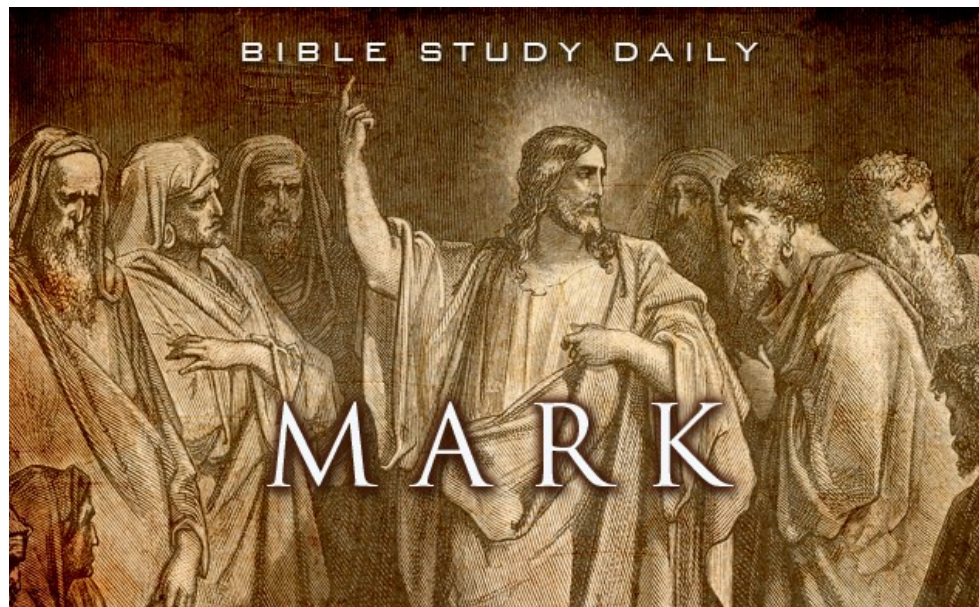




# BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of Mark as well as my study notes for the book.

## Name

The title “Mark” comes from the name of the book’s author.

## Author

Although Mark is technically anonymous there is significant external evidence as well as information within the Gospel itself that corroborates Mark’s authorship. The Mark that wrote the book is known as John Mark (John is a Hebrew name, Mark is a Latin name), the son of a widow named Mary who lived in Jerusalem.

## Genre

Gospel

## Literary Form

Narrative. The Gospel of Mark includes five major sections: a prologue (1:1-13), Jesus’ ministry in and around Galilee (1:14-8:21), Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem (8:22-10:52), Jesus’ last week in Jerusalem (11:1-16:8), and an epilogue (16:9-20) .

## Time Frame

It is impossible to date the writing of the Gospel of Mark with certainty. Scholars all agree the book had to be written prior to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Many scholars accept a date range of between A.D. 67-69 assuming the book was written after the deaths of Peter and Paul. Another view (and my belief) is that the book was written between A.D. 57-59 based on the premise that Luke had use of Mark’s material when he wrote Acts.


## Emphasis

The emphasis of the Gospel of Mark is on Jesus’ actions more than His teachings. Mark recorded 18 of Jesus miracles, but only four of His parables and one major discourse (13:3-37).

Mark’s portray of Jesus focuses on His divinity as the Son of God. This is seen in Jesus’ baptism (1:11), the demons who recognize Him (3:11 and 5:7), His transfiguration (9:7), Jesus’ own confession 14:61-62, and the Roman centurion (15:39).

## Outline

- 1) Jesus’ baptism in preparation for public ministry (1:-1:13)
- 2) Jesus’ early ministry in Galilee (1:14-3:6)
- 3) Jesus’ later ministry in Galilee (3:7-6:6a)

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- 4) Jesus' ministry and and beyond the region of Galilee (6:6b-8:30)
  - 5) Jesus' journey to Jerusalem (8:31-10:52)
  - 6) Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem (11:1-13:37)
  - 7) Jesus' betrayal, suffering and death in Jerusalem (14:1-15:47)
  - 8) Jesus' resurrection from the dead (16:1-8)
  - 9) Jesus' appearances and ascension (16:9-20)

# What I Noticed Today (Mark 1-3)

## Mark 1

In verse 1 Mark announces the theme of his book: the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God.

**Note:** “Gospel” means “good news.” “Jesus” is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew for Joshua, which means “Yahweh is salvation.” “Christ” is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew “Messiah.” Both “Christ” and “Son of God” are titles.

In verses 2-3 Mark records a mixed quotation from Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:10.

**Note:** This is the only instance in which Mark refers to the Old Testament.

In verses 4-8 John came into the wilderness teaching baptism for repentance and for the forgiveness of sins.

**Note:** Repentance means to “turn about, a deliberate change of mind.” Forgiveness means “the removal or cancellation of debt,” in this case through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross.

**Note:** John’s attire marked him as a man of the desert and a prophet resembling Elijah (Zechariah 13:4, 2 Kings 1:8).

John announced while he came baptizing with water, the one coming after him would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

In verses 9-11 Jesus came to John to be baptized in the Jordan River. When He was baptized the heavens opened the Spirit descended upon Jesus and the voice of God said, “You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased.”

**Note:** Jesus was without sin so his baptism was not a confession of sin, but an act of obedience to God.

In verses 12-13 Jesus was immediately driven into the wilderness for 40 days where he was tempted by Satan and angels ministered to him. (*See also Matthew 4:1-11*)

In verses 14-15 after John was arrested Jesus began his ministry proclaiming the gospel of God in Galilee.

In verses 16-20 as He passed along the Sea of Galilee, Jesus called Simon (Peter) and his brother Andrew, who were fishermen, to follow Him. Immediately they left their nets and followed Jesus.

A little further on Jesus saw James and John the sons of Zebedee and He called them to follow Him also. They also immediately left their nets and fol-

lowed Jesus. (*See also Matthew 4:18-22*)

**Note:** In Jewish tradition a disciple would seek out a Rabbi for instruction. Jesus instead called those who He wanted to disciple.

In verses 21-28 Jesus and the four disciples he had just called made their way to Capernaum (northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee). While Jesus was teaching in the synagogue a man with unclean spirits came. The spirits addressed Jesus as the Holy One of God. Jesus commanded the spirit to leave the man and it did. Because of this, Jesus' fame spread throughout the surrounding region.

**Note:** It is interesting that the demons recognize Jesus immediately as the Holy One of God, but the people who witnessed the miracles and heard His teaching, for the most part, did not.

In verses 29-34 Jesus immediately left the synagogue and went to the house of Simon and Andrew, along with James and John. Simon's mother in law was sick and Jesus healed her. In the evening, many people from the city gathered at their door and Jesus healed them. (*See also Matthew 8:14-15*)

In verses 34-39 Jesus rose early the next morning for prayer. When the disciples found him He told them it was time to leave to preach the Gospel in other towns throughout Galilee.

In verses 40-45 a leper came to Jesus humbling asking him out of faith to be healed. Jesus healed him and told him not to say anything to anyone but to go and show himself to the priests and make the required offering (Leviticus 14:2-31). But the man told people about what Jesus had done so that He was surrounded by people coming to him to be healed. (*See also Matthew 8:1-4*)

**Note:** Leprosy included a number of serious skin diseases, not just the disease of leprosy that we think about today. A person with leprosy was exiled from society because they were unclean. Leprosy was considered incurable, except by act of God.

## Mark 2

In verses 1-12 after returning to Capernaum people found Jesus (probably in Simon's house) and He taught them. While he was teaching them four men carrying a paralyzed friend dug a hole through the roof of the house and lowered the man on a mat down to Jesus asking that he be healed. Because of their faith, Jesus said to the man your sins are forgiven. Scribes in the audience viewed this as blasphemy because only God can forgive sins. Because of the Scribes' doubt, Jesus then also healed the man who got up and walked out. (*See also Matthew 9:1-8*)

**Note:** Typical homes had a flat roof with a set of outside stairs leading up to the roof.

In verses 13-17 Jesus went out to the Sea of Galilee where a large crowd assembled and He taught them. As he was going Jesus passed Levi, a tax collector, the son of Alphaeus and called him to follow him. Levi immediately

followed Jesus. Jesus had dinner with Levi and other tax collectors and when the Scribes and Pharisees saw this they wondered what kind of man eats with tax collectors and sinners. Jesus replied it is not the well who need a physician, but the sick. He came not to call the righteous, but the sinners. *(See also Matthew 9:9-13)*

In verses 18-22 people came to Jesus asking why John's disciples and the Pharisees fasted but Jesus' disciples did not. Jesus answered the wedding guests do not fast while the bridegroom is with them. When the bridegroom is not there they will fast.

**Note:** Jesus is the bridegroom, and the day in which he is taken away is the day of Jesus' crucifixion. Fasting was a time of sorrow, so the guests (believers) would not be sorrowful while the bridegroom was still there.

Two parables of Jesus:

- Jesus refers to unshrunk cloth. No one puts a piece of new cloth on an old garment or it will tear away.
- Jesus refers to a wineskin. One does not put new wine in an old wineskin or it will burst.

*(See also Matthew 9:14-17)*

**Note:** The point of these parables is one does not try to "fix" an old system (the religion of Judaism). The new replaces the old. Salvation available through faith in Jesus Christ replaced the old system of Judaism.

In verses 23-28 on a Sabbath day Jesus and the disciples were walking through a grain field and while they were going they plucked some heads of grain and ate. The Pharisees said this was illegal (it was considered work which was not allowed on the Sabbath). Jesus responded to the Pharisees reminded them that David took the showbread from the temple which was legal only for the priests to eat (1 Samuel 21:1-6). *(See also Matthew 12:1-8)*

Jesus said 1) the Sabbath was made by God for man's benefit not to be a burden, and 2) the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.

**Note:** Mark is the only Gospel writer to record the statement in verses 27-28 about the Son of Man having authority over the Sabbath.

### Mark 3

In verses 1-6 on a Sabbath Jesus was in the synagogue (probably Capernaum) when a man with a withered hand came to Him. They (probably the Pharisees) watched Him to see if He would heal the man (only life-saving emergencies were legal to treat on the Sabbath). Jesus asked them if it was legal to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath. When they did not answer He healed the man. From there the Pharisees immediately met with the Herodians plotting to destroy Jesus. *(See also Matthew 12:9-14)*

**Note:** Only Mark mentions the Herodians.

## Mark 3:7-6:6

The emphasis of this section shifts demonstrating Jesus' ministry in the face of opposition and unbelief.

In verses 7-12 Jesus and the disciples withdrew to the Sea of Galilee and a large crowd followed him coming from miles away (Tyre and Sidon were in Phoenicia, a largely Gentile region). Jesus healed many and whenever he cast out a demon they recognized Him as the Son of God, but Jesus ordered them not to speak. *(See also Matthew 12:14-21)*

**Note:** I wonder if Jesus ordered the demons not to speak because He wanted the people to recognize Him as the Son of God on their own.

In verses 13-21 Jesus went up to the mountain and called those whom He wanted as disciples and they came to him (probably many more than the 12 He appointed to be apostles). Among these, He appointed twelve as apostles (ones sent out on a mission) and gave them the authority to do the work He called them to. The twelve apostles included: Peter, James, John, Andrew, Judas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew (Levi), Thomas, James, Thad-daeus, and Simon the Zealot. *(See also Matthew 10:1-4)*

**Note:** Judas was the only apostle not from Galilee.

In verses 22-30 the scribes came from Jerusalem and accused Jesus of getting His power from Beelzebul (aka Beelzebub), the prince of demons (Satan). Jesus answered them with two parables *(See also Matthew 12:22-32)*:

- How can a kingdom or a house divided against itself stand? If he was with Satan why would he cast out Satan's demons and thus weaken Satan's control?
- How can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder it unless he first binds the strong man? How could he cast out Satan's demons unless he also had power over Satan himself?

In verses 31-35 (these verses relate back to verse 21) Jesus mother and His brothers called to Him through the crowd. Jesus asked who are my mother and brothers, and answered these (referring to those around him) are my mother and brothers. Whoever does the will of my Father is my mother and brother.

**Note:** Jesus is not rejecting his mother and brothers here. Rather, He is expanding the definition of the spiritual family to be all those who do the will of the Father.

# What I Noticed Today (Mark 4-5)

## Mark 4

In verses 1-2 Jesus is again teaching a large crowd by the Sea of Galilee. He taught in a boat just off the shore as the crowd lined the shore.

In verses 3-9 the parable of the sower (*See also Matthew 13:3-9*). A farmer sowed seeds in his field. Some of the seed fell on a footpath, some in rocky places, some among the thorns, and some in good soil. Birds ate the seed that fell on the path, the sun scorched the small plants that grew in the rocky soil, thorns choked out the plants that grew in their midst. But the seed that fell on the good soil produced 30, 60, even 100 times what was sown.

**Note:** Jesus tells the people to listen before He starts teaching and concludes the parable with the phrase “anyone who has ears to hear should listen.” “Should listen” is stated as an imperative, a command; if you have ears listen, this is important!

In verses 10-12 Jesus explains to the disciples and other believers why He teaches using parables. Those who believe have been given the secret to the kingdom of heaven, those who do not believe will hear but not understand. (*See also Matthew 13:10-17*)

**Note:** Verses 10-12 were inserted here, but were not part of Jesus’ overall teaching by the Sea of Galilee but later when they were alone.

In verses 13-20 the parable of the sower explained (*See also Matthew 18-23*). The sower is anyone one who sows the Word. For some, Satan takes away the Word. For some, they hear the word but have no deep roots so they fall away. For some, when trouble comes, they wither and fall away. For some they will hear the Word, accept it, and produce much spiritual fruit many times over.


In verses 21-25 the parables of the lamp and the measure (*See also Matthew 5:15 and Matthew 7:2*). No one lights a lamp and hides its light. You put it on a lampstand so its light can be seen. Be careful with what you are given. If you use wisely more will be given to you, but if foolishly even what you have will be taken away.

In verses 26-29 the parable of the growing seed (only in Mark). This parable is similar to the Parable of the Sower. It describes the process of sowing seed (v. 26), growing (vv. 27-28), and harvesting (v. 29).

**Note:** The only part of the process where man is involved is in the sowing.

In verses 30-32 the parable of the mustard seed (*See also Matthew 13:31-32*). The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. It is the smallest seed known in Jewish culture, but when it grows it becomes the largest plant in the garden.





In verses 33-34 Mark recounts again the fact that when in a crowd Jesus taught using parables, but when He was alone with the disciples He spoke to them openly about the Kingdom of God.

In verses 35-41 the calming of the storm on the lake (*See also Matthew 8:23-27*). Mark provides what seems to be an eyewitness report, perhaps from Peter. “On that day” is the same day as Jesus was teaching the crowds by the Sea of Galilee. At the end of the day, Jesus told them to get into the boat and go to the other side of the lake (the Gentile side). Other boats came with them. Jesus was sleeping in the back of the boat when a storm came up. The disciples woke Him afraid they would die. Jesus rebuked the wind and waves quieting the storm. Then He rebuked the disciples for being afraid, asking if they still had no faith.

**Note:** Most of the disciples were professional fisherman very familiar with the Sea of Galilee. They had witnessed Jesus perform many miracles and healing but when He calmed the sea they wondered what power He had because they understood only God had power over the winds and the seas.

## Mark 5

In verses 1-20 Jesus arrived on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee in the region of the Gerasenes (most of the inhabitants were Gentiles) (*See also Matthew 8:28-34*). A demon-possessed man came to Jesus. Jesus told the demon to leave the man and the demon addressed Jesus as “Jesus Son of the Most high God.” The demon’s name was Legion.

**Note:** In the Roman army a Legion was a regiment of about 6,000 soldiers. The word legion was also used simply for a large number.

The demons asked Jesus to send them into the pigs (rather than being disembodied). The demons entered the pigs, ran down the hillside, and drowned themselves in the sea. The people who saw this reported to the townspeople who came to see Jesus. They found the demon possessed man cured and the pigs drowned so they urged Jesus to leave.

**Note:** The townspeople witnessed a miracle in the man being cleansed of his demon possession and rather than wondering what power Jesus had to do this they were most concerned about their loss of income.

The demon possessed man was the only one who wanted to be with Jesus, but Jesus told him to go back home to the region of Decapolis and report all that the Lord had done for him. So the demon-possessed man did and the people were amazed.

**Note:** Telling others about Jesus is most often as simple as being willing to tell the story of what Jesus has done in our lives!

In verses 21-23 Jesus and the disciples returned to the west side of the lake (probably to Capernaum) and again a large crowd assembled. Jairus, a synagogue ruler came before Jesus begging Him to heal his daughter. (*See also*

*Matthew 9:18-26)*

In verses 24-34 as Jesus was going to heal Jairus' daughter, a large crowd was following along with him. A woman who had been bleeding for 12 years came up behind Jesus and touched His cloak believing that she would be healed. The instant she did this Jesus felt power leave him, asking who touched Him. The woman came forward and admitted touching Jesus. Jesus referred to her as "Daughter" and commended her faith. (*See also Matthew 9:20-22*)

**Note:** The woman's constant bleeding may have been a menstrual disorder. Regardless, it would have made her unclean and kept her from being able to engage in any of the traditional Jewish services and social life.

In verses 35-43 people came to Jairus informing him that his daughter had died. Jesus told Jairus not to be afraid and took Peter, James, and John with him to Jairus' house. When they got there people were already in mourning. Jesus sent the mourners away and entered the house. Jesus saw the girl, took her by the hand, and commanded her to get up. Immediately she got up and walked and the disciples were amazed. Jesus told them not to speak of this to others.

*Some points for additional thought:*

- *We have the privilege of sowing the seed, the Word of God. But it is also a great responsibility because without the sowing there can be no harvest.*
- *We who have ears must listen to the Word of God. This is not a suggestion but a command from the Lord.*
- *There are those who will reject the Kingdom of God because they are more concerned with worldly wealth than heavenly riches.*

# What I Noticed Today (Mark 6-7)

## Mark 6

In verses 1-3 leaving Capernaum Jesus and the disciples departed for Nazareth, about 20 miles southwest. When He arrived He started teaching in the synagogue. They were amazed at His wisdom and also offended by him.

**Note:** Scripture does not say why they were offended. It certainly could be because of His position pointing out the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders. More likely it was because of the people's refusal to believe His message (v. 6a.)

Jesus' mother Mary was there along with his brothers James, Jose, Judas, and Simon along with his sisters (plural).

**Note:** referring to Jesus as "only a carpenter" and as "Mary's son" rather than by name were both derogatory references to a man in Jewish culture.

**Note:** Jesus *was not able* to do many miracles there because of their unbelief. This is not an indication that Jesus power was limited, but that He chose not to do miracles for those who did not believe.

## Mark 6b-8:30

This section of Mark's Gospel is focused on describing Jesus' ministry in and beyond Galilee.

In verses 6b-13 Jesus commissioned the 12 disciples as apostles and sent them out into the villages in pairs with power over unclean spirits. (*See also Matthew 10:5-15*)

They could take a staff and wear sandals but were not allowed to take extra provisions or clothing. All they needed was to be provided by the people they ministered to.

They were to shake the dust off of their feet wherever they were not welcomed (*See Note Matthew 10:5-15*).

**Note:** The disciples being sent with the power to heal demonstrated to the disciples that Jesus' power extended beyond Him and His physical presence.

In verses 14-29 (*See also Matthew 14:1-12*) Herod heard about Jesus and the miracles He performed and was convinced that John the Baptist had come back to life.

**Note:** Mark refers to Herod Antipas as king but he was not a king. He was tetrarch (ruler of a portion of his father's kingdom).



Herod had liked hearing from John the Baptist but was upset when John told him he should not have his brother's wife. Because of an oath, he made to his daughter, Herod had John brought from prison and beheaded.

When the disciples heard about what happened to John they removed his body and placed him in a tomb.

In verses 30-44 (*See also Matthew 14:13-21*) the apostles returned to Jesus from their missions work (vv. 7-13) and told Jesus all they had done. Jesus said they needed rest so they left by boat for a remote place, but many people ran after them and crowded around them when they reached shore. Jesus had compassion on them and told the disciples to feed them. They had no food except five small fish and two loaves of bread. Jesus had the people sit in groups, blessed the food, and gave it to the disciples to give to the people. 5,000 men ate (probably 20,000 people total) and when they were finished they had 12 baskets of food left over.

In verses 45-52 (*See also Matthew 14:22-23*) immediately after feeding the 5,000 Jesus instructed the disciples to get in a boat and sail to the other side of the Sea of Galilee toward Bethsaida. In the meantime, Jesus dismissed the crowd and went away to pray. Later that evening Jesus saw the disciples in the boat in the middle of the sea. The wind had come up and was against them. About three in the morning Jesus walked on the water toward them and wanted to walk by them, but they were afraid and cried out so he got in the boat and comforted them. They were astounded when the wind ceased because they still did not understand the miracle of feeding the 5,000, or who Jesus was.

In verses 53-56 (*See also Matthew 14:34-36*) they made it to Gennesaret (south of Capernaum). People recognized Jesus and came from all around as Jesus visited the towns in the area, and he healed all who came to him.

## Mark 7

In verses 1-13 (*See also Matthew 15:1-20*) the Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and confronted Jesus about His disciples not washing their hands before eating.

**Note:** The ceremonial washing was a tradition prescribed by the elders, not a part of Mosaic Law.

Jesus answered them asking why they were hypocritical in saying people needed to follow the Law yet they break God's Law by not honoring their mothers and fathers (Exodus 20:12). They avoided caring for their parents by declaring their possessions as Corban (a gift devoted to God). In effect, their tradition had revoked or nullified the Law of God.

In verses 14-23 (*See also Matthew 15:10-20*) Jesus summoned the crowd and explained to them that nothing that goes into the body from the outside can defile him, only what comes out of the body. Explaining to the disciples further Jesus said it is what comes out of a man's heart that defiles him; our evil thoughts, sexual immorality, thefts, murder, adulteries, greed, evil actions,

deceit, promiscuity, stinginess, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness. All these defile a person and come from inside, in the heart.

In verses 24-30 (*See also Matthew 15:21-28*) Jesus left that area (probably Capernaum) and traveled to the region of Tyre and Sidon (Gentile territory).

**Note:** Tyre was a Phoenician port city on the Mediterranean about 40 miles northwest of Capernaum.

Jesus was trying not to be noticed, but people recognized Him. A woman came with her demon possessed daughter asking Him to heal her. Jesus responded that His purpose to care for the children (the Jews) first. The woman recognized her place as a Gentile called Jesus Lord, saying even the dogs get the children's crumbs.

**Note:** The picture here is of the dogs (representing the Gentiles) eating the crumbs at the same time as the children (the Jews).

Because of her faith, Jesus healed her daughter.

In verses 31-37 (*See also Matthew 15:29-31*) Jesus left the area of Tyre going toward Sidon to the Sea of Galilee in the region of Decapolis.

**Note:** Decapolis was a group of ten cities in the region of Syria, Jordan, and Palestine. They were predominantly Greek and independent of Rome.

People brought a deaf man who had difficulty speaking asking to be healed. Jesus took him to a private place. Jesus prayed and commanded his ears to be opened and he was immediately healed and could speak clearly. The more he ordered the people not to speak about this, the more they spoke of His miracles.

**Note:** Mark is the only Gospel writer who includes this miracle of the healing of the deaf man.

*Some points for further consideration:*

- *Jesus demonstrates the importance of faith and acceptance of His message for Him to perform miracles.*
- *Jesus' list of twelve behaviors/actions that defile us reflect the condition of our heart.*

# What I Noticed Today (Mark 8-9)

## Mark 8

In verses 1-10 (*See also Matthew 15:32-39*) while Jesus was still in the region of Decapolis another large crowd formed around Him who had been with Him for three days. Jesus had compassion on them and wanted to feed them. The disciples said they had only seven loaves of bread a few small fish. Jesus told the people to sit in groups, He gave thanks to the Father and broke the bread. They fed the entire crowd of 4,000 men (probably 16,000 in total) and had seven baskets of food left over.

**Note:** Given the region, the crowd was likely composed of both Jews and Gentiles.

After they finished feeding the people Jesus and the disciples got into a boat and went to Dalmanutha.

Note: Matthew identifies Dalmanutha as Magadan, near Tiberias on the western side of the Sea of Galilee.

In verses 11-13 (*See also Matthew 16:1-4*) before he left, Pharisees came out to question Jesus demanding a sign from heaven, but Jesus said no sign would be given to this generation.


In verses 14-21 (*See also Matthew 16:5-12*) in their haste to depart the disciples brought only one loaf of bread. Jesus warned them to avoid the yeast of the Pharisees or of Herod Antipas. They had failed to understand, their hearts were hardened, they had eyes but did not see, and ears but could not hear.

**Note:** Jesus is warning the disciples to be on guard against the corruption of the Pharisees and of Herod that spread in their society. Yeast was a common metaphor for something that spread into and affected whatever it was mixed with.

Jesus reminded the disciples of the two feeding miracles, of the 5,000 and the 4,000, they had witnessed yet they still didn't understand who He really was.

In verses 22-26 As they entered Bethsaida, the people brought a blind man to Jesus. Jesus took him out of the village. Spitting on his eyes and laying hands on him, Jesus healed him. Jesus warned the man not to go to the village but to go straight home.

**Note:** The fact that Jesus took the man out of the village to heal him privately and then asked him not to go to the village is an indication that Jesus wanted this healing to remain private so as to not interfere with His planned ministry.



In verses 27-30 (See also Matthew 16:13-20) Jesus and the disciples were walking on their way to Caesarea Philippi. As they were walking Jesus asked who do people say I am. The disciples answered John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the prophets. Jesus then asked but who do you say I am. Peter answered you are the Messiah. Jesus warned them not to tell anyone who He really was.

**Note:** Up until this point in Mark's Gospel only God and the demons understood and proclaimed who Jesus was. Peter was the first disciple to proclaim this truth.

In verses 31-33 (See also Matthew 16:21-23) Jesus told the disciples that he would suffer and be rejected by the chief priests, scribes, and elders. He would be killed and rise after three days. Peter took Jesus aside and rebuked Him, but Jesus warned Peter he was thinking about man's plans, not God's.

**Note:** Jesus reference to Satan suggests that Satan was influencing Peter's thoughts, causing him to focus on man rather than God.

In verses 34-38 (See also Matthew 16:24-28) Jesus summoned the disciples and the crowd to teach them. He said if anyone desired to follow Him they must:

- Deny themselves (their selfish interest).
- Take up his cross (public submission to God).
- Follow Me (an imperative that means to keep following all your life).

Jesus said whoever is ashamed of Him and His Word in this world, He will deny when He returns as the Son of Man.

## Mark 9

Verse 1 continues from Mark 8:38. Jesus said some of the people He was speaking to would not taste death before they saw the power of God.

**Note:** There are several interpretations of Mark 9:1 among scholars as to what display of power Jesus is referring to 1) Jesus' transfiguration, 2) His resurrection and ascension, 3) the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the spread of Christianity in the early church, 4) the destruction of the temple, or 5) Jesus' second coming. Given the very next passage in Mark's Gospel relates Jesus' transfiguration I think this is the power that Jesus is likely referring to.

In verses 2-13 (See also Matthew 17:1-13) after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John to a high mountain where He was transfigured.

**Note:** Mark does not say which of the several nearby mountains they went to but the "high mountain" description fits well with Mount Hermon.

Elijah and Moses appeared with the transfigured Jesus. The voice of God came from a cloud that was overhead saying "This is my beloved Son, listen

to Him” (Deuteronomy 18:15).

**Note:** The literal translation of “Listen to Him, is “Be obedient to Him.”

As they were coming down the mountain Jesus warned them not to say anything about what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They kept discussing what was meant by rising from the dead.

**Note:** Of the three times Mark records Jesus telling the disciples to be silent this is the only instance in which he indicated a time limit on their silence.

**Note:** Jews believed in a future resurrection, but Jesus confused the disciples by speaking of His resurrection after three days.

In verses 14-29 (*See also Matthew 17:14-21*) as Jesus and the three disciples returned they were met by a large crowd and some scribes. A father had brought his demon-possessed son to the disciples to be healed but they had failed to drive out the demon. When the demon saw Jesus it threw the boy into a violent seizure. The father begged Jesus if you can do anything please help. Jesus answered everything is possible for one who believes. The boy’s father responded, I believe, help me with my unbelief. Jesus rebuked the spirit and it left the boy.

The disciples asked why they had not been able to drive out the spirit and Jesus answered this type of spirit can only be driven out by prayer.

**Note:** It seems the disciples had not prayerfully asked God to heal the boy. Perhaps they assumed because they had cast out demons before they could do it again on their own power.

In verses 30-32 (*See also Matthew 17:22-23*) Jesus and the disciples left that place and as they were walking through Galilee He told them again that He would be betrayed, killed, and rise again after three days.

In verses 33-37 (*See also Matthew 18:1-5*) Jesus and the disciples arrived in Capernaum and settled into a house. Jesus asked them what they had been arguing about on the way. They said nothing because they were discussing who was the greatest. Jesus said he who would be first must be last and servant of all. Whoever welcomes a child in Jesus’ name welcomes Him.

In verses 38-50 (*see also Matthew 18:7-9*) John said they had seen someone driving out demons in His name and they stopped him because he was not with them. Jesus said do not stop him because no one who performs a miracle in my name can deny me later. Whoever is not against us is for us. Whoever even gives you a cup of water because of Me will never lose his reward.

But, Jesus warned anyone who causes a little one who believes in Jesus to stumble will face judgment.

**Note:** The little ones referred to in this verse are immature believers, people young in their faith. The reference to stumble means to turn away from their faith in Jesus.





Jesus uses three examples to convey the seriousness of the judgment:

- It is better to cut off a hand than face the fires of hell.
- It is better to cut off a foot than face the fires of hell.
- It is better to gouge out an eye than face the fires of hell.

Jesus said salt is good but worthless if it loses its flavor. Therefore, keep salt among yourselves.

**Note:** The common source of salt in the region was the Dead Sea. But this salt was impure and could lose its saltiness, making it worthless.

*Some points for further thought:*

- *The disciples did not grasp where the power came from that gave Jesus the ability to perform miracles. As a result, they didn't understand who Jesus really was.*
- *When the disciples did attempt to perform a miracle while Jesus was away, they failed because they had neglected their own spiritual discipline.*
- *The disciples were concerned about prestige and greatness in human terms. They failed to see that greatness in God's economy comes from service to Him.*

# What I Noticed Today

## (Mark 10-11)

### Mark 10

In verse 1 (*See also Matthew 19:1-12*) Jesus and the disciples left Capernaum and went into Judea on the west side of the Jordan River.

**Note:** the phrase across the Jordan is an area known as Perea or Transjordan. It was a district ruled by Herod Antipas.

In verses 2-12 crowds of people came to Jesus and He taught them. Some Pharisees came to Jesus to trap him by asking is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife. Jesus answered God's intention was never for those God had joined together to separate (Genesis 1:27).

**Note:** Jews had two views on divorce. Some believed Deuteronomy 24:1-4 allowed divorce in the case of marital infidelity. Others believed a man could divorce his wife for almost any reason.

Teaching the disciples privately in the house Jesus said someone who divorces his wife and remarries commits adultery.

**Note:** Mark does not include the exception noted in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9.

In verses 13-16 (*See also Matthew 19:13-15*) while in the house people brought little children to Jesus for a blessing. The disciples stopped them thinking it a waste of time. Jesus said let the little children come to me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.

In verses 17-27 (*See also Matthew 19:16-26*) as Jesus was leaving a young man ran up and knelt before Jesus asking what must he do to inherit eternal life. Jesus answered he must keep the commandments (those listed are the second tablet dealing with personal relationships, Exodus 20:12-16). The man said he had kept all these commandments. Jesus told him then sell everything, give it to the poor and follow Me. The man went away sad because he had many possessions.

In verses 23-31 (*See also Matthew 19:23-26*) Jesus explained to the disciples that it is difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Peter said we have left everything to follow You. Jesus answered whoever sacrifices for Him in this age will be rewarded in the age to come.

**Note:** The disciples were concerned with worldly rewards, thinking they had given up what they had and, therefore, deserved some earthly reward. Jesus said their reward would come in their eternal life.

In verses 32-34 (*See also Matthew 20:17-19*) Jesus predicted His death for the third time. He explained that soon he would be handed over to the chief

priests and scribes and be condemned to death. He would be killed and rise again after three days.

In verses 35-45 (See also Matthew 20:20-28) James and John (the sons of Zebedee) came to Jesus asking to be given places of honor when He came into His glory. Jesus answered the Father decides who will sit in these places of honor. When the other ten disciples heard about James' and John's request they were upset. Jesus reminded them they were not to be like the Gentile rulers to use their power to lord it over people. Whoever desires greatness must become a servant. Whoever desires to be first must become a slave to all. He did not come to be served but to serve and to be a ransom for many.

**Note:** Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross as a ransom for us was the ultimate act of service to mankind.

In verses 46-52 (See also Matthew 20:29-34) as Jesus and the disciples were leaving Jericho a blind man named Bartimaeus heard Jesus was coming and called out, Son of David, Jesus have mercy on me. When Jesus called to the man Bartimaeus addressed Jesus as *Rabbouni* (my Teacher) saying he wished to see. Jesus simply said your faith has healed you, and immediately the man was healed. And Bartimaeus began to follow Jesus.

**Note:** the use of the title "Son of David" suggests Bartimaeus believed Jesus was the prophesied Messiah.

## Mark 11

Mark 11 begins the fifth and final section of the Gospel of Mark: Jesus' ministry in and around Jerusalem during this final week.

**Note:** Mark arranged the order of events in chapters 11-13 topically more than chronologically.

In verses 1-11 (See also Matthew 21:1-11) Mark describes Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. As they approached Bethphage and Bethany Jesus sent two disciples into the village (probably Bethphage) to borrow a young donkey. They brought the donkey to Jesus threw their robes over it and He sat on it. As Jesus rode many people laid their robes and palm branches in the road. The people cried out chanting Psalm 118:25-26.

**Note:** Bethany is where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived and is where Jesus often stayed when He was in Judea.

Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple complex. After looking around he went to Bethany with the disciples.

In verses 12-14 (See also Matthew 21:18-19) the next morning (Monday of Holy Week) on the way to Jerusalem Jesus was hungry and spotting a fig tree he went to it to see if it had any fruit. Finding no fruit, Jesus cursed the tree.

**Note:** Mark tells us it was not the season for figs but there should have been edible buds on the tree. Instead, it had only leaves.

**Note:** The fig tree is a picture of Israel who had produced no spir-

itual fruit.

In verses 15-19 (*See Matthew 21:12-17*) Jesus and the disciples came to Jerusalem the next morning and made their way to the temple area. Jesus threw out the money changers and those carrying goods through the temple complex. Jesus quoted Isaiah 56:7b. The chief priests and scribes heard about this and began to plot how they would kill Him.

**Note:** There were three kinds of money in circulation at this time: Roman, Greek, and Jewish. Only Jewish money could be used to pay the temple tax, so the money changers were there to exchange Roman and Greek money for Jewish money. Their rates of exchange took advantage of people.

In verses 20-26 (*See also Matthew 21:20-22*) early the next morning as Jesus and the disciples were passing by the fig tree again Peter noted that it was withered. Jesus explained that the absence of doubt and the presence of faith released the power of prayer. Jesus concluded the teaching saying while we pray we should forgive others so that our Father in Heaven will also forgive us.

In verses 27-33 as Jesus came to the temple complex on another day (Tuesday) the chief priests, scribes, and elders asked Jesus two questions: 1) By what authority do you do these things, and 2) Who gave you this authority. Jesus said he would answer their questions if they would answer His question: was John's baptism from heaven or from men. They didn't answer Him because they knew if they said from heaven he would say then why didn't you believe him. If they said from men they would arouse the people who believed in John as God's prophet.

Because they refused to answer Jesus He refused to answer them.

*Some points for additional thought:*

- *Can we let go of the idea that we deserve an earthly reward because we served in some way? Rewards in heaven come from our sacrificial service to our fellow man.*
- *The fig tree did not bear fruit and it was cursed. Do we bear fruit in season?*

# What I Noticed Today (Mark 12-13)

## Mark 12

In verses 1-12 (*See also Matthew 21:33-46*) Jesus, still speaking to the chief priests and elders, told the parable of the vineyard owner. A landowner developed and planted a vineyard, then leased it to some tenants. At harvest time the landowner sent a slave to collect the rent, but they beat the slave and sent him away. The landowner sent a second slave whom they also mistreated and sent away. The landowner sent a third slave whom they killed. The landowner sent more slaves, some they beat and some they killed.

Finally, the landowner sent his own son thinking they would respect the son. But the tenants killed the son hoping to gain an inheritance. Therefore, the owner of the vineyard will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to someone else. Jesus quoted Psalm 118:22-23. The chief priests and elders knew Jesus was speaking against them so they plotted to destroy Him.

**Note:** The three slaves sent to collect the rent represent the prophets God sent to the people of Israel. God sent prophets many times to gather the harvest, but each time they were rejected.

In verses 13-17 (*See also Matthew 22:15-22*) then the chief priests and elders sent some Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to trap Him by asking whether it was legal to pay taxes to Caesar. Jesus knew their intent and asked them to bring a Denarius and asked whose picture was on the coin. They answered Caesar. Jesus said then give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.

**Note:** If Jesus had simply answered yes they would have pictured Jesus as pro-Roman thus alienating the crowd. But if he said no they would have characterized Jesus as being a rebel against Rome.

In verses 18-27 (*See also Matthew 22:23-33*) the Sadducees now came to Jesus attempting to trap Him by asking if a woman marries a man and he dies, and she marries his brother and this happens seven times whose wife will she be in the resurrection.

**Note:** Sadducees were part of the Jewish aristocracy, often priests, and members of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish supreme court). They did not believe in the resurrection, God's future judgment, angels, or spirits. They accepted only the Pentateuch as authoritative and even rejected the traditions set down by the Pharisees.

Jesus answered them saying they had deceived themselves. First, they had assumed there would be marriage in heaven, and they did not fully understand the power of God. Jesus quoted Exodus 3:6 which says "I am the God of..." indicating God still is their God. God is the God of the living, not the

dead, suggesting Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob still had a relationship with God, confirming there is life after death.

In verses 28-34 (*See also Matthew 22:34-40*) one of the scribes (teachers of the Law) heard this previous exchange and asked Jesus what is the most important commandment.

**Note:** Scribes had established a large volume of 613 commandments from the Mosaic Law, some more important than others, some positive (to do), and some negative (not to do).

Jesus answered by quoting the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) saying this was the most important commandment. The second commandment Jesus said, is to love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18). The scribe admitted that Jesus was correct and Jesus said the scribe was not far from the kingdom of God (he had spiritual understanding).

**Note:** To this point the chief priest, elders, Herodians, and scribes had all attempted to trap Jesus but He had refuted them all.

In verses 35-37 as Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said how is that the Messiah is said to be the Son of David, yet David said the Messiah was His Lord. The only possible answer is that the Messiah is descended from David and also His Lord.

**Note:** Unlike the religious leaders, the crowd listening to Jesus were listening with delight.

In verses 38-40 (*See also Matthew 23:1-9*) Jesus warned the people about the hypocrisy of the scribes who liked to portray themselves as important and at the same time took advantage of widows. They are all show and will receive a harsh judgment.

In verses 41-42 as Jesus was sitting across from the temple treasury rich people were putting in large sums of money while a widow came and dropped two small coins into the treasure. Jesus said this woman had given more because she had given out of her poverty all she had while the rich had given out of their surplus.


**Note:** The widow displayed great trust in God, by giving everything she had. She was trusting God to supply her needs.

## Mark 13

Mark 13 is known as the Olivet Discourse because it was Jesus' teaching given on the Mount of Olives.

In verse 1-2 (*See also Matthew 24:1-3*) as Jesus was leaving the temple a disciple remarked about the temple stones, and Jesus said not one stone would be left on top of another.

In verses 3-8 as Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olive across from the temple complex. Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Jesus when this destruction he spoke of would happen. Jesus warned them not be deceived about



those claiming to be Him. Signs of the beginning of the end include wars, earthquakes, and famines.

In verses 9-13 (*See also Matthew 24:9-14*) Jesus warned the disciples they would face persecution, be handed over to the Sanhedrin (local courts), they would be flogged, and brought before governors and kings as a witness to them. The disciples were not to worry about what to say when they were arrested because the Holy Spirit would speak for them. They would be hated by everyone, even their own families, because of their faith in Jesus, but if they persevere they will be delivered in the end.

In verses 14-23 (*See also Matthew 24:15-28*) Jesus continued teaching saying when they see the abomination of desolation (a reference to Daniel 9:25-27), the people must immediately escape Jerusalem and go to Perea. There will be a great tribulation unlike any seen before. No one would survive if the days of tribulation had not been limited by God. They were not to believe those who claim to be Messiah because they are trying to lead the elect astray.

In verses 24-27 (*See also Matthew 24:29-31*) Jesus continued saying in those days (the days of the great tribulation) the sun will be darkened and the moon will not shine. There will be a great upheaval in the heavens. Then the Son of Man will come with great power and glory and will send His angels to gather the elect, from all over the earth.

In verses 28-31 (*See also Matthew 24:32-36*) Jesus continued teaching with the parable of the fig tree. When the fig tree blossoms you know summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things (the events of Mark 13:14-23) you will know that the end is near.

In verses 32-37 Jesus concluded saying no one knows the hour or day when these things will happen, not even the angels or the Son. Only the Father in Heaven knows. Be alert and be ready at any time.

# What I Noticed Today

## (Mark 14-16)

### Mark 14-16

These three chapters comprise the sixth and final major section of the Gospel of Mark. They cover Jesus' last days in Jerusalem; his betrayal, arrest, trials, crucifixion, and resurrection.

### Mark 14

In verses 1-2 (*See also Matthew 26:1-5*) two days later it was Passover (Thursday) and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and scribes were plotting to have Jesus arrested and killed but because of His popularity, they delayed acting until after the festival.

**Note:** Jerusalem would have been crowded with people coming to celebrate Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread.

In verses 3-11 (*See also Matthew 26:6-16*) while Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon the Leper a woman came and anointed Jesus with an expensive jar of oil. Some of the disciples rebuked her extravagance saying the oil could have been sold for about a year's wages and given to the poor. Jesus rebuked them saying she had anointed Him for burial. Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests and betrayed Jesus promising to hand Him over to them.

**Note:** Mark is jumping back in time in verses 3-11 to the week prior to Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem (probably Friday).

In verses 12-16 (*See also Matthew 26:17-19*) on the first day of the Festival of Unleavened bread and the day for preparation for the Passover (Thursday) Jesus sent Peter and John to go into the city (Jerusalem), and meet a man who would have a room prepared for them to prepare for the Passover.


In verses 17-21 (*See also Matthew 26:20-25*) Jesus joined the disciples in the evening (Friday) and they began to eat the Passover meal when Jesus announced that one of them would betray Him. Each one, in turn, denied, and Jesus said it was the one with whom he was dipping the bread. *This fulfilled Psalm 41:9.*

**Note:** Judas would have been in a place of honor reclining at the left side of Jesus.

In verses 22-26 (*See also Matthew 26:26-30*) Jesus established the Lord's Supper explaining the bread was a symbol of His body, and the cup of wine a symbol of His blood. The eating and drinking established a new covenant of promised forgiveness through Jesus' death on the cross.

**Note:** Jesus gave thanks for the bread and wine. The Greek word for "giving thanks" is *eucharistēsas* from which we get the word Eucharist.





In verses 27-31 (*See also Matthew 26:31-35*) Jesus announced the disciples would all scatter (quoting Zechariah 13:7) after His death, but that after He was resurrected He would join them in Galilee. Peter vehemently denied that he would fall away. Even if he had to die with Jesus he said he would not fall away. All the other disciples said the same thing.

**Note:** It is interesting that all the disciples focused on the first part of Jesus' statement that they would fall away, but none of them brought up the meaning of resurrection or the fact that Jesus would see them again in Galilee.

In verses 32-42 (*See also Matthew 26:36-47*) they journeyed to Gethsemane to an olive orchard. He told the disciples to sit and wait while he prayed. He took Peter, James, and John with Him a short distance away and told them to keep watch. Jesus went a little further and began to pray. He returned to Peter, James, and John and found them sleeping. He left them a second time to continue praying and returned to find them asleep a second time. He left them again to pray and returning found them asleep a third time. He told them it was time to get up because His betrayer was near.

**Note:** Gethsemane means "olive press, or "press of olives."

In verses 43-52 (*See also Matthew 26:47-56*) while Jesus was still speaking Judas arrived with the chief priests, scribes, elders, and a mob of men with weapons. Judas kissed Jesus referring to Him as Rabbi. They arrested Jesus. One of the disciples standing nearby cut off the ear of the high priest's slave (from John 18:10 we know it was Peter who cut off the ear of the servant named Malchus).

Jesus rebuked them for coming out at night to capture Him as though He was a criminal when they could have arrested Him anytime He was teaching in the temple. With that all the disciples ran away.

A young man who was with them attempted to run away, was caught by his linen cloth. He left the linen cloth behind and ran away naked.

**Note:** Most scholars believe that the young man Mark referenced was Mark himself. Jesus was staying at Mark's father's house. Mark had gone to bed in a linen sleeping garment, and hearing the commotion had hurried outside into the olive orchard.

In verses 53-65 (*See also Matthew 26:57-68*) Jesus was taken from Gethsemane to Jerusalem to the high priest for trial with the chief priests, scribes, and elders all in attendance. Peter followed at a distance and stood in the courtyard surrounded by the temple police.

The chief priests and the Sanhedrin conducted a trial looking for testimony that they could use to convict Jesus but none of their false testimonies agreed.

**Note:** The Sanhedrin was a 71 member court headed by the high priest (Joseph Caiaphas). A quorum of 23 members was needed to conduct a trial.

The high priest asked Jesus two questions: Are you going to answer these charges, and Are you the Messiah?

**Note:** The first question is stated in emphatic form meaning a positive response is expected but Jesus said nothing. According to Jewish custom not defending yourself was usually taken as an admission of guilt.

In answer to the second question, Jesus answered yes, He was the Son of Man. With that the high priest tore his robe and declared Jesus guilty of blasphemy. The court agreed, condemning Jesus to death.

**Note:** The punishment for blasphemy was stoning (Leviticus 24:15-16).

Some members of the Sanhedrin spit on Jesus blindfolded Him and beat Him. The temple police joined by assaulting Jesus.

In verses 66-72 (See also Matthew 26:69-75) While Peter was still in the courtyard of the high priest one of the high priest's servants accused Peter of being a Nazarene who was with Jesus. Peter denied it and moved to the entryway. Another servant approached Peter and accused him and again he denied being a disciple. A third servant accused Peter of being a Galilean and a disciple of Jesus and again he denied it calling curses on himself.

**Note:** Galileans spoke an Aramaic dialect that was different from those in Jerusalem so his accent stood out.

**Note:** Peter calling curses on himself was like swearing before God that what he was saying was true but, of course, it was not.

Immediately a rooster crowed and Peter realized he had denied Jesus three times just as Jesus had said. He wept realizing what he had done.


## Mark 15

In verses 1-5 (See also Matthew 27:1-2) as soon as it was morning the chief priests, elders, scribes, and Sanhedrin met to confirm their guilty verdict. They then led Jesus away to Pilate (the Roman governor over the region).

**Note:** This second meeting was probably 5-6 am on Friday (April 3, A.D. 33). It was typical for a sentence to be confirmed the day following the verdict. Under Roman law the Sanhedrin could convict someone, but they had no authority to carry out a death sentence.

Pilate questioned Jesus asking if He was the King of the Jews and Jesus confirmed that He was. The chief priests accused Jesus of many things but He did not answer their charges.

In verses 6-15 (See also Matthew 27:15-26) at the Passover festival Pilate's custom was to release one prisoner. He asked the people if he should release Jesus but the chief priests rallied the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas, a convicted murderer. The crowd then demanded that Jesus be crucified, so Pilate had Jesus flogged and then turned Him over to be crucified.



**Note:** It was Roman custom to flog a male who was sentenced to death. The prisoner was stripped, usually tied to a post, and then flogged with whips that had pieces of sharp bone and metal embedded in them. Because there was no set limit on the number of blows in a Roman flogging, the flogging itself often led to death.

In verses 16-20 (*See also Matthew 27:27-31*) the Roman soldiers removed Jesus from the courtyard and took Him inside the palace. There they humiliated Him by dressing Him in a purple robe and placing a crown of thorns on His head. They beat Him with rod and spit on Him. Finally, they dressed Him in His own clothes and led Him away to be crucified.

In verses 21-32 (*See also Matthew 27:32-44*) the Roman soldiers forced Simon the Cyrene to carry Jesus' cross until they reach Golgotha (means Place of the Skull). They offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh but He refused it.

**Note:** Myrrh was a narcotic given to deaden the pain and bring about a quicker death.

They crucified Jesus at 9am (the third hour) casting lots for His clothes (*fulfilling Psalm 22:18*) and put a sign on the cross "The King of the Jews." Jesus was crucified between two outlaws (*fulfilling Isaiah 53:12*).

Passersby, the chief priests, and scribes mocked Jesus so much that even the two men being crucified with Him also mocked Him.

In verses 33-41 (*See also Matthew 27:45-56*) in the ninth hour (12n) darkness came over the land for three hours until 3pm. Jesus shouted, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"

**Note:** Jesus had taken on the sin of the world so in this moment he was separated from the Father who cannot look upon sin (Habakkuk 1:13).


Jesus let out a loud cry and breathed His last. At that moment the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion who was standing near Jesus said certainly this man was the Son of God.

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Jose, and Salome mother of Zebedee's sons were there and had been attending to Jesus.

**Note:** The devotion of these women who had been ministering to Jesus stands in stark contrast to the disciples who had been scattered, just as Jesus predicted.

In verses 42-47 (*See also Matthew 27:57-61*) it was Preparation Day (Friday before the Sabbath) and Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrin, went to Pilate and requested Jesus body in order to bury Him. When Pilate confirmed that Jesus was indeed dead he gave Jesus' body to Joseph.

**Note:** Roman custom was to leave a body hanging on the cross for some time. Only the Roman magistrate had the authority to release the body for burial. Jewish custom was to bury the corpse on the day the person died and this needed to be done before evening.



Joseph wrapped Jesus' body, placed Him in a tomb, and rolled a large stone across the entrance while Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching.

**Note:** The large stone that covered the entrance of the tomb was quite heavy and rolled downhill into a slot in front of the tomb. Moving it away would require it to be rolled uphill, which would require several men.

## Mark 16

In verses 1-8 (*See also Matthew 28:1-8*) in the evening when the Sabbath was over Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, and Salome bought spices to anoint Jesus. Early the next morning they went to the tomb and found the large stone rolled away and a young man dressed in white linen sitting on the right side of the tomb.

The angel told them not to be afraid, Jesus had been resurrected, and to go tell His disciples and Peter that Jesus would meet them in Galilee (as promised in Mark 14:28). The women fled from the tomb and said nothing to anyone for a while because they were afraid.

**Note:** Peter being singled out for this confirming message indicated that despite his denial of Jesus he was still counted among the disciples.

## Mark 16:9-20


These twelve verses are the most problematic and disputed in the New Testament. The writing style is different than the previous writing. Mary Magdalene is introduced with some detail as though we had not already been introduced to her, but she was mentioned three times before in Mark 15:40, 47 and Mark 16:1. Modern scholars generally agree that these last twelve verses were written by someone other than Mark and added to his Gospel early on, and thus became part of the canonized version.

In verses 9-13 Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb that same morning and Jesus appeared to her. She went and told the disciples but they did not believe her. Jesus appeared also in a different form to two others as they were walking on the road. When these two reported it to the others they did not believe either.

In verses 14-18 Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples while they were eating. He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart because they had not believed those who told them He had been resurrected.

**Note:** The word the author used to describe Jesus' rebuke of the disciples is an especially harsh criticism.

Then Jesus commissioned the disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. The signs of a person who believed include casting out demons, speaking other languages, picking up snakes, not being



harmful by poison, and being able to heal the sick.

In verses 19-20 after speaking with them, the Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven by God and sits at His right hand. The disciples went as directed into the world preaching the Gospel.

