NOT BE AMAZED] YOU SEEK. It is possible that the clause is a question; "do you seek Jesus of Nazareth?" Lane,

in line with Lightfoot, sees the use of the verb here as a slight rebuke, a kind of "why are you looking for Jesus here?" This seems unlikely.

τον Ναζαρηνον [ος] "**the Nazarene**" - [JESUS] THE NAZARENE. Variant - missing in some texts. Most likely used here as a title, as NIV, but possibly a double accusative, object complement, and so a geographic description, "Jesus of Nazareth", although a genitive would be expected.

τον εσταυρωμενον [σταυρω] perf. pas. part. "**who was crucified**" - THE ONE HAVING BEEN CRUCIFIED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Jesus of Nazareth", as NIV.

ηγερθη [γειρω] aor. pas. "**he has risen!**" - HE WAS RAISED. The passive probably should be emphasized / a divine passive; "he has been raised."

ᾧδε adv. "**[he is not] here**" - [HE IS NOT] HERE. Adverb of place. Establishing what type of resurrection the women now face - not a spiritual one, but a bodily one; "he is not here!"

ιδε "**see**" - SEE, BEHOLD, LOOK. Serving as an exclamation and not a verb as NIV, so not "see the place", but "behold! here is the place where they laid him"; "Look, the place where they put him", Gundry.

ὁ τοπος [ος] "**the place**" - THE PLACE. Predicate nominative of an assumed verb to-be. Referring to the shelf or position in the tomb where Jesus was laid.

ἔπου adv. "**where**" - WHERE [THEY LAID HIM]. Local adverb of place.

v7

αλλα "**but**" - BUT. Adversative; "However, be on your way", Cassirer.

ὑπαγετε [υπαγω] pres. imp. "**go**" - DEPART, GO, BE OFF. This command is followed by a second, an aorist imperative, **ειπατε**, "speak / tell". Decker suggests the durative present is possibly used for "what is the most urgent of the two commands." They have "to go" before they can "tell."

τω πετρω [ος] dat. "**Peter**" - [TELL THE DISCIPLES OF HIM AND] PETER. Dative of indirect object. Why is Peter singled out? Gundry suggests that Peter, having publicly denied Christ, is now not with the dispirited band of disciples presently residing together with some of the women, probably in Jerusalem somewhere. So, the message is to be conveyed to the disciples, but also to Peter (adjunctive **και**), so including him, despite his denial.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect / direct speech expressing what should be told them / what he told them.

προαγει [προαγω] pres. "**he is going ahead**" - HE GOES BEFORE [YOU INTO GALILEE]. "He is on his way before you", TH, giving the sense "lead". "Jesus goes before / leads his disciples out of Jerusalem and puts them on the road toward Galilee, where their life with him will begin again", Marcus. This move out of Jerusalem to Galilee and then to the world, does not preclude the appearances in

Jerusalem which clearly followed the discovery of the empty tomb. Jesus promised that he "will go before" the disciples to Galilee, 14:28, and now the angel announces that this promise is about to be fulfilled; he "is going before."

εκει αυτον οψεσθε "**there you will see him**" - THERE YOU WILL SEE HIM. Turner proposes that this statement should be treated as a parenthesis and so bracketed. It has been suggested that ὁραω, "see", here refers to Jesus' parousia, but it is more likely to refer to post resurrection appearances, first to Peter, and then the apostles,, 1Cor:15:5.

καθως "**just as**" - AS. Here the comparative establishes a characteristic quality / standard, "exactly as / in accordance with"; "just as he told you that he would."

υμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - [HE TOLD] YOU. Dative of indirect object.

v8

Fear overwhelmed the woman and reduced them to silence.

εξελθουσαι [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "**the women went out**" - [AND] HAVING GONE OUT. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "they fled."

απο + gen. "**from**" - [THEY FLED] FROM [THE TOMB]. Expressing separation; "away from the tomb."

γαρ "-" - FOR [TREMBLING, QUIVERING, AND AMAZEMENT, ASTONISHMENT, TERROR, CONFUSION, SEIZED THEM]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the women fled the tomb.

ουδενι dat. adj. "**to anyone**" - [AND THEY TOLD NOTHING] TO NO ONE. Dative of indirect object. Note the double negative for emphasis.

γαρ "because" - FOR [THEY WERE AFRAID]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they said nothing to anyone. For the use of γαρ here, see note above in Interpretation, *Textual Criticism*.

8/23

Finis



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