

# JESUS OF MARK'S GOSPEL

## Repentant Life



***ROD  
ADAMSON***

## ***MARK'S GOSPEL***



Jesus presented himself as the Son of Man, the disciples came to know Him as the Son of God, the crowds wanted a celebrity healer and judge, the religious and political leaders eliminated him – or so they thought! Modern spiritual leaders want Jesus only as another wise global sage, but Jesus offers inclusive repentance above culture.  
Who do you follow?

## Jesus of Mark's Gospel: Repentant Life

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### **Use of Support Resources:**

It is recommended that only a Bible faithful Jesus DVD is used as audio-visual support for any study of the gospel:

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## 1. MARK 1.1 – 1.13 REPENTANT LIFE ANNOUNCED

Jesus was Hebrew of obscure origin in the time of Roman domination of the Jews. He ministered largely among the Jews. Jesus presented himself as the Son of Man. The disciples came to know Him as the Son of God, the Hebrew crowds wanted a celebrity healer liberator, the religious and political leaders wanted to eliminate him. God brought forth his unique ministry of repentance and healing to salvation, his unique death for the forgiveness of the world, and his unique futurology - including Jesus resurrected, disciples who became apostles, and a Spirit-filled Church as gospel keeper and mission commissioned to take the gospel faithfully to all nations.

Mark's gospel tells this simply, and is regarded as the earliest of the gospels upon which Matthew and Luke's gospels relied for most of their presentation and detail. The gospel does not record it's author. Church history notes him as John Mark, whom the New Testament details as cousin of Barnabas who was nephew to Mark's mother Mary (Acts, 12.12/Col 4.10), and who has history as the interpreter of Peter from Hebrew/Aramaic, and recorder of Peter's preaching, particularly in Rome.

**(Please see Appendix 1 – Peter, John Mark, and the Authorship of Mark.)**

### Mark 1.1-13 – The Beginning of the Gospel

#### 1.1 Jesus Christ is the gospel.

The introduction is short and sweet – *The beginning* - of which each phrase has specialist theological use:

ευαγγελιου *of the gospel* – the good news, which Mark will tell.

ιησου χριστου *of Jesus Christ* – presented as 'Y'shua haMessiach' (Messiah) - Jesus the 'anointed', who fulfilled the Hebrew expectation of 'one like Moses and King David's offspring' coming to establish the New Covenant of God with his people.

υιου θεου *Son of God* – also a messianic title, but used with Hebrew and Christian layers of theology. It originally denoted the messiah in his human prophetic and Davidic line relation to God who as the 'anointed' was the 'Son of God'. Post-resurrection New Testament theology expanded the title to include the layer of 'in trinity God'. God has revealed himself fully in Jesus - in his life and teaching, his once for all death for humans, his resurrection and ascension, and his giving of the Holy Spirit by whom Jesus continues in His Church and to redeem the sinners of the world.

**[See comment at Mark 15.39]**

#### **SPECIAL FOCUS - JEWISH MESSIANIC EXPECTATION**

Unique to Jews, Hebrew expectation of 'one like Moses and King David's offspring' coming to establish the New Covenant of God with his people in fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, was positively but vaguely upheld among the majority Jewish leadership and people in the Greek and Roman era. Not all were positive.

The **Sadducee** minority dominated the Jerusalem priesthood, secure by material wealth and power collaboration with foreign domination, and holding to Torah primacy alone over oral or prophetic rabbinism, thus rejecting messianism. They opposed messianic individuals as threatening their vested interests. **[See comment at Mark 12.18]**

The **Pharisees**, originators of Talmudic Judaism of 'oral Torah tradition explains written Torah', were positively inclined only to a messiah upholding this 'tradition Torah' as a non-violent 'separated' lifestyle teaching leader, while God initiated political liberation. Their majority leadership gave governance involvement.

**[See comment at Mark 2.16]**

The **Essenes**/Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls group 'separated' by withdrawing into 'true Israel remnant' community in the Judean desert, as their self-identification verse using Isaiah 40.3 (1QS 8.15) and upholding their method of study of Hebrew Scripture as the path preparing God's way. By their 'Teacher of Righteousness' messiah, God would meet them in the desert, give the final overthrow of Gentile oppressions, and deliver Israel. *[The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in 1948, are now fully published]*

Sadducee and Essene Judaism were eliminated in the Jewish-Roman Wars and fall of Jerusalem, AD 66-70. Pharisaic Judaism regrouped into Rabbinic-Talmudic Judaism, by hindsight regarding political messianism of that time as discredited scripture teaching, and messiah claimants as failed tragic Zionist nationalists. Jesus' Jews and Gentiles, alone, still claim that the gospels give the historic account of the only successful non-Zionistic messiah, *Y'shua HaMessiach, Jesus Christ*.

### **1.2-8 John the Baptist was the Forerunner of the Messiah**

Mark's is a ministry action gospel - the gospel of repentant life in Jesus had historical first step with John the Baptist, Mark begins from the witness of John the Baptist. John's gospel also gives the witness of John the Baptist as historical first step, but with a much expanded prologue. *[Mt 3.7-12, 14/Lk 3.7-18/Jn 1.15-36 give detail of John the Baptist's preaching, along with detail of Jesus' birth and early life, not in Mark.]*

#### **1.2-3 The Expectation of the Forerunner – the Voice calling in the desert:**

Mark uses Ex 23.20 modified by the Mal 3.1 Elijah forerunner expectation to ground John the Baptist's self-identification verse used in common by all four gospels - Isaiah 40.3. John the Baptist fulfilled forerunner prophecy as the voice calling in the desert that the cause of the Lord needs a straight worship path/road for God to be made. For John, it was life repentant befitting the one to come, whom he identified as Jesus.

#### **1.4-8 John's Ministry:** The publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls showed that John's self-identity use of Isaiah 40.3 matched the self-identity use by the Qumran Community. Also similar was that they used ritual washing, he baptised. The differences were more significant, however:

- John came out of the desert and among the Jews to minister
- John preached a once off baptism, not regular washing
- John preached repentant life – repentance for the forgiveness of sins
- John self-identified as the forerunner of one greater than himself
- John preached that the 'greater one' would baptise in the Holy Spirit.

#### **1.4 A Baptism of Repentance for the Forgiveness of Sins:** While Essenes linked ritual ablution/water-washing with cleansing from sin, John's one-off baptism set forgiveness not by the water, but the inner spirit of repentance. Repentant life was life choice to be offered to the greater one. Jesus took over and developed John the Baptist's call for people to

- 1.5-6 repent for the forgiveness of their sins. **[See comment at Mark 2.17]**  
John the Baptist like Elijah: John's popularity is noted, his righteousness is given gospel support in his confrontation of Herod, and backed by non-biblical historian Josephus (*Ant XVII.v.2*). Mark further sets the Elijah-like personality and lifestyle with which John the Baptist entered ministry, even to the common Jordan 'crossing' venue (2 kings 1.8/2.7-8).
- 1.-7-8 John the Baptist's Prophetic Objective – 'Identify the Greater One': This is prophetic confession by John “of the vast superiority of the coming one over himself. While John administers the eschatological sacrament of baptism, the coming one will actually bestow the eschatological gift of the Spirit.” (Cranfield, CEB. The Gospel according to St. Mark.) Academic words point to spiritual truth: physical baptism enacts a destiny-determining spiritual transformation as is part of the messianic expectation, central to the messiah's work, and vital to each individual to be a disciple of God. (Is 11.1-3;42.1-2;61.1-2/Jer 31.31-34/Ez 36.25-27/Joel 2.28-29). The messiah's gift orders the destiny of discipleship.

### 1.9-13 The Son, the Baptiser in the Holy Spirit, has come:

Mark then moves from John the Baptist to the fulfilment of his forerunner prophetic ministry – John's baptism of the greater one who came.

*[Mark and Mt 3.13-17/Lk 22 agree that Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist, he came up out of the water, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended and rested on him like a dove, and God's voice spoke that Jesus was his beloved Son. Jn 1.31-34 focusses on the Spirit anointing Jesus, and rather gives John the Baptist's witness that the Spirit anointing on Jesus like a dove was the fulfilment and end of his forerunner ministry for the Son of God (testimony which initiated the discipleship transfer of Andrew and presumably John the fisherman to follow Jesus). The sources for the event and for John the Baptist's witness were thus John the Baptist himself, Jesus himself, and the two disciples.]*

- 1.9 ιησους απο ναζαρετ *Jesus from Nazareth* – scepticism that Jesus is an unhistorical fictional myth is ignorant **[See Special Focus – Jesus is Historical Truth, and Appendix 1]**, though Mark gives no details of Jesus' past in Bethlehem or Nazareth. Again Mark's is the action account with little embellishment – Jesus came into God's ministry through John, was baptised in the Jordan, and took over the ministry as the greater one.
- 1.10-11 Mark presents John and Jesus as the witnesses of the baptism event:
- *heaven being torn open* – Mark's account includes a direct revelatory interface between self-revealing Spirit God and humanity by which Spirit God reveals for redemption. Test tubes were not in existence for empirical analysis at that time.
  - *the Spirit descending on him like a dove* – with OT link to Gen 1.2, the Spirit of God imaged as a 'female bird hovering/brooding' over creation, and the Gen 8.11 dove returning new life promise to Noah's ark after the flood, the Spirit is upon Jesus for life deliverance to come at the cross.
  - *a voice came from heaven* - the Father's voice affirms Jesus' sonship. “His Messianic dignity is openly declared at the outset of His ministry. The baptism is not to be viewed as a self-dedication of Jesus to the office of Messiah; here, at the beginning of his book, Mark makes it clear to us that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor 5.19). Lohse, E. Mark's witness to Jesus Christ. p50). Jesus' baptism did not initiate his adoption as the Son in royal Davidic manner, but revealed him

as the Son already pre-existent. God's voice confirms Jesus' sonship, the words given in OT link to Is 42.1/Ps 2.78, which explore the Spirit-anointing and sonship of God's servant. **[See also Appendix 1 on the Hebrew Gospel]**

1.12-13 το πνευμα αυτον εκβαλλει *the Spirit sent Him out* - with OT link to Ex 24.18/Deut 9.9-19 and to 1 Kgs 19.8, the Son the greater one is sent by the Spirit to go through preparation for covenant leadership like Moses and Elijah. Of forty days, the number indicates a full period of discipline through temptation, temptation which Matthew and Luke's gospels show as messianic.

Mark then moves to the opening of Jesus' ministry as the greater one.

### **SPECIAL FOCUS – JESUS IS HISTORICAL TRUTH**

Jesus was born before 4 BC, was raised and ministered in Hebrew Palestine, and crucified at the Jerusalem Passover for the political expediency of Jewish and Roman leadership at the time. **(See Appendix 4: Probable Chronology).**

Christian, Jewish-Rabbinic, Roman and other sources that attest to Jesus:

- over 5300 manuscripts/fragments of the Greek New Testament (many with early dating validity thus accuracy),
- over 8000 Latin manuscripts of the New Testament,
- over 1000 other NT manuscripts in other contemporary languages,
- hundreds of references in letters of Apostolic and Church fathers,
- references in Talmudic Jewish writings,
- references in non-Christian historians of Jewish, Roman, Syrian and other sources contemporary to the apostles,
- hundreds of archeological inscription and other verifications,

Manuscript quantity and reliability (closeness of manuscript date to original event) put the figure of Jesus crucified as fact, by reference and evidence unparalleled for ancient time. To regard Jesus born, ministering and crucified as a myth or unhistorical, needs to be seen as ignorance. Jesus born, ministering and crucified as the founder of Christianity is a fact of history. The claims of miracles, his resurrection, ascension, giving the Holy Spirit, and coming again, are the further issue that the gospels give witness to.

Manuscripts also predate Muhammad (b.570-d.632AD) and the 23 years till the caliph Uthman determination of the 655AD final version of the Qur'an, after which all differing versions were destroyed. Neither Muhammad nor the Qur'an are, nor had or have, accurate historical source material about Jesus.

### **Discussion:**

- **Please read Appendix 1 – Peter, John Mark and the Authorship of Mark.**
- **John the Baptist announces 'Jesus the greater one' as a new ministry distinct from the Hebrew spiritualities of that time. Why is this important in understanding Jesus?**
- **Why is John the Baptist's focus about Jesus that 'He baptises in the Holy Spirit' so important in understanding Jesus?**

## 2. MARK 1.14 – 3.12 THE DOMINION OF JESUS, SON OF MAN

Since the Sadducees were negative to the messiah, and the Pharisees and Essenes seeking a teaching messiah at best for unfolding of political liberation, Jesus' ministry as one of authority in healing, teaching and forgiveness was a shock even greater than John the Baptist to the Jewish leaders, an attraction even greater to the people. John the Baptist had been asked if he was the messiah. Mark's gospel records how this was correctly answered in the 'greater one' ministry of Jesus of Nazareth.

### 1.14–44: The Son's Dominion Over Repentant Life

#### 1.14 – 20 The Son Calls the Disciples to Repentant Life

- 1.14 - *after John was put into prison, Jesus went into Galilee.* Ruler of Galilee was Herod Antipas, who had imprisoned John the Baptist. Jesus deliberately moves into his territory and takes over the repentant life ministry (and is so recognised by Herod, Mk 6.14f).  
- κηρυσσων το ευαγγελιον kerysson to evangelion *preaching the good news*: proactive participial use of a vital phrase in theology, the 'kerygma' is understood as the structured heart of John, Jesus and the apostles' preaching, both in oral and written phases, as the earliest most accurately preserved, and around which the full written gospels were authored. With OT link to Is 61.1,2 (Heb qarrah)/(Joel 2.1/Zech 9.9 LXX), 'κηρυσσω preaching' proclaims God's time of judgement and salvation in progress.
- 1.15 - *The time has come, the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news* is Mark's concise slogan of John, Jesus and Peter's kerygma.  
- καιρος *kairos*, the appointed time of God's purpose with humanity has come; η βασιλεια του θεου, *the kingdom of God*, God's dominion by his representative leader is now among humans; μετανοειτε και πιστευετε *repent and believe*, is to proactively enter into and keep taking part in the gospel life choice. Mark then tells Peter's preaching of Jesus' ministry, suffering, death and resurrection – historical event of the gospel kerygma.
- 1.16-20 First order of gospel business was Jesus' calling of disciples. [**Detail of how Jesus came to Simon and Andrew, James and John is supplied in John 1.35-51.**] Mark records that Peter preached the overall effect: "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men", and the disciples take up the life choice of repentant life, and being those in training for passing on repentant life to others. The authority of Jesus' word of call needs comment: "His word lays hold on men's lives and asserts his right to their whole-hearted and total allegiance, a right that takes priority even over the claims of kinship." (Cranfield, CEB. Gospel according to St. Mark. p69). The 'at once' immediacy is the sense of a willing taking ownership of the call with a proactive ending to fishing and entry into their new life choice of discipleship work. The 'without delay' in Jesus' call of James and John shows again Jesus' willing approval of them and their own willing acceptance. Fishing of humans is a negative OT image (Jer 16.16/Ez 29.3-5/Am 4.2/Hab 1.14-17); positive use for bringing others to repentant life originated with Jesus.
- 1.21-22 Jesus begins ministry as a travelling preacher rabbi in Galilee in order to take the gospel to a wider geographical audience. One part of his plan of action was to join Sabbath prayers at a synagogue, be indicated as a teacher, usually use an Isaiah scroll to expound a messianic prophecy and give it's interpretation as fulfilled in him, and that the time is now. These events regularly inspired debates, demonic/psychiatric and bodily healing encounters, even raising of the dead, and 'natural order redirect' miracles,



**(See Comment - Jesus' Mighty Healing Works/Miracles at Mark 5.30).**

1.23–28      The Son's Dominion over the Spiritual Dimension

1.23-28 Jesus' preaching in the synagogue inspires a demonic/psychiatric encounter, in which Jesus completes a healing so efficiently that amazed reaction begins the genuine and celebrity renown that surrounded Jesus. His 'bedside manner' not to engage 'demon/psychiatric condition' in dialogue reflects awareness of futility either in engaging the confused state of many such sufferers in practical spiritual insight of demonic presence, or the demonic. Here direct spiritual command to the patient and 'demonic/psychiatric condition' in a casting-out-demons miracle reveals Jesus' dominion over the spiritual demonic dimension.

1.29-34      The Son's Dominion over Bodily Health

1.29 Jesus moves on to the home of Peter and Andrew in Capernaum (the archeological 'house of Peter in Capernaum', unearthed as part of the Capernaum synagogue research, was a 'Peter pilgrimage' site indicating truth to Mark's claim for Peter's family home in Capernaum as the base for Jesus' Galilee ministry).

1.30-34 Peter's mother-in-law is ill with a fever, Jesus goes to her and heals and helps her up, upon which she resumes her household role. This and the previous incident spread Jesus' renown, many people brought their sick to Jesus, a large crowd gathered. Jesus performed many bodily and demonic/psychiatric healings, again revealing his dominion over both spiritual dimension and bodily health.

1.35-39      The Son's Spiritual Discipline

1.35-39 Mark records that Jesus' ministry was not spur of the moment, he had the deepest spiritual discipline and most committed sense of gospel mission.  
- *early in the morning, still dark, solitary place, pray* – Jesus upheld his personal relationship with the Father in 'Quiet Time' diligence out of which his preaching, teaching and mighty works ministry flowed.  
- *Let us go somewhere else, preach there also. That is why I have come* – Jesus was not celebrity status seeking, but overflowing with mission by the empowering of the Holy Spirit He had been anointed with at his baptism.

1.40-45      The Son's Willing and Inclusive Dominion

1.40-45 The Greek word λεπρα *leprosy* refers to leprosy and other dreaded skin diseases, the account is without mention of deformed limbs or features, so either early stage leprosy or other skin disease is meant. Superstitious healing gave no hope. Hebrew hygiene, health and quarantine laws through Moses only recognised the severity of leprosy, but offered no treatment without prophetic action (2 Kgs 5.1-27). Only empirical medical science has sustained success against leprosy, with it's so bodily ravaging and disabling impact if untreated. Jesus' healing of lepers is linked to his being the Son of God, of prophetic order suiting the 'greater one'.

1.41 *filled with compassion* - Jesus' strong emotion, both towards the ill power of disease and patient need, comes out. By touch and will "*I am willing*" – God in Jesus meets us in our need by his grace, his undeserved favour,

mainly in salvation but here in mortal flesh restoration, for which Jesus also has dominion, and gives grace and healing - *be clean*.

- 1.44 Jesus recognises the need for treatment validation if faith is to be uplifted and not misled, so instructs the patient to observe this according to Mosaic health law. His anti-celebrity instruction to the patient, often labeled the 'messianic secret' of hidden glory, is ignored.

***Discussion: Why do you believe that gospel kerygma/preaching faithfully preserves Jesus as the Son with dominion authority of God over individual life and eternity?***

- ***How does one keep Jesus' dominion of repentant life in one's own life practice? How is Jesus' call of "Follow me" lived by you?***
- ***How real do you believe Jesus' healing dominion to be, and how does this work together with medical science?***

2.1–3.12     The Son's Dominion of Forgiveness

2.1–12        The Son's Dominion of Forgiveness

2.1-4         The historical details of Capernaum, the type of house roof that could be dug through, indicate this as eye witness record from Peter.

2.5,11       - *Your sins are forgiven* – Jesus indicates his priority of salvation over mortal flesh outcomes, but again grace in Jesus is willingly given for both. *I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home* – the 'greater one' prophetic ministry is given, the patient receives healing, and must act on his treatment. On this occasion, the validation is dramatic – a paraplegic walks, carries a loads and is restored to motor skills self-sufficiency.

2.6-10       - *the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins* – the real drama of the incident is not the claim of a 'greater one' prophetic miracle. Jesus' use of his self-identity **בַּר אֱנוֹשׁ** (bar enosh), ο υιος του ανθρωπου ho huios tou anthropou, *the Son of Man*, is given for the first time by Mark. **(See Comment – Jesus the Son of Man at Mark 8.31)**. Jesus understood his dominion to be for gospel salvation, including authority to forgive sinners and patients that is God's alone.

2.13–17      The Son's Dominion for Repentant Sinners

2.13         From his Capernaum base (probably at Peter's house), Jesus moves out to the lakeside again, this time his unsolicited celebrity status means that a large crowd anticipates ministry. He gives teaching ministry.

2.14         Still near the Capernaum seaside, Jesus' fishing for people now includes a despised tax collector, who is called as the other disciples were. Mark and Luke use his original family name of Levi at his call event, Matthew's gospel uses Matthew, by which he chose to be known among the disciples and is so listed in all three lists of the twelve (Mark 3.16-19 and parallels). As Peter's name change indicated a new beginning, so too with Levi/Matthew when Jesus' call led him to personal repentant life and the life of passing on repentance to others.

2.15-17      Jesus is then invited to Levi/Matthew's house, where in missionary meal method also kept in Eucharist practice, Jesus ministers repentance to the marginalised 'sinners and tax collectors' of Judaism but the welcomed to repentance" of Christianity. Pharisees in the crowd reacted with scorn.

- 2.17 - *It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.* Mark records Peter's recollection of one of Jesus' most renowned sayings. In spiritual application of common expectation to find medical doctors among the sick, Jesus finds the place of ministry as among sinners. The addition in Luke's gospel of *to repentance* is Luke's personal expansion of meaning already obvious in the incident, also giving apostolic era support that 'kerygma' preaching by the apostles and early church included call into spiritual life of repentant discipleship. From one Africa commentator: "Such obedience requires absolute faith in the living God. The same Lord still calls his own from their everyday concerns into a life of unqualified obedience." (Cole, VB. Mark in Africa Bible Commentary. p1175.)
- 2.18–22      The Son's Dominion in New Covenant Management  
 2.18-20 Jesus gave explanation of the different management of his disciples from the ascetic disciples of John the Baptist and the Pharisees, who fasted. Jesus' disciples did not, as yet, but would need to later. The presence of Jesus the bridegroom meant God's spiritual wedding with his chosen bride the Church was underway. Once completed in the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, then the bride's endeavours for God would need ascetic spiritual discipline to grow her relationship with the bridegroom.
- 2.21-22 Jesus also indicates the changed spirit for ascetic discipleship. The presence of the new wine of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' disciples is always kerygmatic, primarily for mission, not a withdrawn life of contemplation. Spiritual disciplines such as fasting are now for the growth of the church, not for worldly denial. Many of liberal Protestant modernism have dumped fasting and other ascetic disciplines as being of the old covenant. The balance of Jesus' saying is that asceticism belongs with Church growth. Spiritual discipline is sought for mission outcomes, not merit. Spiritual discipline was not disparaged by Jesus, nor should be by modernism.
- 2.23–3.6      The Dominion of the Son of Man even over the Sabbath  
 2.23 Standing grain (corn/wheat) ready for picking, thus earlier than June, is more Petrine eye-witness testimony, and the only synoptic gospel indicator that Jesus' ministry was longer than a year's duration (just after one Passover with nearly a year to the next). Jesus' original attitude towards Hebrew legalism, compared to that of Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and even John the Baptist, marks this as his original preaching faithfully remembered by Peter, recorded by Mark.
- 2.26 *in the days of Abiathar the high priest* – reflected the original uncertainty of 1 Sam 21, 22.20/2 Sam 8.17/1 Chr 18.16 Ahimelech-Abiathar-Ahimelech (grandfather-son-grandson?) priestly family line. Ahimilech was the high priest who gave holy bread to David (1 Sam 21), but his son Abiathar was better known as a long-term David loyalist, perhaps naming one of his own sons after fallen father and grandfather Ahimelech. Matthew and Luke omit the personal reference, and also omit verse 27, to avoid the personal reference and Sabbath difficulties.
- 2.27 *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath*, is unique to Mark's gospel, (omitted by Matthew and Luke), so an original reliable record of a saying difficult to deal with among Jews. It only implies that

- messianic mission service to God has priority over Sabbath legalism; that it expects Sabbath Saturday be changed to Sunday is to exaggerate. The kerygmatic object is further clarified at the Mark 3.1-6 incident of healing.
- 2.28 This is retained by Mark, Matthew and Luke. Since the Sabbath was God-ordained, only a 'greater one' could alter its impact, which Jesus did, as his self-identity בַּר אֱנוֹשׁ (bar enosh), ο υιος του ανθρωπου ho huios tou anthropou, *the Son of Man*, would allow.

### **Special Focus – Discipleship and Culture**

God gave Sabbath practice as life and work ethic liberation. The Hebrews had been 24/7 slaves of Pharaoh and Egypt, oppressed in physical, psycho-emotional, family and worship brokenness without future. God freed his people into a new culture of liberation, with Sabbath observance of 6 work days a week with a 7<sup>th</sup> regenerative day – a no formal work, family centred day of rest and worship. Applying discipleship within culture or cultural practices that are enslaving/oppressive means using gospel practice to transform culture practices into practices of a culture of God's liberation.

Rabbinic Judaism deteriorated Sabbath practice from a liberating regenerative day (for the poor in particular), into a judgmental legalistic oppression lorded over by the powerful. Instead of the freedom of a 'day off' from contract labour, enslaved or free, the new Sabbath culture downplayed this, robbing the poor of the regenerative opportunity of free family and worship time by imposing legalisms on what is or isn't 'work'. Despite violating no work contract or engaging in formal work, the disciples of Jesus had 'crossed' the legalistic cultural line, which was now even resisting the regenerative mission of the messiah. This is even clearer in the Mark 3.1-6 healing of a disabled man on the Sabbath. So at a later apostolic time, Paul could write: *“Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.”* Col 2:16.

Christian acceptance of Sunday as a day of worship is the acceptance of resurrection reality. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, the Holy was poured out on the first day of the week. These and resurrection gospel mission are greater than a strict 'Saturday Sabbath culture'. Christians did retain true Sabbath culture of labour, family and worship freedom for Sunday, for Jesus was not anti-Sabbath, but pro-resurrection culture. Yet 'Culture' is often appropriated by the powerful for their own agenda, as with Rabbinic culture of Sabbath which twisted away the original impetus of liberation for self-elevation. Jesus encountered the full power of the negative Sabbath culture of Sadducean and Pharisaic rabbis; their cultural power eventually succeeding in having Jesus crucified.

Modern secularism has the different power of consumer culture: secular consumer choice has largely abandoned Sabbath/Sunday 'regenerative culture' for legislated labour hours for employees by human rights. Soviet, Fascist/Nazi, Maoist scientific secular empires were no improvement, rather the opposite, and the current global pyramid of scientific corporate secularism with its shift to temporary labour contract culture is only about profit maximisation among the survival of the fittest, not 'regenerative' balance for employees. It is elite freedom rather than an 'exodus' opportunity for common humanity.

- 3.1-6 Jesus' healing of a disabled man on the Sabbath as further development of Jesus' authority over the Sabbath is remembered in Peter's preaching and faithfully captured by Mark.
- 3.1-2 Jesus' ministry in a synagogue encounters both a man with a disabled lower arm and hand, and the presence of negative rabbinic power over Sabbath culture.
- 3.3-5 Jesus' management of ministry is superb. Aware of pastoral need, he ministers to the individual; aware of the judgmental power of rabbinic culture over the Sabbath, his healing of the disabled man is public and dramatic, demanding a choice – if the healing is of God and on a Sabbath, then negative legalistic Sabbath culture must be transformed. The choice applies for gospel mission across time - healing of disability of this kind is not really available even today; when done then, it showed unique messianic activity. Jesus, those he spoke to, and the individual he healed, knew this. When Jesus said “Stretch out your hand”, he upheld pastoral gospel mission for individual healing which must remain part of healing practice (partnership with modern medical science is included as it seeks individual restoration), and he upheld healing over negative culture which perpetuates the individual's bondage if healing is withheld. The dominion of the Son of Man had come, for the disabled man was healed.
- 3.6 Power hierarchies most often oppose transformation, even if the challenge comes by such an acultural, apolitical upliftment.
- 3.7–12 The Son's Dominion Welcomed by Sinners
- 3.7-8 Peter's preached remembrance is that large crowds came to Jesus who received them without nationality distinction, for their areas of origin are listed as Hebrew and different Gentile backgrounds. Verses 10-11 note that Jesus' celebrity arose from a twofold healing pattern, physical healing and casting out of the demonic or psychological healing.
- 3.9-12 Jesus' celebrity due to his healing ministry is so great that he applies and has his disciples implement crowd control measures – as Capernaum fishermen the disciples have access to boats, which Jesus uses to put a natural water and height distance between himself and the large crowds and so allow an easier teaching ministry to be conducted as well.
- 3.11-12 Peter remembers that the crowds came for the healings, no matter Jesus' identity, but that the spiritual dimension 'psychological' claimed Jesus as the Son of God, upon which he silenced the spirits according to his 'messianic secret' purposes. Individuals were to discern this themselves.

**Special Focus: Inclusive Repentance**

Jesus' call to repentance is inclusive over culture or caste, economic strata, gender, health isolation (Hebrews had strict anti-contagion management), peer or political correctness. God's grace is given in Jesus, and is open to all to come in repentance.

Jesus' said: “*First let the children eat all they want*” (Mk7.27) with meaning as in “*I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel*” (Mt 15.24), when he was ministering outside Hebrew territory to Gentiles (see Mk 3.7/5.1f, 20/7.24-30/7.31-37/8.1-

9/8.27-9.1 with Jn 4.1-42/12.20-33), Jesus had a Jewish priority, since ...*salvation is from the Jews* (Jn 4:22). But the gospel of the messiah, the Son of Man, was never exclusive to Jews (by implication to any homogeneous grouping), for the three sayings originate from Jesus' deliberate and planned Samaritan/Gentile ministry. Much of Jesus' self-identity as the Son of Man comes from Isaiah's suffering servant passages, which are also rich in Gentile inclusion - Is 42.1-4 (with verses 1,4,6,10-12), Is 49.1-6 (with verses 1,6, 22), Is 50.4-11a), Is 52.13-53.12 (with verses 52.13). From the Genesis 10 "Table of Nations", through the prophetic picture of God also declaring himself the God of all peoples (Is 2.1-4=Mic 4.1-4 / Is 25.6-9/ Is 60 1-22/ Jer 3.17/ Zech 8.20-23 and Psalms continuing this (Ps 22.27-28/45.17/67.2,4/ 72.11,17/86.9/117.1), it is not surprising that the Son of Man has inclusive purpose: "The nations are not mere decorations incidental to the real drama between God and Man; rather, the nations – that is mankind as a whole – are part of the drama itself. God's work and activity are directed at the whole of humanity." (Verkuyl J. 1978. Contemporary Missiology. Eerdmans. P91.) Zionist-Apartheid discipleship is not of Jesus: the gospel is not for a homogenous group to the exclusion of others, and such discipleship is to be repented of.

The so-called 'inclusiveness' of universal welfare altruism, or spirituality that is the claim of either secular common humanity or 'all rivers lead to the sea' Hinduism, was also never part of the preaching and ministry of Jesus or his apostles. There is never a sense that behind all religions we all worship the same God by different name or way, rather a sense that that is foolish. It is God's distinction of the Hebrews from Abraham, and uttermost in Jesus, that salvation is from the Jews, and "*through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed.*" (Gen 12.3/18.18/22.18)

**Discussion:** - *Why did Jesus take God's saving purpose for individuals beyond only the Hebrews?*  
- *What is your opinion of Jesus' open non-discriminatory ministry and life?*  
- *Why do you think God wants us to focus beyond just our own culture or nationality in the way we and our churches continue to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ?*

### 3. MARK 3.13 – 4.34 THE ESCHATOLOGICAL MISSION OF REPENTANCE

#### 3.13–35 Kingdom Community – Community of Holy Spirit Mission

Jesus sets apart twelve of his disciples to be apostles, establishing his identity not just as an isolated prophetic figure of Hebrew past, but as the initiator of a lifestyle movement of inclusive repentance meant to spread and be passed on generation upon generation among all peoples for God.

#### 3.13–19 Community Leadership - the Apostolic Preachers

Peter's recollection of Jesus selecting his apostles is uncontroversial.

3.13-15 Away from the crowds, (Luke details an all night prayer discipline by Jesus preceding the selection), Jesus calls twelve from among the wider group of disciples following him, twelve like the original Hebrew twelve tribes thus significant of the new Israel community they would lead. Their first phase work is to go out and preach, with authority for healing including the casting out of demons befitting the new spiritual kingdom come. It may well be pointed out that obedience in initial mission process (preaching repentance and healing ministry) of being personally disciplined by Jesus was their training, not confessional or sacramental adherence.

3.11-16 The disciples appointed are listed from experience of their team work –  
- the inner three, Simon, James and John; Jesus also adds new qualifying names for them, Simon becomes Peter (Greek form of Aramaic Cephas, the rock), and Zebedee's sons, James and John, become the sons of thunder, (perhaps reflecting their initial characters as in Luke 9.54). The three were often used as special witnesses. Their personal past was also close, providing a good team platform.  
- the wider nine, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddeaus (user nickname of Judas the son of James of Matt 10.3/John 14.22 so not to confuse him with Iscariot), Simon the Zealot (correct rendering of Cananaean), and Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus.

#### **SPECIAL FOCUS: Aramaisms in Mark's Gospel**

3.17 βοανεργες *Boanerges* 'sons of thunder' is Mark's first use of an Aramaism, with translation for his gentile audience. He uses Aramaic vocabulary/Aramaisms in 3:17/5.41/7:11,34/14.12/15.22,34,42 as well as explaining Jewish customs 7.3f/15.42. These show the authenticity of Mark's gospel as originated/authored by an original Hebrew/Aramaic user now busy in a Greco-Roman Gentile Church in need of the translations.

#### 3.20–35 Spirit of the Kingdom – Community of the Holy Spirit

3.20-22,30 - Three challenges to Jesus' authority to form the messianic gospel community arose - priority of his familial community come from Nazareth (dealt with in vs 23-29), and priority of spiritual tradition such as represented by the teachers of the law come from Jerusalem (Sadducees) and so of spiritual dimension origin, (both dealt with in vs 23-30). In each case Jesus faces peer pressure claim that he is 'out of his mind' or 'possessed by evil', his ministry invalid. Jesus asserts his eschatological messianic and gospel priority in each case – he drives gospel and kingdom dominion.

3.23-30 Holy Spirit Inspired – Spiritual Origin of Jesus' ministry:

By technique of 'scepticism answers scepticism' and original parable, Jesus rebuts the claim of the teachers of the law that his ministry arises from '*possession by evil, by Beelzebub*', also applied as synonym for Satan. Their 'superior' scepticism earns a sceptical response – if Jesus' ministry is evil, it is casting itself out which is absurd. The parable explains what is really happening: "Jesus' exorcisms prove that the strong man (Satan) is bound. The ultimate defeat of Satan and his kingdom is clearly forecast; even now his house is being plundered." (Pherigo, LP. 1982. Gospel according to Mark. Interpreter's One Volume Commentary. p652). Jesus' ministry is binding evil and Satan.

αμην λεγω υμιν *amen lego humin truly I say to you* is used for the first time by Mark as a saying in the gospels unique 75 times to Jesus and giving Jesus' awareness it is equal to the 'Thus says the Lord' sayings of the prophets. Jesus then applies the depth teaching of the parable: it is by the Holy Spirit that disciples recognise Jesus and are the community of the Spirit; conversely, unbelief in Jesus expressing that he ministers by evil and thus is blasphemy against the person of the Holy Spirit whose job is to evoke such belief, is the only unforgiveable sin. He is the eschatological presence for belief and eternal life or for being eternally unforgiven.

**Special Focus: The Holy Spirit in Mark's Gospel**

Jesus' high theology of the Spirit is faithfully retained in Peter's preaching and Mark's record. An impersonal 'spirit' of God - common alike to prior Hebrew thought in which the spirit was merely the immanent energy of God (even the holy spirit of Ps 51.11 and Is 63.10,11 is only given personhood by Christian theology), to Hindu thought on the impersonal universal 'atman' 'soul?', to Qur'anic thought, and to the modern Spinoza-like pantheism of Einstein and Hawking or Vedanta pantheism of Schroedinger for whom 'godness' is discernible in the energy order of natural law immanent in all things and beings – an impersonal spirit cannot be blasphemed against. In a way even more than just holiness attributed to personal God who is spirit, Jesus knows the Holy Spirit with personhood who can not just be grieved as is given poetically in Is 63.10, but can also be blasphemed against and who has part in the discernment of eternal judgment of each individual by the ministry of Jesus which the Spirit originated. The same pneumatology is also present in Mark 1.8, 12.36 and 13.11, and is alike with the trinitarian pneumatology which characterises the New Testament alone, in particular the pneumatology of the Lucan, Johannine and Pauline gospels and letters.

**Discussion:** How has our church practice accommodated the world's secular trends about godness so much that churches have lost the dynamic of the person of the Holy Spirit?

3.31–35 Community Family – Relatives in the Kingdom Community The arrival of Jesus' biological family, his mother Mary and his brothers, was for their application of familial peer superiority over his public activity of ministry in order to remove him or persuade him out of his growing conflict with the Sadducee and Pharisee power leadership of the Jews, in particular the



Jerusalem elite there simultaneously, and so to alleviate what looked to be a growing family crisis. This account, taken with Mk 10.29-31, does not set aside family values, but balances them under the eschatological priority that Jesus' gospel presence presents. The special focus below details some of the insights of Mark's gospel on family values.

### **Special Focus: Jesus' Family Values**

The apostolic kerygma source of Mark's gospel repudiates familial peer priority as superior to that of the eschatological need for gospel repentance (see 3.31-35), while at the same time it upholds Jesus' family values very clearly.

Celibacy for the sake of the kingdom and heterosexual monogamous faithful union in marriage alone were part of Jesus' preaching as love expressed with or in abstinence from sexuality practice (see study on Mark 10.2-12,18 /12.18-27). Jesus' sexuality teaching has little in common with the superficial over-the-top romantic, permissive encounter which characterises modern secular sexual interrelation.

Priority of passing on the gospel to the next generation is given inclusive place by Jesus for children to find faith and healing in his ministry of the kingdom (see study on Mark 9.33-37 with 42 / 10.13-16 / 5.21-24 with 35-43/7.24-30/9.17-28). Next generation exclusion is addressed by the millstone judgment parable.

***Discussion: - How has our church practice accommodated the world's secular trends so much that missionary life priority above family duty is considered fanatic? How can gospel mission correctly still come first?***

***- How has our church practice accommodated the world's secular trends of dysfunctional family or 'family-lessness' by individual right, so much so that Jesus' family values are considered inferior to secular 'freedoms'?***

***- Is our Biblical family team best for individual upbringing success, or should we be planning 'political commissar'-secular rights 'bondings' as more successful for nurturing and mentoring individual success?***

### **4.1-33 Kingdom Teaching - Parables of the Kingdom Come**

The parable teaching style that Jesus is most famous for was used because of its user friendliness among common people and because it was fit for a lifestyle movement under way for spreading on to the next generations, rather than for confessional indoctrination set in time. It was for a young movement among the young looking for future opportunity in hope, which Jesus gives more than any other. Parables are probably the most original of Jesus' teaching preserved in the gospels, with form of the *Heb. Masal Gk. Παραβολη* 'wise story' of Jesus' Hebrew background. A kingdom teaching in parable has one main message about the kingdom, but often with allegorical use as well (this person/object represents this interacting with another person/object representing that; the interaction brings out a God or gospel message). Detail of Jesus giving teaching, yet being so crowded he got into a boat at the shore of Galilee and then taught the crowds, is so consistent and vital as to be historical.

- 4.3–20      Parable of the Sower – God sows and multiplies the Word  
4.3–9      Jesus tells the parable of the Sower which lends itself easily to allegorical interpretation (God sows the 'word' seed, but can also have many agents who sow; What kind of person or lifestyle is which soil, what is it's effect on the gospel word sown, so what should a disciple be like?; Across humanity, multitudes welcome the 'word' which grows. Disciples are challenged by which soil they think they are, thus what to do about their character and faith). By *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear”*, Jesus' pointer phrase for kingdom destiny is applied - vs 4.8b is the one main point – God's Word sown fruitfully produces a multiplied crop .
- 4.10–12    Jesus taught the crowds in parable teaching form for their own 'soil' application. Peter remembered/Mark recorded faithfully that the disciples asked Jesus the depth meaning.  
μυστηριον *musterion* – the 'mystery/secret' of the kingdom is the gospel expression for something previously veiled, now revealed in Christ – and in the gospel passed on for all disciples anywhere. That secret is that the kingdom has come in the person and work of Jesus Christ, is not immediately obvious to any, for in Jesus the suffering Son of Man, the kingdom come is revealed by the Word sown and received in faith. “The secret of the kingdom of God is the secret of the person of Jesus Christ. (Cranfield, CEB. p153)
- 4.12      Peter remembered/Mark recorded, that Jesus quoted Isaiah 6.9,10, indicating that the gospel is a hidden mystery within/by God's purpose.
- 4.13–20    Peter remembered/Mark recorded, that Jesus gave his creative and original interpretation to the disciples. Secular and liberal scholars make much of 'rules' of parable telling/formation, but these are more their own 'censoring attempts'; free creativity on Jesus' part is far more persuasive as the origin of the parables.  
The farmer, God or his gospel agents, sow God's Word. Different people can lose the Word by Satan's deception, by troubles or persecution, or by the world's choking – this is life. Where the gospel Word has fruitful soil of faith, God multiplies his Word abundantly (see also John 10.10).
- 4.21–25    Parable of Lamp Light – Shine out God's Gospel Light  
4.21–22    Peter preached, Mark recorded, that Jesus' parable of the lamp being put on a stand and not under a bowl or under the bed, applied again to the gospel mystery. The light has come for its purpose to give the gospel light; so Jesus' life, death and resurrection, though 'veiled' to be received by faith, are not to be concealed but in open preaching to have their purpose fulfilled by giving their light.
- 4.23      *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear”* - Jesus' pointer phrase for kingdom destiny is used again.
- 4.24–25    Jesus' further application challenges disciples to faith-building as body builders do muscle building - the more they exercise preaching/sharing the light, the greater their faith becomes, passivity withers faith.
- 4.26–29    Parable of Grain Growth – God's Harvest is Sure  
4.26–30    This parable is unique to Peter's preaching, Mark's record, and not in Matthew or Luke. It's main point is that the kingdom is “a divine act rather than a human accomplishment. It calls on man to be patient with the delay of the kingdom in coming. (Pherigo, LP. Gospel according to Mark in Interpreter's One Volume Commentary

p 653). "It is as certain that God's kingdom will come as that sowing will be followed by harvest." Lohse, E. p72)

4.30–32 Parable of Mustard Seed Growth

4.30–32 Here Jesus asks to prompt response on what the kingdom is like. It has both small beginning in both veiled revelation in the suffering Son of Man and size by the power of one at the cross alone. Yet the kingdom is spiritually and in human participation the full dominion of God proleptically present, that is fully present with eschatological power of accomplishment. The kingdom is as fully present in the seed as in the fully grown plant.

4.33–34 The Kingdom unlike other kingdoms: Jesus' 'seed illustrating the kingdom' parables taught so successfully that a human mortal life is also a seed of spirituality and eternity into which the cross and resurrection are meant to give growth or it perishes. As this seed is successfully sown in more and more humans, so more and more of the kingdom plant flourishes. It is, then, not a kingdom of political economy, but of the spirit and eternity. What makes the teaching 'veiled' is the human tendency to focus only on immediate bodily existential need. God's kingdom is always more.

***Discussion: - That Jesus taught in parables is probably the most authentic of all ministry activities known of Jesus. Peter recalled/Mark recorded that many of the parables taught about the Kingdom of God.***

- ***What is taught about the nature of God in the parables of Mark 4?***
- ***What is taught about the nature of the Word/seed planted inclusively across all of the nations of humanity?***
- ***What is taught about the human reception of the Word/seed of God?***
- ***What is taught about the outcome of the harvest of God's Word/seed?***

#### 4. MARK 4.35 – 6.6 THE DOMINION OF JESUS, THE RESURRECTOR

After grouping Peter's preaching of the incidents of teaching in parables to reveal Jesus the teacher of the Kingdom, Mark has grouped some of Peter's preaching of 'mighty works' incidents showing further aspects of the dominion of Jesus. Mark's introductory time and date references like 'That evening', 'Jesus left there', 'crossed to the other side' don't require a rushed sequence, but are more generalised continuity phrases connecting preached incidents in the rough sequence received from Peter.

##### 4.35–5.43 The Son's Dominion in Mighty Works

##### 4.35–41 The Son's Dominion over Nature

4.35–41 Jesus calms the Storm: Arising out of Jesus' tiredness at ministry pressure in West Lake Galilee, and desire to keep spreading the gospel to more people, Jesus' and the disciples set off across the Lake to another area. Modern secular tendency is to reduce the incident to a parable teaching that faith in Jesus calms the storms of life: this was not the preaching of Peter. The incident took place; the details of Jesus taken as he was, the other boats, Lake Galilee notorious for sudden violent storms, Jesus asleep on a cushion, are vivid recollection preached, and recorded by Mark who is usually scant of detail.

The disciples panic, Jesus is awoken at their fear of drowning, and in his dominion as the Son over nature, calms the storm so his mission goes on. He is not impressed by the disciples' lack of faith in him; Mark records Peter's preaching of the long-spread inability of the disciples to come to realise that Jesus was more than just another rabbi.

##### 5.1–20 The Son's Dominion over Natural and Spiritual Dimension

5.1 Gergesenes – Of the three East Galilee sites (Gadara, Gerasa, Gergesa) Gergesa alone is on the lake with a steep bank sloping into the lake; the others are copy changes to more well known villages, with Gergesa being in the area of more well known Gadara – in the gentile Decapolis region.

5.2-5 Mark's detail suggests he recorded eye witness preaching by Peter. Jesus lands, is met by an individual manifesting psychological abnormality, whom he heals. Whether the man had schizophrenia written up by pre-scientifics as demon possession is secular psychology speculation, since it does not allow demonic possession as an illness. The incurable severity of his condition for that time is emphasised.

5.6-10 'Healer-patient' process ensues. Jesus makes spiritual discernment within diagnosis, beginning with the strict exorcist command to the spirit to come out. At this, the demonic spirit in him is recorded as having identified Jesus in his Sonship, (thus healing practice among humans, and Jesus' spiritual identity in the spiritual dimension, are revealed). Jesus adds in to 'command' exorcist practice only a discernment of the spiritual origin of the abnormality (thus disallowing 'whip up emotion' performance, or beating or 'other' abusive therapy often claimed by exorcists ancient or modern). The spirit in the man pluralises as 'Legion' (again, that this indicates a prior abnormality-inducing trauma at the hands of some Roman Legion human rights abuse is speculative, though interesting. Jesus discerns cause only

to advance healing, not for case study or psychological theory)

**SPECIAL FOCUS: 'Latinisms' in Mark's Gospel.** Latinisms show deliberate intent by Peter and Mark to reach an original Latin speaking audience, and supports historical evidence that Peter and Mark were ministering in Rome. Verses 5:9/6.27/12:15,42/15:16,39 have Latin use, which must be explained.

- 5:9 This first Latinism, this use of the Latin 'legion' by Peter and Mark supports the authorship of the gospel in Rome. Roman legions, normally 4000-6000 strong were the familiar hands-on coercion of the oppressor, but a useful metaphor of the power of the many in abuse of/domination over the individual here applied by the spirits to challenge Jesus and claim 'right' over the patient. The interplay of 'he' (patient relating to Jesus and 'they' (spirits relating to Jesus) suggests a patient-conscious acceptance of both condition and some responsibility therein (demonic possession is regarded as with an element of 'by choice' to be possessed, if adult, and an element of 'by choice' to be healed which exorcism supports for deliverance to occur and remain).
- 5.11-16 Healing, with 'vivid detail' end: Jesus retains direction of the patient-spirit-Jesus interaction – the healing. The patient is healed into his 'right mind' and cleans himself up.  
The detail of the patient's 'deliverance choice' being aided by Jesus' not 'torturing/sending them out of the area' but allowing 'unclean' pigs to host them, and that Jesus' agrees despite the accompanying harm to animals, has offended or puzzled many. Jesus discerned that healing of the man was of greater value than harm to a large herd of pigs, and acceptable, even if hard to understand that evil spirits had appropriate unclean end. The Decapolis Gentile neighbours of the patient received the news in superstitious fear of Jesus' 'mighty works' and pleaded that he leave their area. The healed patient wanted to join Jesus, but was instead prevailed upon to share his amazing story with Jesus with his neighbours.
- 5.25–34 The Son's Dominion over Bodily Health (2)
- 5.21 Mark's link description notes continued crowd pressure on Jesus. Two incidents then follow, the woman's healing separating the continuity of the girl's healing and resurrection with eye witness recall credibility.
- 5.22-24 See introductory part to the girl's healing below, linked with the healing,
- 5.25-34 Healing of the Woman with Uterine Haemorrhage Abnormality: Her 'furtive' approach to Jesus is understandable given the personal nature of the condition and the Lev 15.25-30 'unclean' condition law. Again the contrast of Jesus' healing with the so inferior practice of his contemporary healers is made. More significant, though crowd pressure surrounds him, Jesus' awareness of one-on-one patient relationship is recalled as acute for the positive benefit of his 'patients'.
- 5.30 *δυναμις* *dunamis* *power/mighty work* – Recalling Peter's preaching, this is Mark's first use of the word used to describe Jesus' power and miracles. **(See Comment – “Jesus' Mighty Healing Works/Miracles” below.)**
- 5.31-34 This mighty work comes as the faith of the woman in Jesus (imperfect and near magical) has her touch his clothes. By spiritual discernment either

instantly or growing quickly, Jesus knew, and knew that power linked to faith had achieved something which he proceeded to find out.

That the disciples' scorn is remembered indicates vivid recall accuracy.

Jesus searches insistently for a one-on-one meeting with this faithful woman, for faith is not just a private matter but also a faithful witness. Jesus also manages her return to both health and public 'clean' status, for God extends his shalom in both the miracle and new social acceptance.

## 5.22-24,35–43      The Son's Dominion over Life and Death

5.22-24      Healing and Resurrection of Jairus' Daughter (1): Back in Jewish West Galilee, crowds again flock to Jesus. Again Jesus' inclusive ministry opens up for a synagogue ruler, of a social group usually opposing him. The miracle of 5.25-34 intervenes; by the time Jesus gives new hope to the haemorrhaging woman, death of his daughter ends Jairus' hope.

5.35-43      Healing and Resurrection of Jairus' Daughter (2): First Jesus persuades Jairus the devastated parent out of fear into hope again, then the Saviour opens the future for parent and child. as he raises the girl from death.

5.35-40      Good comment: "Fear is the foe of faith. When one turns to God, he gives hope where humans are utterly hopeless and helpless." (Cole VB. In Africa Bible Commentary. p1180). Whatever emotions Jairus had when faced with news of his daughter's death, Jesus persuaded him into faith for something else, and Jairus chose to believe Jesus – not once, when his messengers gave the news of death; not just twice when at his house he met mourners family and professional and heard their scorn for Jesus; perhaps not even three times for he had to look his wife in the eyes, but four times when he saw the lifeless body of his daughter – he chose to believe Jesus. *Don't be afraid; just keep on believing...* is the sense Jesus impressed on him, and wants to impress on us when we meet life's troubles, even death. Jesus took only Jairus and his people, and Peter, James and John (inner three disciples) with him. Mark records Peter's vivid eyewitness preaching recall.

5.40b-43      Probably the gentlest incident of Jesus' ministry – Jesus keeps Jairus and his wife, and Peter, James and John with him, escorting all other attendants or mourners out the house - this is tender, this is personal to a minor, this is protected from sensationalism.

5.41      *ταλιθα κουμ Talitha Koum Little girl/lamb, I say to you, get up!* Mark records another Aramaism of Peter's preaching recall, translating it for Gentile readers of Greek usage – usage repeated only at 7.34 for a healing, but since Mark uses translated Aramaic six times more without miracles, Mark has no genre use of miracle stories, but records eyewitness recall.

5.42      Jesus raised the little girl from the dead.

5.43      Jesus' pastoral ministry is again acute - He orders protection of the child from sensationalism, and for food to be given her; physical, psychological and emotional would need support. Cole VB again: "...Jesus demonstrated his authority over all the conditions of life that tend to shatter human security. He demonstrated that he is Lord indeed! (Cole VB. Africa Bible Commentary. p1181)

### **SPECIAL FOCUS – JESUS' MIGHTY HEALING WORKS/MIRACLES**

The Hebrews already had unique hygiene, health, sexuality and quarantine laws from Moses which kept them apart from the nations in past eras of superstitious healing and therapy. Exodus 15.26 records that God made it clear to his people: *“If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”* From this base, the Hebrew healers and therapists/exorcists put together their own treatments, superstitious or herbal.

Yet the superior success of Jesus' ministry of healing and therapy amazed his own people. In Mk 5.30/6.2,5/6.14/9.1/9.39/12.24, Mark uses the term *δυναμεις* *mighty works* to describe Jesus' miracles, in particular the widely seen healing and therapy/exorcism ministry. Modern science's 'doctor-patient privacy' was not used by Jesus, he was first a repentant life preacher of which one consequence was healing encounters among crowds. Yet Jesus' pattern of ministry indicates a one-on-one dealing with each sufferer in any mighty work encounter that he inspired. The apostles' own ministries in Jesus' name also astonished the peoples among whom they took the gospel. In eras of superstitious healing or even modern therapy, properly scripture-diligent and holiness-disciplined ministries of healing by faith in Jesus' name keep on making impact.

Those of superstitious era healing have also been amazed at the success of modern medical practice. Modern empirical medical research, diagnosis and treatment/operation correctly commands our respect, because of it's validated superior success over superstitious and herbal treatments. Christians must work with modern medical practice, and work through it's excesses - of morality and cost elitism in particular (Jesus' ministry was grace driven, committed to those unable to be worthy, largely for the poor). Yet modern medicine's 'Lazarus will die again' outcome also needs pastoring, of proper scripture-diligent and holiness-disciplined type, to keep on linking bodily healing with eternal salvation. Gospel or empirical 'mighty work' ultimately comes to nothing without this.

#### **6.1–6 The Son's Dominion by Faith**

- 6.1 When God's prophets led a new movement or era, it's human agent most often encountered 'familiarity bred contempt' from nuclear family, relatives and hometown. Jesus and his disciples encountered the same hometown scepticism or jealousy in Nazareth. Jesus' dominion is a faith dominion. Hometown, homogenous or peer group, or family, 'spiritual connection' or popularity cannot be equated with faith integrity. Dominion of faith stands on its own at some point, which meets the Gamaliel criteria (Acts 5.38-39).

***Discussion: - Is Jesus' dominion over nature, for psychological and bodily health, over life and death and by faith over the individual's human spirit, and regarded as genuine by believers, a threat to modern medicine?***

***- How should believers use modern 'mighty works' medical success like Immunisation against polio/small pox/ etc., diagnostic and operating procedures, and psychiatric/psychology therapy?***

***- The dominion of Jesus Christ - over nature, for psychological and bodily health, over life and death and by faith over the individual's human spirit, is regarded by secular religiosity as mythical 'puffing up' for the superstitious by the early church. What do you think?***



## 5. MARK 6.7 – 8.26 THE MISSION OF REPENTANCE EXTENDED

Jesus' call to repentance and missionary life remained the gospel foundation of Peter's preaching and Mark's record, like the rest of the apostolic New Testament. It began among the Jews, but was never experienced as only for them (as seen in *Special Focus – Inclusive Repentance* p 12f). Also from Mark 3.13-15 (p14), Jesus and the apostles never instituted a confessional doctrine or sacramental adherence, but initiated a lifestyle movement of inclusive repentance for all people. It alone of all Jewish groupings reached and multiplied among Gentiles to fulfil the expectation of the messiah being the 'light to the nations', so much so that it may well be said "If this was to be from other Jews, we're still waiting." The sending out of the disciples was the second step initiating this after their call to follow Jesus.

### 6.7-29 Gospel Repentance Preached and Ministered:

6.7,12-13 Jesus' call on the lives of the disciples was no longer just passive following. Now they were sent out under the authority and dominion of Jesus into proactively extending Jesus' mission - to preach the gospel of repentance, and minister mighty works (healing the sick under anointing with oil, and casting out demons). Jesus' priority for individual repentance and healing became mission method priority of the apostles (Acts 6.2)

6.8-11 Messianic/Apostolic Poverty is the well-used term for the missionary simplicity of the lifestyle that Jesus and the apostles entered into. Go out - two by two: in supportive and supported personal team for resoluteness ; - with a staff for self-defense, not holier-than-thou doormats for robbers (as with Luke 22.35-38, where rugged self-defense against robbers would be expected of a travelling man, but Mark 14.48 and parallels rules out organised armed struggle). Matthew/Luke parallels omit the staff, but a self-defense against robbers itinerant is more original. - in apostolic poverty of no bread, travel bag, or money, with sandals but no extra tunic (next to the skin, under the coat) is practice of solidarity even with the poorest and most marginalised, amongst whom early Christians had such success till Constantine that one economist dimly called the dominion of Jesus Christ the Son of Man 'the last great slave ideology' (Fukuyama, F. The End of History and the Last Man. p198) - hospitality honouring: if hospitality lodging is taken, don't dishonour the offering by moving on to more luxurious lodging; if no welcome is extended, 'shaking of the dust' declares the place heathen/judged for responsibility of gospel opportunity has been given to its inhabitants.

### **SPECIAL FOCUS – MISSION AND APOSTOLIC POVERTY**

The Apostolic Poverty method of mission and evangelism has consistently given Christian mission its greatest success - through Roman and Mediterranean, Celtic, Dark and Middle Ages eras in Europe, the Orthodox missions through Slavic Europe, and the colonial and global eras with the great Catholic, Protestant and Pentecostal missions of North and South America, Africa, and Asia (India, China included). Growth of local churches after colonial withdrawal, most facing indigenous local power opposition, in particular in Africa and Asia, is testimony to ongoing 'apostolic poverty' mission success. Some positives and negatives:

- In the modern era, liberal Protestant/secular religious relativity chooses to link faith as myth motivation to secular scientific and economic power, driven by evolutionary 'competitiveness' (survival of the fittest) for success. The negative for the poor and the gospel is that the poor are never more than just the 'extinction fodder of evolution', Christianised myth just cold comfort in donor 'hand out' mission. The decline in Liberal Western Protestant/secular religiosity in favour of a genuine gospel for the poor that is practiced more by Catholicism or Anabaptist/Pentecostal Christians grows 'apostolic poverty' success.
- celebrity mission superficiality: 'Americanisation' of mission in mass spectacular evangelism, or 'doing ecumenical super-Councils' among liberal Protestants, gives rise to statistical success of 'converted' or 'membership' claims. However, such top-down 'statistical' mission most often loses connection or context with local disciples, who are just cash 'plucks' in the pyramid. The 'apostolic poverty' ministry is locally connected not pyramid serving.
- vulnerability to 'superior' absolutist persecution: Across history Christian mission has often meant local disciples have been labelled 'inferior': the 'rice Christians', 'neurotic pawns of capitalism/superstition' under past Marxist USSR-China secularism and now increasingly under modern scientific secularism, 'foreign devils/spies' under nationalist type governance, 'infidel unbelievers' under Shariah Law (the most persistent persecution in history against Christian disciples). Local disciples are easy persecution for 'pyramid persecutor' states, and apostolic poverty mission often becomes martyristic, as in apostolic days, awaiting the fall of the cycle of the beast empire.

***Discussion:*** - ***The advance of gospel salvation by Jesus' crucifixion-resurrection experience and in Christian discipleship takes place while the rise and fall of beast empires and their persecution continues.***

- ***How do you feel about apostolic poverty mission?***
- ***What other mission-evangelism strategies offer effective gospel and discipleship mission?***
- ***In 'pyramid persecution' situations, increasing under global secularism, would you be ready for martyristic witness? How can 'churches of abundance' assist churches of apostolic poverty when 'pyramid persecutors' either steal, kill and destroy, or 'seduce'?***

6.14-29 The First Persecution Victim – John the Baptist

6.14-16 Herod and Popular Opinion on Jesus: Emergence of another prophetic leader, with disciples and growing popularity after John the Baptist had been eliminated, disturbed Herod Antipas (tetrarch). Speculation is that Jesus is Elijah (Mal 4.5) or one of the prophets; at this stage of Jesus' ministry, it isn't yet in public opinion that he is the messiah. Herod's guilt at having John the Baptist eliminated is given expression as Herod regarding Jesus as John the Baptist resurrected, God's positive judgment on John and therefore negative judgment on Herod's action.

- 6.17-29 The Kingdom of God come near generates evil opposition, often directly or in underhanded fashion. Non-Biblical histories verify that John the Baptist was historical not myth, so too the circumstances of his opposition to Herod (Josephus *Antiquities* XVIII.v.1-4, which also confirms the twisted incestual practices of the Herods, male and female). John prophesied judgment on Herod Antipas for marrying the wife of his half brother Philip (not tetrarch, not just for 'divorce by design', but also because Herodias as daughter of Aristobulus, Antipas' brother, was his niece, so the marriage was incestual violation of Lev 20.21 degrees of consanguinity, like her first marriage. Herodias pursued evil against John, Herod was co-opted by his wife, John was arrested and imprisoned in fortress Machaerus bordering Nabatea. Mark describes the underhanded evil by which Herodias co-opts her own daughter Salome (not by Herod) to obtain elimination of John the Baptist.
- 6.27 σπεκουλατορα *speculatora executioner* – a Latinism for the legionary assigned to staff duty with commanders or governors, also with execution duty.

### 6.30-56 The Son's Dominion in Mighty Works (2)

Peter's recall/ Mark's record is clear - God is so closely at work in the Jesus who authorises and initiates the mission that the gospel of the mission is next shown as under the dominion of the Son and is the gospel of the Son, or it is no gospel.

### 6.30-44 The Son's Dominion over Nature Revealed Again – Feeding the 5000:

The account links to 2 Kings 4.42-44 by event similarity. Secular trend is to deal with such accounts as myth created by the pre-scientific church to bolster gospel power among the superstitious. However, "The miraculous element should not be explained away along rationalistic or naturalistic lines. It was not a great sharing experience, but the demonstration of Jesus as the sustainer of life." (Pherigo, LP. *Gospel according to Mark*, Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p655).

6.30-34 Again Jesus' gospel imperative was matched by necessary crowd management practice. The vividness of Peter's recall of people's demand for attention being so strong, that Jesus' team had no opportunity to eat, that people anticipated another landing not far off after Jesus' team boarded boats to get to self-necessity 'space', is eyewitness persuasive. The crowds are looking for Jesus, heedless of their personal need or of the personal needs of Jesus' team. Jesus knows it, and ministers again.

6.35-44 The message and lesson Jesus gives is enormous in terms of human existential anxiety – our loving God knows; his providence flows naturally, and in Jesus it flows miraculously for gospel purpose. Jesus urges the disciples to supply their natural solution into this occasion of mixed 'man shall not live by bread alone' need, they bring back far too inadequate loaves and fish. The event of physical dietary need and spiritual need of a gospel Saviour being met then flows out of Jesus naturally and miraculously. He reveals himself as the Lord in both, the loaves and fishes are multiplied enough to feed the crowd with some leftovers, and the gospel food is vividly shown as provided by an overflowing Saviour. In typical Peter fashion, the account of Jesus gives little explanation for what seems obvious, and moves on to another event. It is in Mark 8.14-21 with John 6.14-69 that the dual natural and spiritual meaning is explored.

- 6.45–56 The Son's Dominion over Nature Revealed Again – Walking on Water:
- 6.45-46 The need of the people having been met, for food and revealing of Jesus as the gospel Saviour, Peter's preaching/Mark's record keeps to the sequence of events rather than inserting explanation of what went before. Recalling Jesus' concern that the gospel news is kept spreading, Jesus instructs the disciples to move on to Bethsaida further around the Sea of Galilee, in opposite direction from where the crowds come. Jesus dismisses the crowds and goes apart to pray. The account of Jesus walking on water fits the sequence.
- 6.47-52 Peter's recall/Mark's record is of Jesus being at a mountain vantage point allowing him to watch, probably by fourth watch moonlight, the disciples' progress by boat across the lake. It is also that with deliberate intention Jesus crossed the lake 'walking on the water'. Mark's account alone assumes the disciples' doubt as to whether he intended to be seen by them or help them (Peter's recall/Mark's record is of general failure by the disciples to appreciate Jesus' plans or motivations). The later landing at Gennesaret opposite from the intended Bethsaida and back on the west bank among Capernaum linked crowds more likely shows how disoriented the disciples had become. For the account also assumes Jesus' willing and deliberate contact with them in their human need: he did go to them despite their fear of a 'ghost', speaking his identity to calm their fear, getting into the boat for involvement in their need, and again bringing calm of sea and mind for progress through a natural law and existential anxiety spiritual crisis. Peter's recall/Mark's record is again of disciples unable to 'process' the revealing of Jesus, the Son of God, that they had been part of, like at the miraculous feeding of the five thousand.
- 6.53-56 Peter's recall/Mark's record again is of events moving the disciples on with little chance of further 'processing' as the landing at Gennesaret once more involves Jesus' ministry and team with crowd attention and crowd control as his healing presence was desperately sought out. In his preaching Peter made clear both the event and the inadequacy of the disciples in dealing with this 'amazing' Jesus they were with who was more than just another miracle worker. It is a consistent inadequacy of the disciples throughout the gospel of Mark, reflecting Peter's recall from his own call as a disciple to his denial of Jesus before the crucifixion. A Christian's acceptance of the call to repentance builds twofold awareness of both Jesus' overflowing for our salvation and his deep grace and patience for the slowness of awareness to develop into faith.

**SPECIAL FOCUS – IS THERE A PLACE FOR MIRACLES IN SCIENCE?**

Dogmatic science has empirical absolutism that nature's laws explain all. However, within black hole event horizons (Big Bang is the supreme reversal), natural laws are unknowable since gravity, temperature and pressure approaching infinity at infinitely small volume means that no information not even light escapes for empirical validation. Miracles function across a **spiritual event horizon**, focussed in spiritual dynamism, of which Jesus is the supreme reality. Scientific and/or medical empirical testing can verify if a miracle (spiritual event horizon incident) occurred, not explain it.

## 7.1–37 Gospel Cleansing for All Sinners

### 7.1-23 Gospel Cleansing of the Human Spirit:

- 7.1-2 Jesus' ministry team is overworked facing the people pressure of those coming for healing ministry – and provides the contrast in Peter's preaching/Mark's record between this deliverance and pettiness from 'superior' religious types. The Pharisees as peer leaders of centralised religious authority bring both 'put down/make inferior' attitude, and legalistic pettiness typical of power, in religion in this case.
- 7.3-4 (*Note on Pharisee tradition: Hebrew custom explained to Greek readers*).
- 7.5-13 'Why don't your disciples wash their hands before eating?' In modern hygiene and parenting with piped water, children know this: in the water restricted lifestyle of the ancient middle east, in a non-structured out-of-home crowd pressure situation, applying it to eating with unwashed hands was hyper-critical legalism and a sense of snobbery from the Pharisees. Jesus' proper sense of spiritual openness shines through.
- 7.6-8 Jesus' first-part answer used Isaiah 29.13 to highlight that 'ritual tradition can be empty spirited godlessness and just human tradition'. Peter recalls him labelling as hypocrites the Pharisees who criticised.
- 7.9-13 Jesus' second-part answer then exposes false religious traditions. He notes the correctness of the Fifth Commandment (Ex 20.12/Deut 5.16 with Ex 21.17/Lev 20.9), but the '*korban*' disqualifier of the Fifth Commandment was rebuked as he upheld Biblical parent-child standards.
- 7:11 *κορβαν* *korban* '*given to God*' – another Aramaism is given by Mark, who supplies the meaning '*gift devoted to God*'. Jesus' sense of the spirit of the Law was impressive; the Law upholds parents, even when of children become adults, in his example of withheld support for old age parents. No matter how '*religious*' *korban* is made by the Oral Torah and how '*superior*' it's teachers, it is not of the spirit of true Torah, but one example of a regular human '*dodging*' of the spirit of Torah. Christians are to respect God's Word, not twist it by human ingenuity.
- 7.14-16 Jesus' third-part answer: Peter preached/Mark recorded that Jesus took his impressive distinction to the crowd. Outside dietary things don't make the human spirit unclean (even if unhygienic); motivation from within does. Jesus has now gone above Torah food law, not simplistically preferring moral over cultic law, but giving a higher spirit into the law as the One who fulfils the Law and the Prophets.
- 7.17-23 Jesus' fourth-part answer gave full explanation to the disciples, whom Peter again recalls as inadequate. The verse 18-19 spiritual logic is a variant of 'man shall not live by bread alone' (Deut 8.3/Mt 4.4/Lk 4.4). The verses 20-23 list, of general Hebrew spiritual understanding, gives examples of what arises from false ambition or motivation of the heart, are of sinful spirit, and causing sin which breaks our relationship with God. Here is the real crunch of Jesus' sense of spiritual openness. He knows ritualistic, religious dogma, with external observance emphases has a place. But the real spirit of faith is that gospel forgiveness restores holiness and reconciles sinners to God; it is Jesus who cleanses the heart and baptises in the Holy Spirit.

- 7.24-30 Gospel Cleansing of Jew and Gentile:  
 7.24-26 Whether Jesus left Hebrew area to escape Hebrew crowds, or went among Gentiles by mission (it is both/and), crowd pressure continues to follow Jesus even among Gentiles in Lebanon. Jesus' ministry of forgiveness transcended racism or xenophobia; forgiveness was for all. Here a Greek-speaking woman of *Syro-Phoenician (Lebanese, to be distinct from Carthaginian-Phoenician, Lybian)* background moves Jesus' spirit with her humble yet astute plea for God's grace in healing.
- 7.27-30 *...even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."* She isn't pushing in, the 'scraps' of grace will do. Deep faith; grace isn't quantity, but relationship of favour. Jesus did have a 'Jews first' priority, but also a mission to all, imitated by the apostles - unique among Hebrews. Jews keep apart from Gentiles, by culture convinced that Gentiles are unclean and beyond redemption, despite the Word of the prophets that salvation for all is from the Jews (see Special Focus – Inclusive Repentance p12). Jesus recognises the deep faith, not the 'apparent' reduction of the Jewish priority. The women's appeal even to scraps of grace receives the favour of the Son for healing her daughter.
- 7.31-37 Gospel Cleansing of the Sick and Marginalised:  
 7.31-32 Again, whether Jesus went from Gentile Lebanon to Gentile Decapolis by mission or crowd pressure, (it is both/and), crowd pressure continues to follow Jesus even among the Decapolis Greek settler Gentiles. Peter's preaching/Mark's record is that Gentiles bring to him a deaf mute, one who was double marginalised by both his disabled physical condition and the severe social isolation which resulted.
- 7.33-35 Jesus' healing technique/bedside manner is again exemplary. This is not about the spectacle or celebrity he may have; he takes the man aside one-on-one. His procedure is also tactile, touching the ears and tongue of a man who otherwise was unable to be communicated with. That Jesus' mighty works/*dunamis* is regarded as spiritually based is also explicitly indicated by his look heavenward and the deep breath – the Spirit is here.
- 7:34 εφφαθα *ephphatha* 'Be Opened' – another Aramaism with explanation is included by Mark, tracking the usage of Peter the eyewitness. Jesus directs nature that this man's disability be 'opened'.
- 7.35 The extent of the mighty work is astounding, even in our modern science era. Restoration of hearing normally requires speech therapy; in this case, a new balance in personal vocalisation and speech is immediate, but does not have to be assumed to be without subsequent learned development as the man further resumed normal function. It is a mighty work of physical restoration without having to be a language miracle too.

***Discussion:*** - ***How do you understand the mighty works of Jesus to have taken place? Is there still a place for belief in and prayer for mighty works of Jesus in our modern science and medicine era?***  
 - ***How do you understand cleansing of sinners to have taken place in Jesus? Is there still a place for belief in repentance from sin and into new life in Christ in the modern psychiatry/psychology era?***  
 - ***How do you understand repentance into the repentant life Peter preached?***

- 8.1–26 More Gospel Dominion in Nature, Human Interaction and Healing
- 8.1-10 The Son's Dominion over Nature Revealed Again – 4000 are Fed:  
Peter's preaching/Mark's record gives two groupings of mighty work and teaching linked to feeding large crowds – Mark 6.30-7.35 (Feeding 5000 to Healing the Deaf and Dumb), and Mark 8.1-26 (Feeding 4000 to Healing the Blind). Still in the Decapolis Gentile area, the crowd is mixed Jewish-Gentile, it's not about race or nationality, but God's opportunity. Similarities and differences to Mark 6.30-44 'Feeding 5000' are obvious. Jesus' Mk 6.34 compassion is for 'sheep without a shepherd' in spiritual hunger, this time he is moved by their physical hunger Mk 8.2-3.
- 8.4-5 The disciples' incapacity for response both times continues in Peter's preaching/Mark's record: "The failure of the disciples to respond to Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> proposal for feeding the multitudes is simply another instance of Mark's insistence that they never understood. He has already charged that "they did not understand about the loaves" (6:52), and their response to the 2<sup>nd</sup> situation simply illustrates this theme again. " (Pherigo, LP. Gospel according to Mark, Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p657).
- 8.6-9 Jesus again prompts the disciples for creative approach, without success, but applies creative option with the loaves and fish they have to distribute a mighty work of food to the crowds, 4000 men with more women and children are recorded as satisfied and with an overflow still left. Such is the abundance of God's grace.
- 8.10 This had been a 'quieter period' of ministry, Jesus had left Jewish area with crowd management intent to clear more time for him and the disciples. However, God's kingdom was opening to Jews and Gentiles, the Gentile areas gave hands-on ministry training to the disciples, with consequent teaching, as much as Jewish areas did. Jesus now crosses back to Jewish territory to Dalmanutha, a village on uncertain location, except that Matt 14.34 has it in the fertile Gennesaret plain).
- 8.11-21 More Peer Pressure Interaction Pressures the Son:
- 8.11-13 As Jesus ministers on in Dalmanutha, spiritual and political peer pressure reasserts a policing over him – Pharisees have noted his presence there, and initiate an interaction with Jesus to test him, requesting a sign from heaven, like so many who desire proof of God, or proof that God is upholding a leader or church. Jesus recognised scepticism from whatever source, his method in dealing with it was neither to 'provide proofs' nor really respond except by ministering and teaching the kingdom of God. Jesus and team then cross over to the other side of Lake Galilee again.
- 8.14-21 During the crossing, perhaps sensing the effect of the peer policing by the Pharisees on the disciples, Jesus reinforces his policy towards peer policing and power hierarchies - (Mark 3.6/8.15/12.13 all mention Herodians or Herod's party, a Jewish power faction grouped around the Herod royal family of the time of Jesus and the apostles, and who had also 'removed' John the Baptist). His questions about how much was left after the feeding of the thousands are the reply that power hierarchies and peer pressure won't stop God at work. But eyes and ears closed by power and peer pressure will fall short of seeing or hearing God's kingdom.

8.22-26 More of the Son's Dominion over Bodily Health:

Jesus lands the team in Bethsaida, Galilee coastal town under the the more Gentile dominated tetrarchy of Philip, half-brother to Herod Antipas (the lead Herodian) but of moderate more successful rule. This afforded Jesus relative freedom from Herodians and Jewish religious power hierarchy and peer pressure.

A blind man is brought to him and Jesus performs a mighty work curing his blindness progressively. Because this seems to be a 'weak' mighty work, Matthew and Luke leave this incident out of their gospels, which thus speaks for it's authenticity. But how is it that the Son with dominion over bodily health could only accomplish the mighty work in stages? Since stages of treatment of the ailment may well have been what was required, it is speculative to suggest Jesus' power somehow fell short, and had to be revisited to complete the work. Other than Peter preaching/Mark recording the progressive success of the mighty work, detail is insufficient.

Mark's record of Peter's preaching completes the first half of the gospel with the miracle of the blind man healed at Bethsaida. Just as the healing of the deaf and dumb man ended the Feed 5000 group of teachings, now the healing of the blind man of Bethsaida ends the Feed 4000 group of teachings. Jesus has just referred to the blindness and deafness of the disciples in Mark 8.18, so Mark's grouping of the teaching presents the need for the disciples' eyes and ears to be opened in order to come to repentant life. Jesus is the ear and eye opener spiritually and physically, and the second half of the gospel presents the teaching which disciples with eyes and ears open are capable of receiving.

***Discussion: - How do you understand Jesus' dealings with the elite power hierarchies and peer pressure policing of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Herodians?***

- How are we to 'beware of the yeast of power hierarchies and peer pressure policing' as we exercise our faith, and as we encounter hierarchy and peer pressure in society, church and wider life?***
- How do we deliver ministry progress measured by what we are for, when faced with power hierarchies and peer pressure policing, and not ministry about what we are against or what our reaction to opposition pressure is?***



## 6. MARK 8.27 – 9.13 THE SON OF MAN REVEALED

The first part of Mark's gospel (1.1-8.26) covers the public ministry and teaching of repentance that Jesus gave. The second part covers the coming of the suffering Son of Man whose death and resurrection become the opportunity and place of grace and forgiveness for humankind.

Mark 8.27–9.13 Peter's Confession, Suffering Son of Man, Transfiguration.

Jesus has moved from Bethsaida further into the relatively safer territory of tetrarch Philip around Caesarea Philippi.

Mark 8.27–8.30 Peter's Confession of Jesus as Christ

Peter's preaching/Mark's record are that Jesus initiated a discussion with the disciples about who he was. The Mark account is characteristically brief, no frills – a short statement of answers spoken of among the Jews, the question directly put to the disciples as it is to us, and then the recollection of Peter's response – you are the Christ. Jesus' ministry and teaching has opened the disciple's eyes and ears through their incapacity to understand who Jesus was. Peter reflects their coming to a faith at that point that Jesus fulfilled Jewish expectation of the messiah, the anointed one. [The general overview of this was given at page 3, Mark 1.1 – Special Focus -Jewish Messianic Expectation].

Except for Mark 1.1, the gospel only uses the title Christ for Jesus after Peter's Confession; the other of the 7 times are in general use about Jewish messianic expectation, or Jews reviling Jesus. The messianic equivalent, Son of David, is used 3 times generally. The title Son of God is used as Peter's preaching only in Mark 1.1 and as the climax of the gospel in 15.39 (the other two instances are recorded as utterances of the demonic). Peter's preaching/Mark's record faithfully uphold that Jesus expressed his self-identity as Son of Man 13 times, each instance of use is by Jesus himself, directly or noted.

Mark 8.31–9.1 The Suffering Son of Man

8:31 Then Jesus entered an extended period of teaching them who he was.

- *the Son of Man* : See 'Special Focus – Jesus the Son of Man'.

- *must suffer many things*: What Jesus taught that he was to undergo as the Son of Man was so unfamiliar to Peter's understanding of 'messiah' that it pushed him over the edge. He rebukes Jesus for it, setting up Jesus' rebuke in turn of Peter as Satan, and opportunity to initiate the teaching, often repeated, about Jesus the Son of Man.

8:31 - *and after three days rise again*: Peter preached/Mark recorded that the disciples entered this phase of Jesus' ministry understanding little of '*rise again*', verb ἀνίστημι *anistemi*. Before Mark 8.31, Mark uses the word generally for stand up/arise (altogether 10 times). From 8.31 on Mark uses it 8 times as 'be resurrected', the context showing that Peter's preaching/Mark's record of what Jesus taught is captured in the formulation in Christian creeds – 'resurrection of the body.'  
[See Mk 16.6 - 'He is risen', the verb more specific than *anistemi*.]

## SPECIAL FOCUS – JESUS THE SON OF MAN

Jesus' use of his self-designation, בַּר אֱנוֹשׁ (bar enosh), ο υιος του ανθρωπου ho huios tou anthropou, *the Son of Man*, has seen vast volumes of biblical academic literature produced.

Lowest denominator claim is that Jesus meant nothing more than God's address to Ezekiel "O son of man..." as in "O human being..." This is more a sceptical ruse to divide the so-called Jesus of history from the Jesus of the Christ myths - 'superstitious, backward fishermen type' disciples, or later non-eye-witness Church members, wrote exalted messianic myths into the accounts rather than true reflection of what Jesus said in order to bolster the early church's growth prospects among Jews, blindly preserved as the Church transferred into the Gentile world. Modern superior patronising is obvious. "It is not a sound historical method to deny Jesus the use of the expression "Son of man" and to relegate this problem to later stages of the Christian community." (Michel, O. "Son of Man" in New International Dictionary of New testament Theology Vol 3, p621.) The New Testament, as the work of the apostles or those authorised by them to write (Peter link to Mark) or under their ministry (Acts 2.42), remains academically and critically more credible. Despite the early Jewish and Gentile churches finding it easier to apply other titles/sayings like Christ or Son of God to Jesus, the gospels in particular retain Son of Man as used by Jesus of himself, not really any other titles. Peter's preaching/Mark's record has 14 uses accurately presented in three groups of the title/saying most self-identifying of Jesus:

- the earthly authority of the Son of Man - 2 times (Mk 2.10/2.28)
- the suffering of the Son of Man - 9 times (Mk 8.31/9.9/9.12/ 9.31/10.33/ 10.45/14.21{x2}/14.41)
- the Son of man comes in glory - 3 times (Mk 8.38/13.26/14.62).

The combination of Daniel 7.14/Isaiah 53/Psalms 80.8-15 with 110.1 as giving Old Testament content to Jesus' understanding is not in dispute. Jesus' understanding of the Son of Man "**suffering for the forgiveness and redemption of humanity and by God's hand being vindicated by resurrection to glory, to return to judge**" was so new and unfamiliar to Peter's understanding of 'messiah' that Peter himself preached/Mark recorded it as something Peter rebuked Jesus about.

*[The 'son of man' uses in the 2 Esdras and Enoch" apocalypses (see Appendix 2), also have Daniel 7 as basis, but only present a 'veiled' glorious being who is 'unveiled' to execute extremist judgement on evil Jews and the nations. Further, their authorship dates are so disputed that some see Christian apostolic influence in their 'son of man' usage.]*

- 8.32-33 – Jesus was clear, Peter's understanding of messiah was measured by worldly power plays, rather than God's real purpose through the messiah.
- 8.34 -37 The Service of the Son in God's Purpose: Jesus takes the teaching among the crowds. Service in God's purpose cannot be by our own ambition, it is by the new repentant life of the crucifixion-resurrection experience in us, and the ambition flowing from it, or we misunderstand.

8.38-9.1 Jesus the Suffering Son of Man is the Glorious Son of Man. The 8.27-9.1 extended interchange and teaching between Jesus, Peter and the other disciples, and the crowd is preached by Peter/recorded by Mark as directly linking a saying of the suffering Son of Man with another of the glorious Son of Man. Numerous secular liberal attempts to unlink them and apply one group of sayings to Jesus, another to some as yet unrevealed person coming at the End, are modern fashion but speculative. "The fact that the passion is never predicted without a corresponding prediction of resurrection paves the way for the sayings about the Son of Man in glory." (Guthrie, D. 1981. New Testament Theology. p278.) The earthly authority, suffering and glorious 'Son of Man' sayings all apply to the same person, Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and resurrected.

9.1 Peter preached/Mark recorded as part of the same interchange that the coming of Jesus the Son of man to crucifixion-resurrection is also the coming of the kingdom of God in power.

9.2–9.13 Transfiguration – the Son of Man Unveiled

9.2 In the same geographic area, knowing Peter was in dark confusion over the Son of Man teaching and Jesus' rebuke of him, Jesus goes up a high mountain for the transfiguration incident. He takes only the inner three disciples, his 'messianic secret' veiled glory method still operating.

9.3-8 For Bible teaching, the Transfiguration is no longer just Jesus' word that he is the Son of Man, it is the full shining display of God's reality with Jesus. The presence of Moses and Elijah are God's declaration that his past "Law and Prophets" covenant is obsolete and superseded in Jesus. To stay with God means to take up and be for his future way, for his favour has moved off the past things and into his Son, and the spiritual harvest of all nations coming to the Son is the new place of God's favour. The Transfiguration is a dramatic act of the prophesied coming of the messiah and the age of the Spirit. Peter's stress comes out, he tries to prolong this 'power' moment, but gets 'over-voiced' by the voice of God himself, overshadowed by the 'Shekinah' spirit cloud of God's presence (with Ex 16.10/19.9/24.15-18/33.9-10). A new moment of revelation of the New Covenant is under way.

- *This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!* In the contrast of Moses and Elijah to Jesus, God's voice fulfils Deut 18.15 in commanding disciples that they should now listen to the Son, described as in Ps 2.7 and Is 42.1.

For the scientific: beyond the event horizons of black holes the laws of nature are unknowable by empirical method as influences of gravity, pressure and density tending to infinity have effect. Likewise, spiritual dimension event horizons (the genuine miracle) have effect: in the Transfiguration event, the presence of Moses and Elijah indicate that past, present and future and existence are of different order in the spiritual dimension, and unknowable to our current empirical existence.

Current secular liberal trend reduces genuine spiritual event to myth without empirical effect – the convenience of myth for scepticism.

9.9-13 The Son of Man and Elijah:

Jesus' 'messianic secret' method is again instructed on the inner three disciples as they are coming down the mountain, that the Transfiguration should be made known only after Jesus' resurrection, something they still have little understanding of. [On a personal note for the disciples, Peter who was in dark confusion, does go on with Jesus who will suffer, who God purposes to die for the forgiveness of humankind. For Peter (as Jesus is for us when fully understood), Jesus has put in place a point of no going back to the past things of God and of Peter's old life.]

- *Elijah coming before the Son of Man* is also discussed. Again, Jesus overrides the worldly messianic expectation of Mal 4.5ff that Elijah comes before the powerful messiah, and subordinates the Malachi prophecy to his teaching so that Elijah comes before the suffering Son of Man. Further, Jesus gives the John the Baptist fulfilment of Mal 4.5f (also Mt 11.10-14).

***Discussion: - Who do you say Jesus is? Why do you hold this opinion?***

***- What does Jesus being the Son of Man mean to you, and how do you intend to take up your cross daily and follow Jesus the Son of Man?***

***- How do we undertake ministry which which helps others through dark confusion about Jesus and enables them to follow him?***

***- Jesus fulfils Deut 18.15, Ps 2.7 and Is 42.1. How will you "Listen to Him" as God has directed us to?***

## 7. MARK 9.14 – 10.52 TEACHING THE MISSION OF REPENTANCE

After the incidents revealing eternal destiny of Mark 8.31-91 and Mark 9.2-13, Jesus and the inner three disciples again find themselves among humanity that Jesus described as 'like sheep without a shepherd' (Mark 6.34). Interspersed through the incidents of ministry are further teachings about the suffering Son of Man.

### Mark 9.14-10.52 Healing, Teaching of the Son of Man, and the Mission of Repentance Continued.

- 9.13-9.29 The Healing Dominion of the Son of Man Continues: Again on the human interaction side, a desperate father brings his spirit-possessed son to Jesus. Jesus enters the case only after a failed exorcism attempt by the other disciples, which mention adds to the eye-witness authenticity of the record. The case details persuade most that this son is epileptic, his symptoms those of one experiencing repeated grand-mal seizures. [In the Mt17.15 parallel passage, this boy is identified as lunatic/epileptic – so of different case to other demon possession (also Mt 4.24)]. Jesus the Son of Man deals with two issues: 1<sup>st</sup>, he heals the epileptic boy, again showing dominion unlike anything of the time; 2<sup>nd</sup>, he confronts the disciples and father of the boy over their lack of faith. His sense of crowd management is again acute; since the mood for a mass spectacle begins to accelerate, Jesus initiates healing before the mass mood grows, giving him some private space for one-on-one work with the father and son. Further, in private with the disciples, Jesus' explanation is sought for their failure. Only in Mark, it is Peter's preaching/Mark's record that Jesus indicates this kind of unclean spirit or illness to be healable by persistent prayer alone (vs 29), adding to eye-witness authenticity of Mark's record.
- 9.30-32 The Second Teaching of the Suffering Son of Man: Jesus is still in crowd management mode, realising that the disciples needed time away from the crowds in order to hear and receive the teaching of the mission of repentance. Central to the teaching was the Suffering Son of Man teaching. [See "Special Focus – Jesus the Son of Man" on page 32 above]. Jesus adds a universal '*betrayed into the hands of men*' aspect to this saying. The disciples still do not understand the necessity of the cross of the Son of Man for repentance or gospel service.
- 9.33-50 Teaching of the Gospel Servant's Way: Peter's preaching/Mark's record then gives a series of teaching incidents clarifying faith of service '*in my name*' of the Son of Man in order to correct misunderstanding of the nature of the disciples' authority and power, most often using a child example.
- 9.33-37 Gospel Power and the Next Generation Part 1: Back in Galilee and Capernaum after the Son of Man revelation and the Transfiguration, since the disciples had become aware Jesus had 'power' and were discussing their related role, Jesus brings them back to service '*in my name*'. He gives his saying that the first should be last and a servant of all, picking up

a child to show power applied with a next generation role. Because the child was regularly of servant/slave-like role and lowest power status, Jesus made link between child-like faith and 'in service of the Son of Man'. As Son of Man, he was servant/slave and child/son in God's service, a link known from the Is 52.13 LXX servant prophecy with its link in the subsequent New Testament 'servant Son of Man' use of the Greek words παῖς *child/servant* and δοῦλος *slave* in passages like Acts 3.13/Phil 2.7. This gives the depth of the second part of his saying that whoever welcomes him welcomes the one who sent him. The Father's deepest purpose is expressed in the servant Son of Man, be part of it – or not.

9.38-50 Gospel Power and the Next Generation Part 2: Peter's preaching/Mark's record indicates that the disciples tested the limits of what this meant in practice. Was use of Jesus' name by one not of the twelve ministering exorcism a genuine use? Who guides the use of Jesus' name? Jesus' answer is threefold:

- 1<sup>st</sup>, Jesus' name and miracles: miracles by the name of Jesus are real and by the power of his name, so much so that one not of the twelve is able to use the name, but will also come under Spirit persuasion that Jesus is 'good' and to be believed, preached and ministered like that. That is gospel victory (vs 40)
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, Jesus' name and 'cup of water welfare' service: Jesus is also positive about welfare action. There is no hint of superior 'miracle gospel' over inferior 'welfare gospel' of modern Pentecostal ministry style, or vice-versa superior 'welfare gospel' over inferior 'miracle myth gospel' of modern liberalism. Jesus approves both and more. Disciples short-change themselves, each other and the Church if they seek miracles but despise welfare or 'gospelling the next generation' (vs 42), or if they seek welfare but refuse ministry including the miraculous or 'gospelling the next generation', or they 'gospel the next generation' in miracle or welfare denying manner.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mk 9.42-50 Jesus' name and judgment in 'next generation outcomes': Peter's preaching/Mark's record in Mk 9.42 (parallel in Mt 18.6/ Lk 17.1-2) has Jesus giving a most astonishing teaching towards the '*mikrwn little ones*' (majority use meaning in the NT is children or the child-like 'poor in spirit', minority use is 'small in measurement') - failure to 'gospel the next generation in Jesus' name' deserves the judgment and punishment as of Osama Bin Laden – weighted to the bottom of the ocean, separated from life and irretrievable eternally.

9.43-48 Jesus then offers more sayings of the severity of sin for disciples, none of which apostles or Church used literally (as in the manner of the Qur'an or Sharia law), therefore can be understood as figurative sayings of Jesus. Their purpose is clear – sin separates us from God unto judgment.

9.49-50 Not only does sin separate us from God, but makes us as tasteless and valueless as 'salt leached of taste'. In their relationship towards God and others, disciples should have 'flavour for salvation in Jesus' name' (so by application indwelling of the Spirit), which is the context of the sayings.

***Discussion: - Why do you think that Jesus' priority for the gospel good news to reach the next generation – that it is the children and childlike – is so important. How are you carrying this out as part of being a disciple?***

- 10.1-12 Repentant Life in Marriage: (Mk 10.2-12, with //Mt 19.3-12; Jn 2.1-11)  
Jesus' teaching to the disciples then moves into husband-wife, male and female relationships, and sin in this which needs repentance. Positive Sexuality is *Heterosexual Monogamous Faithful Union*. The teaching of Jesus on sexuality was a radical new start in sexual relationships in world history, not a new dawn of liberalism or promiscuity, but the dawn of a new level of integrity and maturity in sexual relationships, in particular man towards wife. In Mark 10.4, Jesus is tested by the Pharisees on Deut 24.1. Jesus' response indicates that he knew of the reality of superficial and hard-hearted serial marriage and divorce, in particular males oppressing women. Jesus upholds far deeper relationship principle than the superficial example he was tested on. "In view of this Jesus holds firmly to Scripture. He contends that there never has been any other way than that *one* woman was created for *one* man. The existence of the two sexes was ordained by God ... Marriage is based upon the plain fact of creation in all its simplicity: God created two sexes." (Schweizer, E. Mark. p204). For Jesus, the balanced relationship for practice of human fertility for the procreation of children is marriage.

#### **SPECIAL FOCUS – JESUS' TEACHING ON SEXUALITY**

Until Jesus, most sexuality teaching sought casuistic approach, which had deteriorated into practice dictated not by the intrinsic value of each partner, but by patriarchal power projected abusively into relationships. Demosthenes of Athens typified contemporary Hellenistic-Roman approach: "**The *hetaerae* we have for our pleasure, the concubines for the daily care of our bodies, and our wives so that we can have legitimate children and a true guardian of the house.**" As notorious is Rabbinic legalism that made men incapable of adultery against their wives (women committed adultery); it used Hillel liberalism of even burnt food as grounds for writing the letter of divorce; it used Rabbi Judah ben Elai's "**One must utter three doxologies every day: Praise God that he did not create me a heathen! Praise God that he did not create me a woman! Praise God that he did not create me an illiterate person!**"; it used the infamous old prayer: "**Blessed art Thou, O Lord, ... who hast not made me a woman.**" This is typical global pattern of all non-Jesus cultural religiosity worldwide, either the woman is a legal minor or even less.

Jesus refused all this and radically upheld heterosexual monogamous faithful union as the full measure of integrity in sexual relationships as God had created and ordained. By presenting divorce for both male and female as sinful and adulterous, by presenting sexuality which violates heterosexual monogamous faithful union as adulterous, Jesus returned the male to proper husband practice and re-elevated the woman to the equal, complementary 'helpmeet' of creation. Jesus did not retain legal minor femininity. Hebrew or Gentile sexual practices outside such marriage, caused by the kind of male power plays above, or in polygamy, concubinage, prostitution, homosexuality, or other immorality, are sinful

sexual practices that require repentance (Mark 7.20-23). The Jesus of the gospels frees women into mature adult discipleship, and males into maturity of husband practice.

- 10.13-16 Gospel Power and the Next Generation Part 3: In Mark's gospel, after giving his teaching on marriage and divorce upholding integrity in marriage, Jesus then adds his rightly famous teaching on children and the next generation, upholding family priority in society and salvation.
- 10.14 *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."* Cranfield notes the following: "To receive the kingdom as a little child is to allow oneself to be given it, because one knows one cannot claim it as one's right or attempt to earn it." (Cranfield, CEB. Gospel according to St. Mark. P324). The link to John 3.3-8 is well made. By contrast, the superior patronising attitude of humanity in our "world come of age" (Bonhoeffer, D – Letters, June 8 1944) towards the not-yet-adult child/religious/non-'secular scientific' person, is starkly negative. Whether science has absolutely defined truth and being adult, as Bonhoeffer and most moderns claim, is as dubious as it is unempirical. The schizophrenia of 'science that has executive utopian control of the world' simultaneously leading 'scientific-super-corporate business partnerships driving the climate change/survival negative degradation of the planet' is not lost to discerning disciples. The moderns 'ascending' themselves as elite over the childlike are little matured on the ascension of Jesus the servant as abiding contrast in the dominion of the Son of Man. This is also the reality of the rich young ruler who comes to Jesus next.
- 10.17-31 The Gospel, Wealth and Eternal Destiny: Peter's preaching and Mark's record notes the earnest arrival of a "man", identified later in the passage and in synoptic parallels as 'of great possessions/rich, young and a ruler', so of the elite Jesus had just contrasted with those of child-like faith.
- 10.21 Only Mark's gospel notes that Jesus 'loved him' in his materialistic 'run-it-like-a-business with moral success' approach – loved him enough to challenge the hold of wealth on his life. He should both re-direct his wealth and commit himself to serve the priority of gospel of God. He is unable, as many of those ancient and moderns of self-ascension are.
- 10.25 Jesus measures this with another famous saying: *"Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."* Academic scrutiny makes it probable the saying is of a real needle, the alternatives being much more manufactured explanation. Of more concern is whether the self-ascended person can come into the kingdom. John 3.3-8 with Mark 10.14 suggests yes, amplified by Jesus in two other famous sayings:
- 10.27 *With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God,* and 10.31: *But many who are first will be last, and the last first.*
- 10.28-30 The context of the 'left family for the gospel' saying has a realised and eschatological outcome – new family in the Church, with persecution that remains a gospel context in this age, and new family in the resurrection.



- 10.32-34 The Third Teaching of the Suffering Son of Man: Peter's preaching/Mark's record note that Jesus' psychology has entered it's final 'suffer in Jerusalem' phase – for his teaching of his death in God's mission of repentance will come into final confrontation with those who wield worldly power who will have apparent success over him. Yet as before, central to the teaching was the Suffering Son of Man teaching. [See “Special Focus – Jesus the Son of Man” on page 32 above], part of which was that he would rise from death in the resurrection victory and success that was God's plan. His teaching remains universalised - both Jew and Gentile will be culpable in his death, but both will receive the grace arising from his death and resurrection victory.
- 10.35-45 Gospel Power is in Gospel Service: Peter's preaching/Mark's record consistently note the failure of the disciples to understand the necessity of the cross and resurrection of the Son of Man for repentance and gospel service success, and eternal consequence over worldly power dynamics. James and John, the fishermen sons of Zebedee, seek ascended status and power in Jesus' glory but show no discernment of that power. For Jesus' power is of the Kingdom of God, hidden in the gospel's enterprise and spiritual warfare and even under persecution in this age, yet fully triumphant in the resurrection which follows. The account is another of those credible 'warts and all' portrayal of the disciples' inadequacies – and so discerning of human blindness in God's things without the Spirit's work.
- 10.46-52 The Healing Dominion of the Son of Man Continues: Peter's preaching/Mark's record note the healing of blind Bartimaeus as the last event Jesus performed in Jericho before entering Jerusalem. Matthew and Luke's gospels agree on Jericho, though Luke adds his unique account of Zaccheus, it still shares the purpose Peter gave the Bartimaeus account – Jesus' wider ministry included concern for the marginalised poor and needy in the face of those who were unconcerned about them.
- 10.46-47 The fine detail supports eye-witness account - event, place, name with family identification, and use of *Jesus of Nazareth*. Bartimaeus hears not a messianic title, but this historical identifier used four times of Jesus in Mark (1.9/1.24/10.47/16.6), and well used in all the NT gospels and Acts. This prompts his faith outburst for mercy from the 'Son of David', and Jesus' healing of Bartimaeus confirms the use of the title for him.

**Discussion: - As much as all the New Testament gospels and Acts apply the Old Testament messianic titles to Jesus, they never fail to insist that it is the historically identified Jesus of Nazareth who is the object of their accounts. What do you think is their reason for this?**

## 8. MARK 11.1 – 12.44 THE RESURRECTOR SON OF MAN COMES

All four gospels are explicit that Jesus spent the last week before the crucifixion in Jerusalem and its satellite villages and surrounds. The detail here is consistent with eye-witness testimony. Further, Mark's time indicators are explicit in Mark 11.1-26, a night separated Palm Sunday from the Cleansing of the temple. (Matthew and Luke don't offer such time-specific accounts, John's account does not link Palm Sunday to the Temple Cleansing). While Mark's account of Palm Sunday to Crucifixion only mentions three days, Mark 14.49 is an indicator of more days in Jerusalem than that. Further, Peter remembers Jesus' references to the Son of Man only later in the 'last week' accounts ("Little Apocalypse" (Mk 13.26), "Last Supper" (Mk 14.21), and finally twice in the Passion/Trial accounts (Mk 14.41/62), but the references make clear that Jesus understood his final ministry in Jerusalem as the coming of the Son of Man.

### 11.1-11 The Son Tests Political Leaders and Socio-Religious Expectations

#### 11.1-11 The Palm Sunday Entrance:

11.1 Bethphage and Bethany were well known satellite villages of Jerusalem at the foot of the Mount of Olives, Bethany in the gospels being the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, and Jesus' Jerusalem base this last week.

11.2-6 Mark (via Peter) presents the 'foal of the donkey' incident as a prior agreement with the foal's owner concerning Passover arrangements, with little more detail, for the focus of the incident is that the messiah had come to Jerusalem. Mark just relates the incident and is echoed by Luke, but did not make the link to fulfilment of Zech 9.9 as John did, and Matthew (with dramatic excess).

11.7-11 The Palm Sunday 'messianic entrance' celebration that followed is dealt with sparingly. All four gospels retain the detail.

11.9-10 The Messiah Slogans: All four gospels also retain the details of the 'Hosanna' shouts, a contemporary 'folk hailing' based on Ps 118.25-26a. Guthrie, D. "There is no doubt that the crowd's cry presupposes that they saw, however temporarily, Jesus as a Davidic king. In considering the consciousness of Jesus regarding his office, the significant feature in all accounts is that Jesus did not reject the ascription, although directly challenged to do so by his critics." p256. Jesus did not deny the cries, but the disciples applied them as subsumed under his "Son of Man" self-understanding.

11.11 Interval: Whereas the other gospels give no real time/calendar, Mark 11.11 is an astounding verse of eye-witness account, a very restrained comment which is unlikely in a myth portrayal, for "A *denouement* consisting of a survey of the Temple scene followed by a departure from the city is certainly not a product of imagination and invention". (Cranfield, with Taylor, p352).

11.12-14 The Fig Tree Cursed: The next day, by calendar, Jesus leaves Bethany with food disappointment – figs were out of season, the fig tree he passed had no fruit, a prophecy of Jerusalem's spirituality. In a weird incident for Christians (who are forbidden to curse, Rom 12.14,19) and secular moderns who regard such as superstitious, Jesus *καταράομαι* *kataraoimai* "curses" the tree, a prophetic act of judgment foreshadowing the equally barren hypocrisy of the Hebrews, who put themselves under God's judgment by their spiritually decayed mercantile practice in the temple.

- 11.15-19 The Cleansing of the Temple: Mark's Petrine account is the fullest of the synoptics (Matthew and Luke summarise Mark, Luke omitting the temple trading details), and comparable to John's detail of the temple trading – again indicating eye witness remembrance. Jesus' cleansing of the temple was a messianic purification (not the markedly different AD 44 Menachem-type 'messianic pretender' temple seizure to influence control of the political economy of the Hebrews (see Acts 5.37)). Jesus had no interest in steering the political economy; rather the mercantile enterprises of the temple traders under the Sadducees were a hypocritical spirituality deceiving the people. Mark, followed by Matthew and Luke, note a combined Is 56.7/Jer 7.11 quote which Jesus probably used to explain his prophetic cleansing; John 2.17 notes Ps 69.9 as a consistent purification basis for Jesus' actions.
- 11.19 Another of Mark's unique time-calendar indicators signifies the link to Peter's eye witness role in the account.
- 11.20-25 Meaning of the Cursed Fig tree: Jesus acknowledges the outcome of the curse he laid, then adds a positive application in faith and prayer. "...Jesus pointed out that faith in the living God can move mountains (11.23). Such faith is a potent condition for effectual prayer 11.24). But just as unbelief is a barrier to effectual prayer, so is an unforgiving spirit (11.25)" Cole, VB. Mark (Africa Bible Commentary. p1191)
- (11.26) Omitted by leading manuscripts as an insertion from Matt 6.15
- 11.27-33 The Authority of Jesus questioned: On the third day in Jerusalem, back in the temple, Jesus is challenged by the temple authorities – by what or whose authority does he teach and act? Jesus deals with their question by posing his own question on John's baptism - was it from God or men? His challengers dodged his question, so Jesus gave no answer to theirs.

#### Mark 12.1-13.4 Passion Week Teachings

##### Mark 12.1-12 The Passion Parable:

- 12.1 As was so often the case when Jesus was in Jerusalem confronted by the opposing power figures and systems, he spoke in parables to those who could or would not see or hear (Mk 4.12). Taking up the imagery of God's people as a vine, God has set in place the physical means, vine-dressing and harvest leadership, and appointed the time of harvest blessing.
- 12.2-5 However, when he sent his priest and prophet and kingly servants to receive and share the blessing of the harvest, not only did they find underdeveloped leaders and workers without produce or profit, but self-serving rebels and land and business hijackers who persecuted his servants.
- 12.6-8 God then even sent his beloved son, so great was his love for the vine. Instead the leaders and workers knew the heir had come, but despised and rejected and killed him. Jesus included his prophetic insight from the Is 52.12-53.13 servant passage into a parable prediction of his crucifixion-resurrection to come, preserving his self-understanding as the servant Son of Man in parable form.
- 12.9-11 What then is the future for a people and their leaders who have rebelled against their God? Jesus' prophetic parable indicates judgment is at hand, it is like the past judgments against the Jews. From Mk 12.2, this 'harvest

- time' καιρός '*kairos*' (*set or due season Mk 1.15*) is present with added intensity of fullness. The Son rejected and killed is known to readers and hearers of God's Word in Ps 118.22-23, as the 'capstone', and who judges at the same time as he suffers as the servant Son of Man. Jesus' quote from Psalm 118.22-23 is first full quoted here, with Matt 21.42/Luke 20.17 based on this. Mark, as 'secretary' to Peter, records Peter's preaching, and can be checked here. In Acts 4.11-12 Luke notes Peter free-quoting the same Ps 118 in an illustration about Jesus; twice again in 1 Peter 2.4, 1 Peter 2.7, Peter uses it and adds two more OT verses about God's chosen stone, Is 28.16/Is 8.14. These Peter-based readings are the only uses of (*rosh pinna*) κεφαλη γωνιας '*head of the corner*' in the NT, other than Eph 2.20 imagery Paul probably has from Peter. It is used as follows:
- 12.12 Peter's preaching, Mark's recording, notes the effect of the parable's teaching on the Jewish leaders that had confronted Jesus (Mk 11.27) – Jesus will be dealt with opportunistically, yet it was still part of God's plan. Lenski comments: “More will happen than the rejection of the Sanhedrin and its replacement by better leaders. An entirely new structure will be raised. The old covenant shall yield to a new covenant of which Jesus, although rejected by the jews, will be the mighty cornerstone.” (Lenski, RCH. Interpretation of St. Mark's Gospel. P 514)
- 12.13-17 Give to Caesar what is Caesars...
- 12.13 Peter's preaching, Mark's record, notes continued attempts by the Jewish authorities to discredit Jesus during his Passion week visits to the temple. The 'Herodian' royal Jewish lobby joins the attacks for specific targetting - if Jesus is the 'head of the corner', compare him to the Roman emperor to imply he is aligned with foreigners – xenophobic manipulation.
- 12.13-17 The Jewish opposition set the xenophobic field of play as taxes, specifically paying taxes to a foreign oppressor emperor. Jesus' response is two tiered: taxes are normal human governance under divine authority so pay them (Jesus isn't sidetracked by any abnormal governance model); so '*give to Caesar what is Caesars*'. But Jesus is not done...
- 12.15 *Latin Words* – δηνάριον *denarius* and Καῖσαρ *Caesar* (x4 *this passage*); Mark's use of these 'latinisms' again indicates the Aramaic background of the author engaging his Greco-Roman Gentile reader profile as they are. The politico-theological contrast used to manipulate by Jesus' opponents is understood by Jesus as deliberate – using Καῖσαρ *Caesar*, often by name, instead of the more generic *basileus* king (eg. 1 Pet 2.13/17), became a synoptic feature (eg. here and Lk 23.2 / Jn 19.12, 15 / Acts 17.7) because of perceived opposition of the Roman authorities as well.
- 12:13-17 cont... Jesus neutralised his opponents by using a 'domain-less, political-economy neutral' use for God – αποδοτε ... τα του θεου τω θεω , but then “*give... to God what is God's*.” Give as in 'pay a debt owed' for the normal human governance Caesar gives which doesn't trespass on God's rights and is God-ordained, but also 'pay the debt owed' to God for which God is rightfully owed, which is the Gospel purpose of Jesus' presence.

***Discussion: - Palm Sunday to the 'Tax Test' indicate Jesus' 'political' balance when pressure of revolutionary 'taking sides', political correctness or xenophobia is faced. How should disciples teach and practice 'give- to-God-what-is-God's' spirituality through such trials?***

More 'social' rather than continued 'political' testing of Jesus then follows.

- 12.18-27 Resurrection Celibacy: Mark 12.25/Matthew 22.30/Luke 20.34-36
- 12.18-24 Mark notes Peter's preaching of continuing opposition from temple authorities. This time the Sadducees attempt a life-after-death 'marriage put down' of Jesus, since it was thought and they stiffly proclaimed that the Torah taught no life after death, so there was none.
- 12.24 Jesus upheld the Old Testament (OT). Jesus blatantly disputed the Sadducees' use of the OT, then taught it with his own messianic authority.
- 12.25 Jesus upheld marriage and celibacy.  
Jesus had awareness that our human sexual fertility and sex drive, with the practice of multiplying and replenishing the earth, belongs to this side of Resurrection Day of the end of time. The Matthew 22.30//Luke 20.34f parallels match this, with Luke expanding: *"The people of this age marry and are given in marriage.*  
Jesus' celibacy had a new earnest depth over earlier teaching. Standard religious teaching on celibacy views sexuality as polluting the spiritual, in the main being a carnal distraction from the spiritual, often with concepts of 'uncleanness' linked to menstrual blood and semen. (OT and NT deal with these as only private hygiene health within each person's spirituality.) There is Resurrection difference in the way Jesus was celibate, in fulness even over Jeremiah and John the Baptist for example. Peter preached Jesus' explanation: *When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection.* In the Resurrection celibacy is the relational dynamic, sexual fertility and sex drive are obsolete. It is "until death you do part" as the marriage service says.  
What is surprising about this Jesus teaching is its mature conservatism, deeper than either Hillel or Shammai, and at odds with modern secular politically correct liberalism. Attempted 'explain-aways' are deceitful.
- 12.26-27 Jesus upheld life after death. Jesus' dealing with the supposed absence of 'life-after-death' teaching in the Torah is exceptional, even today. He has just affirmed marriage and celibacy with a direct but unexplained resurrection link. Now he explains resurrection from Exodus 3.6 in terms of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. No one questioned that the God of Torah or the Hebrews was *"the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob."* But if the identifier in present tense usage remains in place with

Moses long after Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are dead, therefore while Jesus and his opponents were alive, therefore while we are alive - then not only is God the living God but also continues with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob even though they are dead, and Sadducees and us will be. So what then is the nature of the death of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob if God continues with them even when they are dead. Jesus is clear: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are dead, but are also still alive to the living God, so faithful people must hope for resurrection – God “*is not the God of the dead, but of the living.*”

Unlike the after-life teaching of ancestralism, which regards ancestors as 'living dead spirits' until they are forgotten by the living, Jesus' perspective is of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as fully dead, but their dust is 'living dust' with which God will renew all their life - body, soul and spirit. Ghostly spirits floating about in afterlife is not really Hebrew or apostolic thought, but rather of Greco-Roman and wider ancestral or animist religiosity.

- 12.28-34 The Greatest Commandment: Not all the temple teachers of the Law (usually Sadducees) were already closed of opinion towards Jesus. Peter recalled, Mark recorded, the open, honest interaction between Jesus and a teacher of the law who had not been part of the 'testing' of Jesus but was impressed with the insight and manner of Jesus' answers he did hear. He joined in with edifying positive – Which is the greatest commandment?
- 12.29-31 Jesus' dialogue with him, the teaching Jesus gave on Deuteronomy 6.4-5 and Leviticus 19.18, he clearly appreciated as correct 'Torah teaching'.
- 12.32-34 His discernment that Jesus was not a ritualist by sacrificial law but had the deeper understanding of a 'life lived in neighbourly obedience is better than ritualistic sacrifice' was his own sense of both Jesus and Torah. Jesus' discernment of this teacher of the Law was equally complimentary – he was not far from the kingdom of God. Jesus passed the Torah test and from then on was no longer actively tested by the temple teachers.

Peter recalled only two more instances of public temple teaching that Jesus gave in Holy Week, noting them as without testing by Torah.

- 12.35-40 Who is David's 'Lord'? Mid-week of Holy Week, Jesus is teaching in the temple as was his ministry practice, Peter recalls/Mark recorded the teaching Jesus gave on Psalm 110.1, the Old Testament verse most quoted in the New Testament (gospels Mark 12.36 and parallels/ Mark 14.62 (linked with Dan 7.13) and parallels/ Acts 2.33-35; 7.55-56/ Rom 8.34; /1 Cor 15.25-28/Eph 1.20/ Col 3.1/1 Pet 3.22/Heb 1.13; 5.6; 7.17-22; 8.1; 10.12-14). Across Judaistic spirituality including Jesus, unanimous opinion was that Psalm 110 was by David and is messianic: Jesus uses Psalm 110.1 to test by scripture the very teachers and opinions that tested him. If David inspired by the Spirit, calls the messiah 'Lord *Adonai*', then the messiah is more than just David's descendant son. *Adonai* is substitute name for יהוה *Yahweh*, but is the use here one of a wider 'trinity' implication? The logic for that is impeccable, the question remains put to every Biblical scholar of rabbinic or liberal persuasion whose evasions remain boringly inadequate.

Greatly expanded in Matthew, woes against the Scribes, Sadducees and Pharisees, are recorded as closing Jesus' interaction with the Jewish leadership (Their grouping was rather against Jesus 'the common enemy' than in organised concert with each other, their differences being distinct). Peter recalled/Mark recorded that Jesus recognised their learning and status, but also their hypocrisy in not practicing what they preach. Their 'business model', in particular when winding up estates for "administration expenses" which "ate" benefits for widows, gained Jesus' condemnation and his final comparison – the widow's sacrificial offering.

- 12.41-44 The Widow's Offering: Jesus' last teaching related to his testing by the Scribes and Pharisees was his comparison between the measured giving of so many, in particular the rich, and the sacrificial giving of the poor widow who offered her life in her giving.
- 12.42 *Latin Word* – κοδραντης *quadrantys*, a low level Roman copper coin not really used in the East: Mark uses another 'latinism' that indicates the Aramaic background of the author engaging his Greco-Roman Gentile reader profile as they are.

***Discussion:*** - ***What do you think of Jesus' handling of his resurrection 'testing' by the Sadducees? They used an extra-biblical 'wise' parable to test Jesus, who answered from the Torah which they treasured most. What does this teach us about answering 'tests' of faith we are faced with?***

- ***Read Deut 6.4-5 and Lev 19.18, then comment on how you understand Jesus' answer to the teacher of the law, and the quality of Jesus' answer.***
- ***Read Mark 12.35-40, Psalm 110, and the readings in the NT which quote this***
- ***How can Christian disciples conduct sacrificial tithes and offerings in our modern world?***

## 9. MARK 13.1 – 13.37 THE FUTUROLOGY OF THE SON OF MAN

The apostolic Christian community had a predominant sense that repentant life through the death and resurrection of Y'shua haMessiah, Jesus Christ, also gave the resurrected life of the last day. Its futurology was thus always in tension between what Jesus had accomplished by his crucifixion-resurrection-giving of the Spirit when on earth, and its link to the end, the day of the Lord, the resurrection of the last day.

**Mark 13.5-37**, loosely known as the “Little Apocalypse”, gives the heart of Peter's preaching/Mark's record of Jesus' futurology. It acknowledges a futurology of cycles of utopia and dystopia, with natural law crises, but preaches Christian eschatology as the futurology of Jesus and the earth. Biblical teaching of eschatology and apocalyptic gives the unique insight of the Hebrew-Christian perspective in the modern study field “Futurology”.

### **Special Focus: Background on Eschatology and Apocalyptic**

Attached to this Bible Study Commentary on Mark is **Appendix 3 – Eschatology and Apocalyptic**, which should be looked at as an overview of eschatology and apocalyptic as the futurology writing of Old and New Testament times.

The **Petrine Source** writings, **Mark's Gospel** and **1, 2 Peter**, contain the second most extensive apostolic Christian eschatology after Johns' Revelation. Cross-reference to 1, 2 Peter are offered below for wider Petrine perspective.

For a modern look at Johannine perspective on Christian Eschatology, especially apocalyptic eschatology, in dialogue with secular futurology, see the full Bible Study commentary on the Book of Revelation by Adamson, RD. 2011, **Revelation – Resurrect Life (Overcoming in the Cycles of Anti-Christ)**, at [www.resurrectlife.co.za](http://www.resurrectlife.co.za) .

Jesus begins his conclusion “*No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father*”, (Mark 13.32). It is important to note that Biblical eschatology and apocalyptic are never just about futurology, but are always for building of salvation faith and obedience in history too.

- 13.1-4 Historical Setting to the “Little Apocalypse”. After Jesus has given his last public teaching in the temple, conflicting opinion arises in the disciples. Zionistically, the temple was beautiful and a source of Jewish pride, but Jesus' teaching had indicated another destiny for his people. Jesus' “Little Apocalypse” confirms another destiny for Jews and the temple.
- 13.5-13 Little Apocalypse 1: Cycles of Dystopia:
- 13.5-8 Jesus' futurology presents cycles of the rise and fall of empires/nations/cultures, cycles of utopia (paradise coming by human politics) and dystopia (power leadership is 'divine right' sanctioned, for which human politics does 'spin doctoring'). Through these cycles, God will centre the development and unfolding of history around Jesus - “*many will come in my name*” - but this is all deceitful, illusionary.



- 13.9-13 The real movement of history is that *“the gospel must first be preached to all nations”* (13.10). Salvation and the life culture of repentant life will be unfolded to reach all the nations. The coming of the kingdom in this way will divide even families as each individual responds to gospel opportunity. The Holy Spirit will facilitate this; human hatred because of Jesus, thus temptation and trial will remain the context of salvation and the life culture of repentant life.
- 13.14-20 Little Apocalypse 2: Zionistic Abomination and Desolation:
- 13.14 Historically the “abomination of desolation occurred in the Temple prior to the siege under Titus, when the Zealots, who held the Temple with arms, admitted the Idumeans, and as a result the Temple was deluged with the blood of 8,500 victims. . . . Because the Jews themselves in conjunction with the Idumeans made their Temple an abomination, special insight is required... (Lenski, RCH. Interpretation of Mark's Gospel. p574f. Lenski quotes from Josephus, Wars Bk IV Ch4-6. Transl Whiston, W, p530-536). Without naming Daniel, yet applying the basic *“shiquts shomeim”* and wider usage in Daniel – the original zion national desolation in 586 BC (Dan 9.2/9.18), the coming yet unfulfilled desolations linked to messiah of Dan 9.26-27 (Young, EJ. Prophecy of Daniel. p206-221), and the desolations of 167 BC by Antiochus Epiphanes (Dan 8.13/11.31/12.11) – Jesus predicts desolation contemporary to him and fulfilled in AD 66-70 as Lenski notes.
- 13.19-20 It is possible that these verses make a wider claim of fulfilment during the time of the 'antichrist' of the Great Tribulation. However, the 'shortening' *for the sake of the elect* can equally apply to the apostolic time when any post-Judeo/Roman war persecution of Jews and Jewish Christians would have implied equally negative consequences for the gospel.
- 13.21-28 Little Apocalypse 3: And then.. In those Days...:
- 13.21/26 και τοτε *kai tote and then*: the short phrase joining thought development now re-introduces a generalised global look at the future, supported by
- 13.24 εν εκειναις ταις ημεραις *en ekeinas tais hemerais in those days*. Then/in those days, in time consequent upon the zionistic desolations,
- 13.21 *false Christs... performing signs and wonders...* Signs and wonders always remain controversial in religion, few are genuine, many are illusionist, many superstitious. False prophets offer 'signs'; for Mark, as with ancient Hebrew false prophets, the one major sign showing falsehood is straightforward – setting up false Christs. Disciples must be on their guard.
- 13.24-25 Jesus, then Peter with Mark recording, uses Isaiah 13.10/34.4 to set tone for the eschatological closing of the age – the universe itself trembles.
- 13.26-27 Coming of the Son of Man: Jesus preached, Peter recalled and Mark recorded, that the Son of Man's coming fulfils Daniel 7.13-14/Psalm 110, fulfils the prophecies of the Day of Yahweh. The eschatological coming has both global and end-time effect - gospel call ends, history ends, resurrection begins.
- 13.28-37 Little Apocalypse 4 Conclusion: Be on Guard! Be Alert! Watch!
- 13.28-31 Jesus used another parable of fig-tree imagery to portray the canceling out of the Mark 11.12-14/1120-25 curse with end-time fruitfulness instead. *Now learn this lesson...* when the last generation receiving the gospel

- word is fulfilled, the coming takes place.
- 13.32 *“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father”* is as demanding as it is measuring. Don't speculate, procrastinate or just debate - spread the gospel (Mark 4.29).
- 13.34-36 The Parable of the Entrusting Lord reinforces the message of Jesus – the Master of Eternal Consequence has tasked us with love for each person's salvation - pass on and build Jesus' love.
- 13.33/37 Be on Guard! Be Alert! Watch! Not just false Christs/prophets are reason to be on guard, but also the occasion of the Son's coming. Be ready!

**COMMENT:** Jesus' “Little Apocalypse” is the proto-type futurology of the Bible. It is very short on the apocalyptic detail of other known Hebrew apocalypses: there is no “Jericho Walls” style like in the Qumran War Scroll; disciples of the weakness of the cross carry a global mission rather than 'zionistic warrior priest' sons of light; except for Mark 13.14, temple and Jerusalem geocentricity are replaced by the global Holy Spirit mission of salvation; Jesus is messiah fulfilled and Jerusalem temple made obsolete, thus - *“Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”* Mk 13:2. Jesus is so little focused on Zion Jews, so gospel mission oriented that his preaching is better described as apocalyptic eschatology.

***Discussion:*** - *What do you think of Jesus' handling of 'futures'?* Why? What do you think of the modern scholarship which makes all this just apocalyptic 'failed' myth? In your opinion, how the future open?

- *Read Mark 13.32, then comment on how you understand Jesus' wisdom on end-time teaching.*
- *Read Mark 13.5-13, the general circumstances of cycles of utopia-dystopia till the end-time resurrection. Has history proved Jesus wrong or right, and why?*
- *Why do you/do you not believe that Jesus is coming again?*

**Mark 13 “LITTLE APOCALYPSE” COMPARED TO 2 PETER 3.3-13:**

Jesus' preaching/Peter's recall is regarded as the major source of Mark's Gospel, and of the Mark 13 “Little Apocalypse”, and can therefore be compared to 2 Peter 3.3-13. Like Mark 13.21-37 in particular, it offers little detail, and similar concepts appear in both passages:

- **the Two Major Guidelines for eschatology and apocalyptic:**
- Mark 13.10 - First coming obedience determines individual outcome at end time judgment.
- Mark 13.32 - Only the Father knows the time of the end; don't attempt dating it.

These are upheld in 2 Peter 3.10 and 11b.

**Other Similar Concepts:**

**Mark 13.5-20 – His Coming Expected – 2 Peter 3.3-4:**

The vague prophetic details about the AD 70 fall of Jerusalem are not repeated in 2 Peter written within a Gentile context. The expectation of His coming is repeated.

**Mark 13.21-23 – Beware of False Christs:** 2 Peter 2.1-3/3.3-4 parallels this.

**Mark 13.24-32 – The End, the Son Comes:** Mark does not use the Noah Flood judgment as a type of the judgment of the Last day.

**Judgment: Heaven, earth pass away**

Like Mark 13, 2 Peter 3.5-7,10 uses the idea that the coming of judgment shakes heavens and earth, which pass away and are renewed. Both concur with Old Testament prophecy - Is 2.19-21/ 13.9-13/24.1-23/34:2-4/51.6/ 65.17-25/66.22-24; Ez 38.19-22; Joel 2.31/3.14-16; Zechariah 14.6-9, Daniel 12.1-2. Mark 13.24-25 and both favour the eschatological and Pentecostal imagery of prophets Isaiah and Joel.

**Mark 13.33-37 'Delayed by Grace':**

Mark's parable of the master going on a journey who puts his servants in charge, is not used by 2 Peter, but the concept of a delayed coming is – *a day like a thousand years, a thousand years like a day.*

**Mark 13. 10 Heaven and Earth pass away – 2 Peter 3.10-13:**

Mark is paralleled by 2 Peter 3.10-13. 2 Peter adds the concept of Old Testament prophetic expectation that new heavens and earth are anticipated for the righteous (See above references)

**Mark 13. 33,37 Be on Guard by holy living - 2 Peter 3.11f:**

The parallel is obvious.

## 10. MARK 14.1 – 15.47 THE CRUCIFIED SON OF MAN

Jesus was guilty of teaching the people about God, his love, care and salvation. He was guilty of claiming to be one with his Father. He was guilty of healing the sick, casting out demons and raising the dead. He was guilty of calling and equipping a group of followers who were to carry on his mission when he was gone. He was guilty of feeding people when they were hungry and calming a storm when people were in danger of being drowned. He was guilty of befriending the lonely, of touching lepers and hanging out with outcasts.

Jesus' message and ministry of Holy Week from his anointing through Good Friday, and vindicated on Easter Sunday, are the fullness of the revelation interface between self-revealing Spirit God and humanity by which Spirit God redeems.

### 14.1-42 The Son of Man and His Disciples

#### 14.1-11 Anointed as Servant of Salvation (Jesus' Full Church):

14.1-2 Typical Markan conjunctive verses in the unfolding of his account. Jesus was not always resident in Jerusalem, spending nights outside the city.

14.3-8 During a Bethany residence, at the home of an individual of whose details little is given, Jesus is anointed by a woman of whose details much is speculated because Mark has both similarities to and omissions about the Mary of John 12.1-8; it is probably the same event, Peter's recall did not intend to be total, rather focused on the anointing. The woman probably just wanted to signify her opinion of and devotion to Jesus' leadership; about the anointing, Jesus applied it and Peter recalled it as the anointing for the servant of salvation who gives his life for the sinner's forgiveness.

14.9 Jesus anticipated significant time between his first coming and his return in order for the gospel to be preached throughout the world – a full church.

14.10-11 Judas, unimpressed by a suffering Saviour, conspired in willingness and with full welcome by the chief priests, to betray Jesus.

#### 14.12-26 Disciples share the Last Supper:

14.12-16 Details of Preparation: Many scholars differ, and seem to miss the point, on whether the preparations are for a Passover meal or a Qumran-style meal (men only not families) or a lesser pre-Passover meal. It was not meant to conform to obsolete meals. Jesus the Messiah inaugurated a new Covenant meal, which fulfills elements of the old with its link to Jesus death at Passover, but deals with completely new emphases according to the coming of the New Covenant. Even the 'men-only' original was never the practice of early or later Churches of full worship community inclusion.

14.12 ἀζυμων *azumon unleavened bread* - another Aramaism: Mark again explains another Hebrew custom for the sake of his Gentile audience.

14.13 the '*man carrying a jar of water*' has been claimed as of Essene/Qumran/Dead Sea Scrolls unique practice, since women rather than men were the normal Jewish family water carriers. No opinion is conclusive.

14.17-21 Prediction of Betrayal of the Son of Man: Peter cannot bear to recall/Mark omits naming the betrayer at the Last Supper or mentioning him going out. Only at Mark 14. 43 is he named. However, the implication is intense and eternal – no ordinary leader is betrayed, it is the Son of Man of whom it is written that he should suffer. The consequences for the betrayer that "*it would be better for him if he had not been born*" are doom.

- 14.22-26 The Last Supper: According to Peter's recall/Mark's record, Jesus' inauguration of the last Supper is of a New Covenant feast. The Passover Lamb of complete fullness is given a new bread symbolism, so too wine for the blood and life given that no longer sporadically but completely 'once and for all' justifies the disciple who enters the fulfilled Covenant.
- 14.27-31 Prediction of Peter's Denial: On the road to Gethsemane, Jesus uses a prophecy of the disciples *falling away*, Zec 13.7, part of the prophecy of the striking of the shepherd close to God. The outcome is devastation of God's people, the remnant are left. Jesus will meet the disciples afterward in Galilee, a resurrection prediction by Peter's recall/Mark's record, which Peter rebuffs. Jesus' prediction of the rooster crowing has come to symbolise Peter and all disciples needing repentant life if they are not to stay in denial and out of fellowship and forgiveness with Jesus.
- 14.32-42 Gethsemane: Jesus' own human need for interaction with his Father across the revelation interface between the human and the spirit is made before the inner three of the disciples – Peter, James and John. The recall is that He agonises, he prayed, he was in trial: the 'Last Supper' content of his prayer indicates Jesus knew a New Covenant was being cut.
- 14.36 αββα ο πατηρ *Abba, Father* - another aramaism and translation (also behind Matt 6.9) for Gentile audiences that Peter and Mark were preaching to. That the disciples were tired, poorly aware and unprepared for what was to come is clear. Jesus' rebuke is for them to retain the 'watchfulness' that was to be a prominent part of their futurology (Mark 13).
- 14.41-42 It is the Jesus the Son of Man who is betrayed *'into the hands of sinners'*. If there is a dualism, it is of the saved who must reach the sinners.

***Discussion: Read Mark 14.1-11 - Why should we remember the women who anointed Jesus in Bethany before the Last Supper and Good Friday?***

- Read Mark 14.12-26, then comment on how you understand Jesus' to have inaugurated the Last Supper/Eucharist/Communion. What does your church/denomination uphold as it's last Supper teaching?***
- Read Mark 14.36. How do you understand Jesus' prayer when you consider his humanity but also his awareness of being the messiah? How are the disciples presented at this crucial time, and were there other times when their human weakness also let them down?***
- What does "the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners" mean?***

**14.43 – 15.47 The Son of Man Betrayed, Persecuted, Denied, Sentenced, Tortured, Executed, and Buried**

- 14.43-52 **Betrayed as prophesied:** Mentioned but unnamed since the Last Supper, Judas as betrayer is named – *one of the Twelve* – so an even greater sin. Peter recalls/Mark records more a mob arrest of Jesus. Peter is unnamed (except by John 18.10-11) as Jesus' would-be defender who then denied.
- 14.48-49 Jesus/Peter's recall/Mark's record are clear – Jesus upheld his 'suffering Son of Man' self-identity (Mark 8.28-38) to the end.
- 14.50-52 The disciples fled, some to follow at a safe distance. The “*young man seized who fled naked*” is traditionally accepted as having been John Mark, the author of Mark's gospel and Peter's scribe (see Appendix 2).
- 14.53-65 **Persecuted, but the Son of Man has come:** Jesus' “trial” before the Sanhedrin remains a 'kangaroo court' hearing. Peter is again named as following behind, so details are recalled, one of which is that all the Jewish socio-religious leadership united in an action against Jesus which was not legal at night. False testimony mentioned parallels the John 2.19 account of Jesus' statement about his body the temple, with the same misconception. The silence of Jesus before his accusers frustrated them: it would have been false recognition of an illegal process which was going to condemn Jesus no matter what he said. (Luke 22.67-68)
- 14.62 “*εγω ειμι*” *ego eimi I AM*” Peter's recall/Mark's record is of only one response by Jesus – to the question of the High Priest (spiritual, social and political head of Judaism). Jesus' reply is a use of “I AM” in the pattern of the Johannine “I AM... “ sayings, but applied by Jesus (Peter's recall/Mark's record) with those Psalm 110.1/Daniel 7.13-14 self-identifications that Jesus alone had used.  
The gospel of Mark is that the Son of Man had come.  
The rejection and persecution is immediate. There is also no allowance in the gospel or in Talmudic writings for Jesus being insane. The charge of blasphemy by Jesus was considered as self-evidenced, the opportunity to get rid of Jesus by a 'Pontius Pilate applied death sentence' was taken.
- 14.66-73 **Denied, for Repentance must be Our Life Choice:** Peter recalled/Mark recorded that it was Peter, now named, who denied Jesus three times, and all gospels (with John 18.25-27/21.15-19) are unanimous. Mark's gospel also records that each mention of Peter in the gospels up till the denial is of a Peter of divided mind, unsure that a servant messiah of even such great signs is God's plan. Peter's inclusion in his own preaching that Peter and the imagery of the rooster crow remain linked for the gospel message of repentance springs from the denial as his 'rock-bottom', which breaks into genuine *'new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead'* (1Pet 1:3). All Peter's post-resurrection preaching indicates that Peter only continued by repentant life choice, so too should all disciples. It is thus the sub-title of this Bible Study Commentary on Mark's gospel.
- 14.67/70 Jesus' identification as 'Nazarene' and 'Galilean', as distinct from Jerusalem cultured, adds to the authenticity of the account.

- 15.1-15 Sentenced, by the Global Representatives of Humanity:
- 15.1-5 Both Jewish and Gentile leadership representatives have gathered against Jesus. It is *early in the morning*, for Passover purification purposes, but there is also no more need for 'hours of darkness' schemes though the hour of darkness was come. It is all open. Jesus remains self-evidencing as the King of the Jews, otherwise silent again.
- 15.6-14 Common humanity chose the criminal over the servant of salvation who offered such ministry in love, but the hour of full love revealed had come.
- 15.15 Jewish and Gentile leadership representatives and common humanity sentenced Jesus to death. Prophecy was fulfilled.
- 15.16-20 Tortured, as prophesied:
- 15:16 *Latin Words* – *πραιτωριον praetorion* Praetorium, is another 'Latinism' to explain the greek 'hall/courtyard' to reach a Roman audience.
- 15.16-20 Jesus' execution process was begun: flogging initiated and the wider soldier company continued a familiar 'kill' process of drawn-out torture.
- 15.21-32 Executed, by crucifixion, prophecies fulfilled:  
The historical and geographic details supplied are too verified for any doubt to linger that the events of Jesus' death are just 'mythical' – from the well known 'Pilate' inscription to the Golgotha detail.
- 15.21 Cross carrier from Africa: the detail about Simon of Cyrene having to carry the cross Jesus was already too broken to continue with suggests eye-witness recall by even more than just Peter.
- 15.22 *γολγοθαν Golgotha 'place of the skull'* - another Aramaism with Mark giving the translation for the sake of Gentile readers.
- 15.23-27 The crucifixion details again indicate a Roman soldier company efficient in their 'kill' business, from the provision of *wine mixed with myrrh* to dull pain, dividing up Jesus' clothes by 'gamble', to acting out of 'propaganda humiliation' in mocking Jesus according to the death notice specified - "THE KING OF THE JEWS".  
It was routine, two robbers were added at convenience and for effect. The predictable 'mob-style' verbal abuse also mixed with the soldiers' mockery.
- 15.33-41 Giving His Life for Our Forgiveness:
- 15.33-41 Again, the detail suggests eye witness recall, some are named (vs 40).
- 15.33 The three hours of darkness from midday have natural explanation mixed with spiritual cause across the 'spirit-human' revelation interface.
- 15.34 *ελωι ελωι λεμα σαβαχθανι eloi eloi lema sabachtani 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?'* - another Aramaism with Mark's translation given. Jesus' words lead some to ask whether he 'doubted' so as to break faith. Humans struggle with doubt, so did Jesus; but in his prayer he answered his own doubt "My God, My God." Further: "Jesus was bearing the sins of the world. He was one with sinners. He took away their sin. He endured the separation from God that is the consequence of sin. And because he endured it, we who believe in him will never be abandoned by God." (Morris L. 1986. *New Testament Theology*. P112)
- 15.38-39 Peter's recall/Mark's record completes both physical detail and spiritual interpretation comment.
- 15:39 *Latin Words* – *κεντυριων kenturion* centurion – Mark again uses a Latinism for his Roman audience. The centurion's comment "*Surely this man was the Son of God!*" is the conclusion that Peter's recall/Mark's record made about who the Jesus of their preaching and gospel really was.

15.42-47 **Dead and Buried:**

15.42 *Preparation Day (day before the Sabbath) - Hebrew custom explained .*

5.42-47 Again, the detail suggests eye witness recall, some are named (vs 47). Joseph of Arimathea is particularly named as the provider of Jesus' tomb and the organiser of his burial, that he acted '*boldly*' indicates a not yet seen pro-active participation in Jesus' business. His status as a Sanhedrin member gained him direct access to Pilate so as to fulfill the customary restrictions regarding the dead at the Passover. **The soldiers had done their job properly, Jesus was dead, he was buried in a known tomb.**

Easy compatibility is made with scripture passages like Psalm 22/69/109 and Isaiah 52.13-53.12. From Mark 14.49 and other verses, which have parallels in all the gospels, it is clear that Jesus himself is regarded as having begun the understanding of these scriptures as being fulfilled by his life, ministry, death, resurrection and pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

***Discussion: Read Mark 14.62 - Why do you think Peter's recall/Mark's record accurately presents Jesus' self-identity as the "Son of Man" suffering for human forgiveness to take his dominion. Use passages/verses in Mark's gospel and other Bible passages to support your answer.***

***- Read Mark 14.66-73 - Comment on how you understand Peter's need for repentance and repentant life, and why this can be used as a suitable sub-theme of the gospel for disciples to make part of their life choice. Use other NT passages/verse to show this as a theme in Peter's post-resurrection, post repentance preaching.***

***- Read Mark 15.39 - Why do you think Peter's recall/Mark's record accurately presents their human understanding of as Jesus the "Son of God" when he died for human forgiveness. Use passages/verses in Mark's gospel to support your answer.***

***- Why do you/do you not believe that Jesus actually died and was buried, rather than swooned, only to recover again then disappear?***



## 11. MARK 16.1-8: THE RESURRECTION

Mark 16.1-8 is typically Petrine and Markan – detail and action given rather than interpretation. Seven features common to the resurrection testimonies are given by Peter's recall/Mark's record:

- 16.1 Easter Women: Peter's recall/Mark's record remained consistent that the gospel and specifically the resurrection are eye witness testimony of people in humble circumstances.
- 16.2 Sunday just after sunrise: Calendar and time details are consistent.
- 16.3-4 Stone rolled away: No explanation is given, just the detail – the stone was already rolled away, the tomb open.
- 16.5 Empty Tomb: Jesus' body was not in the known tomb.
- 16.5-7 Angelic Presence: An angelic presence met the women and confirmed that the known tomb was empty of '*Jesus the Nazarene*'.
- 16.6 'Resurrection of Jesus' Message: Peter's recall/Mark's record is that the eye witness of the women confirmed that “...*Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here*”.
- 16.7 See Jesus in Galilee: αυτον οψεσθε καθως ειπεν υμιν *auton opsesthe kathos eipen umin* “*there you will see him, just as he told you*”.
- 16.8 The Ending: Because the most reliable manuscripts of Mark's gospel indicate an 'end' at Mark 16.8. Peter's recall/Mark's record about the resurrection of Jesus may have ended at verse 8, as some scholars claim, but a majority seem to regard verse 8 as indicating a lost portion of the gospel, therefore the recall is regarded as probably not fully given.

Mark's gospel is universally agreed either to have ended at Mark 16.8, or all of the remainder has been lost. It is also known that the two readings known as the “Longer Ending” and “Shorter Ending”, though ancient, are not original to Mark. The letters of 1 and 2 Peter provide Petrine continuity where Mark's Gospel ends.

**[Please see Appendix 1 for Resurrection Parallels of the Four Gospels ]**

**Discussion: - Read Mark 16.1-8, and comment on whether you think the common 7 features of resurrection witness are present.**

**- Peter's recall/Mark's record of Jesus' resurrection is regarded as probably not fully given. Why do you think there is enough “Peter evidence” to accept that Peter did preach Jesus as resurrected?**

**- Read Appendix 1: Resurrection Parallels of the Four Gospels.**

## **APPENDIX 1: RESURRECTION PARALLELS OF THE FOUR GOSPELS**

**NOTE: The author of this Bible Study Commentary holds the opinion that Mark was the author recording Peter's eye witness recall. The Gospel of Mark therefore expresses the testimony of the resurrection of Jesus Christ as salvation history (with miraculous event across the spirit-human revelation interface between God and humans). The 'history of religion' presupposition is not accepted that "science does not allow the miraculous, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is myth, and only modern secular 'spirit of common humanity' interpretation is valid".**

Mark's gospel is universally agreed either to have ended at Mark 16.8, or all of the remainder has been lost. It is also known that the two readings known as the "Longer Ending" and "Shorter Ending", though ancient, are not original to Mark.

The following presentation of "Resurrection Parallels of the Four Gospels" is included to enhance the reader's awareness that there is a wide testimony of other credible recall and record of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The testimony has both common and unique parts: common incidents are easily discernible, and unique parts are often supported by other testimony even if the incidents are not commonly recorded, for example the Galilee appearances of John's Gospel.

## 1. RESURRECTION SUNDAY: THE WOMEN DISCOVER THE EMPTY TOMB

### Matthew 28:1-8

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. (2) And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. (3) His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. (4) And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. (5) But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. (6) He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. (7) Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." (8) So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. (9) And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. (10) Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

### Mark 16:1-8

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. (2) And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. (3) And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" (4) And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back--it was very large. (5) And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. (6) And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. (7) But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." (8) And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

### Luke 24:1-10

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. (2) And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, (3) but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. (4) While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. (5) And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? (6) He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, (7) that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." (8) And they remembered his words, (9) and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. (10) Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles,

### John 20:1-2

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. (2) So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

## 2. RESURRECTION SUNDAY: PETER AND JOHN WITNESS THE EMPTY TOMB

[MARK'S GOSPEL IS UNIVERSALLY AGREED EITHER TO HAVE ENDED AT MARK 16.8, OR ALL OF THE REMAINDER HAS BEEN LOST.

IT IS ALSO KNOWN THAT THE TWO READINGS KNOWN AS THE "LONGER ENDING" AND "SHORTER ENDING", THOUGH ANCIENT, ARE NOT ORIGINAL TO MARK ]

### **Luke 24:11-12**

...but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. (12) But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

### **John 20:3-9**

So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. (4) Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. (5) And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. (6) Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, (7) and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. (8) Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; (9) for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

## 3. RESURRECTION SUNDAY: THE WOMEN MEET THE RISEN JESUS

### **Matthew 28:9-10**

And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. (10) Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

### **John 20:11-18**

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. (12) And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. (13) They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." (14) Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. (15) Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." (16) Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). (17) Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" (18) Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"--and that he had said these things to her.

#### 4. RESURRECTION SUNDAY: THE BRIBING OF THE SOLDIERS

##### **Matthew 28:11-15**

While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. (12) And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers (13) and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' (14) And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." (15) So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

#### 5. RESURRECTION SUNDAY: THE EMMAUS ROAD DISCIPLES MEET JESUS

##### **Luke 24:13-32**

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, (14) and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. (15) While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. (16) But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. (17) And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. (18) Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" (19) And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, (20) and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. (21) But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. (22) Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, (23) and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. (24) Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." (25) And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! (26) Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (27) And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (28) So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, (29) but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. (30) When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. (31) And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. (32) They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

## 6. RESURRECTION SUNDAY: THE DISCIPLES MEET JESUS IN JERUSALEM

### Luke 24:33-43

And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, (34) saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" (35) Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. (36) As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" (37) But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. (38) And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? (39) See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." (40) And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. (41) And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" (42) They gave him a piece of broiled fish, (43) and he took it and ate before them.

### John 20:19-23

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." (20) When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. (21) Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." (22) And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. (23) If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."

### John 20:24

Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. (25) So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." (26) Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." (27) Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." (28) Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (29) Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (30) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; (31) but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

## 7. RESURRECTION APPEARANCES: GALILEE – FISHERS OF MEN

### {Mat 28:16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. (17) see below }

### John 21:1-14

After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. (2) Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. (3) Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. (4) Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. (5) Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." (6) He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. (7) That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. (8) The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off. (9) When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. (10) Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." (11) So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. (12) Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. (13) Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. (14) This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

### John 21:15-25:

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." (16) He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." (17) He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. (18) Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." (19) (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me." (20) Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had been reclining at table close to him and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" (21) When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" (22) Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!" (23) So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?" (24) This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. (25) Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

## 8. GREAT COMMISSION: JESUS' LAST TEACHINGS, GALILEE AND JERUSALEM

### **Matthew 28:16-20**

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. (17) And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. (18) And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

### **Luke 24: 44-49**

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (45) Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, (46) and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, (47) and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (48) You are witnesses of these things. (49) And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

### **Luke 24.50-52**

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. (51) While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. (52) And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, (53) and were continually in the temple blessing God.

For the section Resurrection Parallels:

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## **APPENDIX 2 – PETER, JOHN MARK, AND THE AUTHORSHIP OF MARK**

### **1. THE APOSTLE PETER**

About 27-28 AD Jesus called Peter and Andrew, James and John from being fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. Peter was the leading disciple of Jesus, heard most of Jesus' teaching and saw most of Jesus' miracles. About April/May AD 30 Peter denied Jesus before the cross, but was given a special resurrection meeting with Jesus, restored to leadership, and saw the Ascension. He urged the replacement of Judas, gave front line preaching at Pentecost, was first of the apostles to be arrested and persecuted with John, first apostle really to go to the Gentiles with the gospel about 36 AD. When James was martyred in 44 AD, Peter was again arrested, miraculously freed, went into exile in the diaspora (probably to Rome with Mark, the basis of Mark's gospel), returned to Jerusalem in 47 AD in time for Paul's famine visit. His work went on: he encountered Paul in Galatia, was pulled into the Gentile controversy again, so led the Acts 15 General Assembly with James. He probably returned to Rome in 54 AD after the death of Claudius (who had expelled the Jews from Rome 1 Cor 9.6), so is the main apostolic link of the founding of the church in Rome. There he ministered till 64-65 AD, inspired the writing or completing of Mark's gospel, wrote his two letters, and was martyred in the Neronian persecution, tradition says crucified upside down - his request because he did not want to be crucified the same way up as the Lord he denied.

### **2. JOHN MARK**

John Mark (Hebrew *Yohanan*, Latin *Marcus*), was a next generation disciple submerged in the cross currents of three major leaders of the apostolic era - Barnabas, Paul and Peter. He only came into his own under Peter's ministry from which his gospel also arose. The New Testament knows Mark's mother Mary as sister/cousin to Barnabas, prosperous property owner and Levite of Cyprus and Jerusalem (Col 4.10). Mary herself was prosperous: Peter's Acts 12 release from prison sees him go to Mary's house (Acts 12.12 - there being no husband mentioned it is presumed she was widowed), which was a known Christian gathering place. Church tradition has it that the young man of Mark 14.51 was John Mark. He then became a support player taken to Antioch by Barnabas and Paul (Acts 12.25/13.5), his hesitancy became the principle cause of Paul and Barnabas taking divergent mission routes (Acts 15.37-41), with Mark accompanying Barnabas. Mark re-emerges in leadership, in 2 Tim 4.11 with Paul as 'useful to Paul for ministry' and Phm 1.24 as a 'fellow worker', and with Peter in Rome in 1 Pet 5.13, a New Testament indicator of Mark's coming into his own. Church historians Hippolytus of Rome and Eusebius of Caesarea note a twofold leadership role:

- **first**, in a probable mission to Alexandria from 49 AD not known to the New Testament, Mark had developed as the initiating major apostolic-linked originator of Christianity in Alexandria and Africa; the Coptic Church holds him to have been the first bishop of Alexandria; from there he had returned to work with Peter and Paul in Europe; and

- **second**, Mark was Peter's interpreter among Gentiles and writer of Peter's preaching finalised in the Gospel of Mark in Rome before, during and after the Neronian persecution in Rome and martyrdom of both Peter and Paul, c 62-67 AD. Tradition relates him as have returned to Alexandria to meet martyrdom being dragged through the streets by a rope around his neck.

### **3. THE AUTHORSHIP OF MARK'S GOSPEL**

The gospel is unnamed in early manuscripts. Church history attributes it to John Mark who assisted Peter as interpreter among Greeks and Romans; church tradition alludes to a vague internal reference (Mk 14.51-52) to a young 'Mark' at the arrest of Jesus. Since church practice had viewed it as an 'inferior' summary of Matthew's gospel, it has been uncontroversial and without alternative authorship claim which has any historical credence. The Gospel's authority stands on three bases:

- apostolic originality: the link passing on the preaching of the apostle Peter. Church historians are as familiar with the presentations of the elder Papias, the anti-Marcionite prologue, Irenaeus, the Muratorian Canon, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Jerome, as they are with no presentation of another author.
- prime source: Mark's gospel was the primary source for the life and passion of Jesus that was used for the writing of the gospels of Matthew and Luke. No prior source document exists within the lifetime of the apostles of undisputed apostolic equivalence as that of Mark's writing of the preaching of Peter.
- authenticity: Mark's gospel competes with an unending list of pseudonymous, non-authoritative gospels. 'Jesus gospels' proliferate from post-apostolic time into the modern era – for example, Ebionite and Gnostic gospels of the second century, 11<sup>th</sup> century muslim 'Gospel of Barnabus', and the Aquarian Gospel (Testament of Levi) of modern 'Hindu-ised theosophy' and the hippies. As other 'Christian' culture and cultic pressures arose, syncretisers wrote false gospels to bolster their cultural, cultic myths. In his "Index of Non-Canonical Parallels" (Throckmorton, BH. Gospel Parallels pg xvii), less than ten parallels are listed for Mark's gospel, indicating low popularity but high authenticity for a gospel of such early manuscript and historical evidence.

#### **4. MARK'S GOSPEL AND THE "HEBREW" EBIONITE GOSPEL**

Church history evidences a 'gospel' of not much more than a small collection of Jesus' 'sayings' written in Hebrew/Aramaic and attributed to the apostle Matthew. No manuscripts or fragments survive, so it's full content is unknown. *[Our current gospel of Matthew in Greek was for the emergent Gentile church, it's major source is Mark's gospel. Our Greek Matthew includes extra mainly sayings material, a probable re-write of the Hebrew/Aramaic 'gospel' into Greek.]*

Some secular liberal Bible academics have made claim that this Hebrew 'gospel' contains an 'older' teaching of a Jewish conservative Jesus that needs consideration given as correction to the 'newer' gentile catholic/orthodox canonical and Nicene creed teaching of 'Jesus'. However, the personal example of the Jewish apostles of Jesus was of being commissioned into the church for all nations among whom they spread and were martyred. This is the preponderance of apostolic witness in Mark's gospel and Peter's letters, John's gospel and letters, Paul's letters, and the other 'semitic root' letters, all with their remaining Hebrew expressions. Their apostolicity and their catholic/orthodox trinitarian Jesus is far more credible. The leading role of Mark's gospel in that apostolic expression is obvious as the primary source for the Greek gospels of Matthew and Luke.

The Hebrew 'gospel' is claimed to have emerged in three versions, the Gospels 'of the Hebrews', 'of the Ebionites', 'of the Nazarenes', any content of which is now known only from quotes in early Church historians, since again no manuscripts or fragments survive. These 'Semitic' gospels were authoritative among Jewish

churchgoers of failed Ebionite/Nazarene confession, Jews of 'Nazarene' rather than Talmudic rabbinism who held to an adoptionist 'anointed in Davidic sonship, human only and not trinitarian Jesus'. Non-Jewish disciples were to assimilate into Nazarene, non-Talmudic Jewish inculturation. Most of the preserved quotes concern Jesus' baptism, which is presented in adoptionist form to uphold their cult.

## **5. MARK'S GOSPEL AND ORAL CHURCH TRADITION**

Because the modern era holds scepticism towards the religious and the miraculous, secular-liberal Bible scholars lay special emphasis on the fact that Mark was not an eyewitness of the gospel events that he recorded. Therefore it is claimed that his content is more of 'oral myth tradition' that developed as the gospel moved into the Gentile Church before the written myth of the Bible emerged, than about genuine event detail or history about Jesus and the apostles.

Mark was written for the Gentile church by Jewish Christian diligence. Many Aramaic words used and Hebrew/Aramaic language style, and much Palestine geographic data (see the gospel and this Bible Study), indicate non-Gentile Aramaic origin. Mark even supplies translation meanings of Aramaic words (Mark 3.17/5.41/7.11/7.34/14.12/15.22/15.34/15.42), and his purpose is clearly more than just parrot religion, for he uses Latin words in this Greek gospel (Mark 5.9/12.15/12.42/15.16/15.39) as he is among Roman hearers of the gospel. So the vibrancy of the gospel is not in question.

That this vibrancy can be twisted by 'oral tradition' claims into being more of myth than event accuracy is to exaggerate. Since Luke-Acts was probably completed by 61-62 AD, Luke's use of Mark (or earlier Markan notes), restricts use of oral tradition in Mark to supervision by the 'fading' of memory of the apostle Peter himself. He was no superman, just a human apostle. But how great a 'fading' of memory Peter had, and how much Mark and the early church 'mythologised' in the production of the gospel because they were backward pre-scientifics, also speculates in an exaggerated and derogatory way of any competence of history other than among modern academics and scientists. The vibrancy of Mark's gospel tends to suggest that clarity of memory by Peter was recorded diligently by Mark, rather than over-enthusiastic religiosity evoking myth creation with much longer oral tradition time.

### **APPENDIX 3 – ESCHATOLOGY AND APOCALYPTIC**

Eschatology (from *eschaton* 'last thing' and *logos* 'word') is biblical study of the last day/end times, relative to the perspective of the prophet. The prophecies of Jesus crucified were futuristic 'in that day' in a different way to us for whom Jesus crucified is past fulfilment (Zechariah 12.10; John 19.37, Revelation 1.7). The power element of Hebrew eschatology has been its linear philosophy of history – history has a beginning and end, and God is moving history purposefully for the salvation of humankind linked to his Messiah. God overcomes evil in history. Today's secular phrase is 'futurology' with 'scenario planning' as part of it.

Apocalypse, named from the first word of Revelation, is biblically a sub-genre of eschatology. Prophets foresaw in metaphorical visions a dualistic 'good forces of light versus evil forces of darkness' struggle but apocalypse was subordinated to prophetic linear eschatology with a global scenario added. It was only ever used by Hebrews, Jew and Christian. Isaiah 24-27, Ezekiel 38-48, Daniel, Zechariah, Mark 13, 2 Thessalonians 2, 2 Peter 2,3, and Jude have apocalyptic usage.

Hollywood and TV projected Eschatology and Apocalyptic into space fantasy. Star Trek, 2001: A Space Odyssey, even Moonraker and the Terminator trilogy use space eschatology – purposeful linear advance in history now including human expansion into space. Star Wars, Battlestar Galactica are dualistic; the struggle of the good force against the evil kingdom, till the final battle with good's victory, allows space action with impressive graphic special effects, but without regard to history.

Non Biblical Apocalypses: Jude 1.9 refers to the non-biblical 'Assumption of Moses', Jude 1.14 to the 'Book of Enoch'. Such pseudonymous (unknown author fakes a 'Bible hero' identity to exalt his writing) apocalypses, without historical balance or time sense, flourished among the Second Temple Jewish nation from the 167 BC temple desecration to the 110 AD Jewish collapse. Failures of Second Temple practice spawned either Jewish Zealots like the Masada group, Bar Cochba and Rabbi Akiva, or ascetics of the Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls Sect where unknown apocalypses were found. From the "War Scroll": "The dominion of Kittim shall come to an end and iniquity shall be vanquished, leaving no remnant; for the sons of darkness there shall be no escape. The sons of righteousness shall shine over all the ends of the earth; they shall go on shining until all the seasons of darkness are consumed, and, at the season appointed by God, His exalted greatness shall shine eternally to the peace, blessing, glory, joy and long life of all the sons of light." (Vermes, G. Complete Dead Seas Scrolls in English. Pg 163). Second temple Jewish nation collapse saw the end of Sadducees, but also Essenes and Zealots and their apocalyptic failure, as evil crushed their nationalistic hope. Only Pharisee practice survived, introverting into Rabbinic Judaism, which with secular agnosticism, lumps all apocalyptic as esoteric pseudonymous failed mythical literature - the messiah of their nationalistic final battle never came.

## 1. SOME EXTRA-BIBLICAL APOCALYPSES

### 1.1 PSEUDONYMOUS ZIONISTIC JEWISH APOCALYPSES

These are representative of Jewish-Zionistic apocalyptic, often of extremism, in which a messiah and/or the last day is prophesied for the Roman era but never came. Rather the failure of the second temple, Masada and Qumran were historical end, relegating these writings to failed pseudonymous apocryphal texts for apocalyptic background study only.

**2 Esdras/Shealtiel 3.1-14.48:** *(Chapters 1-2 and 15-16 are later additions attempting a 'christianisation' which are attested only in Latin manuscripts, and should be discounted. 2 Esdras was written in Hebrew or Aramaic by an unknown author, translated into Greek and Latin, of which only Latin major manuscripts remain. It is dated typically as either reflecting Antiochene or Roman oppression).* Outstanding for its blatant confusion of Ezra and Shealtiel, it reads as a shallower mixture of Job and Daniel. However, it lacks the repentant spirit which characterises those two books in its presentation of Jewish (even Zionistic) self-righteousness in the face of oppression of inter-testamental Jews among the nations. The presentation of the messiah has little of messiah as light for the nations or suffering to win forgiveness for the world: The Ch 13.3 'Man' judges the unrighteous Jews and the nations and so brings victory to the elect in stylised esoteric fashion.

**Book of Enoch/Noah:** *(The original Hebrew, then Greek translation manuscripts no longer exist; it is now preserved mainly in Ethiopic translations of the Greek. It is dated typically as either reflecting Antiochene or Roman oppression).* With most written under the antediluvian Enoch pseudonym, but some attributed to Noah, the book focuses largely on the past judgment at Noah's time, and the coming judgment at the Messiah's time, and of the rightness of God's judgment even if all life is to be destroyed as in Noah's day, for sinners are deserving irrespective of being Jew or Gentile, antediluvian or current. The fire and brimstone judgment is extremist. In its Ch 46-71 the Messiah is also presented as Daniel's Son of Man of 'exalted' nature, but otherwise like in 2 Esdras come to judge to bring victory, with little of light to the nations or suffering Lamb. The stylised angelology and lists of angels and names (Uriel links to 2 Esdras) and stylised judgment and victory are as wooden as 2 Esdras, or the Qumran War Scroll with its stylised armies of the High priest and the priests. True authorship and date of writing of Enoch is unknown: scholar opinions range from ~160BC to ~98AD and accordingly allow either only esoteric Jewish or remotely possible Christian Jewish authorship. (Because Enoch is mentioned in the canonical Jude 14, which reflects some of its esoteric judgmental character, it has even been suggested that Jude inspired or wrote Enoch.)

**Assumption of Moses:** *(Probably original in Hebrew, then in Greek translation (both no longer exist), it is preserved in a single Latin manuscript; it is dated typically as either reflecting Antiochene or Roman oppression).* Written under the pseudonym Moses at the time of hand over to Joshua, it claims apocryphal 'prophetic insight' from Moses unknown to the Old Testament (derived by hindsight). It too lacks the repentant spirit which characterises Biblical books in its presentation of Jewish (even Zionistic) self-righteousness in the face of oppression of inter-testamental Jews among the nations. By caricature, it has a 'Masada extremism': the Jerusalem

priesthood is condemned as worldly, no Messiah is predicted but Taxo, who uses Masada 'suicide spirit' to leverage the wrath of God to come forth against the impious, abominable Gentile nations to secure victory for God's righteous among lawless Israel. [(It's unnamed use in Jude 9 reflects a missing portion of the Assumption, conflated with Zechariah 3.1-2 (a different Joshua of post-exilic time) and the Book of Enoch on archangel Michael's contending with evil)].

**Qumran - The War Scroll:** (*Originating within the Qumran Essene Community, written in Hebrew, preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Caves 1 and 4. By reference to opposing military tactics, it probably dates during the Roman oppression*). It is of extreme zionistic Jewish self-righteousness when facing holy war against the nations, and in particular 'Kittim' (Rome), who are Belial's hosts. The High Priest and priests lead the armies in stylised 'Jericho walls' fashion with plenty of holy numerology and holy nomenclature usage in a 40 year holy war against a roster of nations (linked to the Babel table of nations), and with a stylised appeal to the angelology of Enoch. At the appointed time, by the mysteries of God at war against the ungodly, Kittim's armies shall fall and Belial's hosts be judged and vanquished forever. Written within the known cultus of Qumran, there is no messiah but their leader figures whose elect Essenes of the wilderness represent God against Jewish sin and ungodly nations.

## 1.2 PSEUDONYMOUS/NON-CANONICAL CHURCH EXTREMIST APOCALYPSE

**The Apocalypse of Peter:** (*Written in Greek ~100AD, it is preserved in an incomplete manuscript recovered in 1887 and an incomplete Ethiopic version in 1910, and is the basis for the apocryphal Gospel of Peter. It was also made more extravagant in the derived later Apocalypse of Paul.*) It was pseudonymously written under Roman persecution in a Christian form which took the 'judgment' passages of the canonical letters of Jude and 2 Peter further, also using the books of 2 Esdras and Enoch as Jude did, the author fitting them to gospel detail about Mark 13 and about the Transfiguration. It reflects a Christian extremism which gave extravagant mythical detail to the torments of hell that the wicked and the persecutors would suffer 'fit' compensation for persecution. (The Ethiopic manuscript adds an unhistorical section in which Peter directly commits the insight to Clement. From this pseudonymous Apocalypse of Peter derive also writings like the Sybilline Oracles and Coptic Apocalypse of Elias.) The work shows none of the futurology of Revelation, but rather derives pleasure at the torment of the wicked in Tartarus, the Hellenised myth of hell.

**The Shepherd of Hermas:** This book of 'revelations' held great prominence in the early second and third century Church. Though it's visions are written as 'apocalyptic' or 'revelatory' by angelic medium, it is rather a good works and good wisdom guide to strict Church living which is claimed as unveiling. There is little of righteousness by faith or salvation by grace, little of Christ and more of salvation by Church works. Some of its imagery of tribulation, beasts and locusts was probably sourced from Revelation. It's authorship is either by a Hermas in 85-90 AD, or a brother of a ~140 AD bishop of Rome, written originally in Greek, translated into Latin..

### 1.3 PSEUDONYMOUS NON-CANONICAL Gnostic APOCALYPSES

The Nag Hammadi Library of the Gnostic Society Library gives the fullest presentation of these apocryphal writings at [www.gnosis.org](http://www.gnosis.org). It lists five pseudonymous apocalypses – *Adam, James 1 and 2, Paul, Peter* and two pseudonymous apocryphons *James and John*: but all these rather match the rest of the apocryphal Gnostic material (esoteric texts of spurious authenticity) in that what is claimed to be revealed is the secret 'gnosis' wisdom syncretising Christ into an esoteric form of Platonism, rather than “revealing what must soon take place in human historical future.” As such the Gnostic apocalypses are different literature from Jewish and Biblical apocalyptic, better described as apocryphons, and largely irrelevant when studying the Book of Revelation.

## **APPENDIX 4: PROBABLE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

### *Birth and Childhood of Jesus:*

- 7 BC - Proclamation of the First Quirinius Census
- 6-5 BC** - **Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem** (Matt 1.18-2.23/Luke 1.1-2.40)  
also Flight to Egypt of Joseph, Mary and Jesus.
- 4 BC - Death of Herod the Great
- 7-8 AD** - **Teenage Jesus in the Temple** (Luke 2.41-52)
- 12 AD - Tiberius' Co-Regency with emperor Augustus
- 14 AD - Death of emperor Augustus
- 15 AD - Caiaphas appointed High Priest by Procurator Gratus

### *Jesus' Ministry, and the Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost:*

- 26 AD - Pontius Pilate appointed Procurator
- 26-27 AD** - **Start of Ministry of John the Baptist** (Mark 1.1-14 & par./John 1.1-36)
- **Start of the Ministry of Jesus** (Mark 1.9-20 & par /John 1.37-51)
- Ministry of Jesus Spreads (Mark 1.21-6.12 & par./John 3.1-5.47)
- ?28 AD** - **Death of John the Baptist** (Mark 6.14-29 & par.)
- **Jesus feeds 5000, walks on water** (Mark 6.30-56 & par./John 6.1-71)
- Passover 29 AD
- Ministry leads Jesus to Jerusalem (Mark 7.1-13.37 & par./ John 7.1-17-25)
- 7 April 30 AD** - **Friday Passover Crucifixion of Jesus** (Mark 14.1-16.8 & par/John 18.1-21.5)
- 9 April** - **Sunday Resurrection of Jesus**
- 18 May** - **Ascension of Jesus** (Acts 1.1-26)
- 28 May 30 AD** - **Day of Pentecost** (Acts 2.1-41)

### *The Church's Mission in Jerusalem, Palestine and Nabatea/Damascus:*

- 30-33** - **Jerusalem Church Growth/Persecution** (Acts 2.42-8.3)
- 33 AD** - **The Samaritan/Palestinian Mission** (Acts 8.4-40)
- **Death of Stephen, Saul's Conversion** (Acts 6.8-9.31)
- 35-36 AD** - **Paul to Jerusalem and Tarsus** (Acts 9.19b-30/Gal 1.18-24)
- 36---> AD** - **Peter ministers in Palestine** (Acts 9.32-11.18)
- 36 AD - Pontius Pilate' Procuratorship ends
- Caiaphas removed from High Priesthood
- 37 AD - Death of emperor Tiberius, succeeded by Gaius Caligula
- deposition of Herod Antipas and appointment of Herod Agrippa 1.
- 40 AD - End of the reign of Aretas in Damascus
- 41 AD - Death of emperor Caligula, succeeded by Claudius
- 43-44 AD** - **Martyrdom of James, Peter arrested** (Acts 12.1-25)
- 44 AD - Death of Herod Agrippa 1

### *The Church's Mission to the Jewish diaspora and the Gentiles:*

- 45-46 AD** - **Barnabus and Paul in Antioch** (Acts 11.19-30)
- 46 AD - The Judean famine
- 47 AD** - **Famine Visit to Jerusalem** (Acts 11.30/Gal 2.1-10)
- 47 AD - Appointment of Ananias as High Priest
- 47-48 AD** - **The First Missionary Journey** (Acts 13.1-14.28)
- 48-49 AD** - *Paul writes Galatians in Antioch*
- 48-49** - **The Council in Jerusalem** (Acts 15.1-35)
- 49 AD - Expulsion of Jews from Rome (Acts 18.2)
- 50-52 AD** - **Paul's Second Missionary Journey** (Acts 16.36-18.22)
- 51 AD** - *Paul writes 1 & 2 Thessalonians in Corinth*
- 51-52 AD** - *James, Jesus brother, writes the letter of James*
- 51-52 AD - Gallio Proconsulship in Achaia/Corinth (Acts 18.12-17)
- 52 AD - Felix appointed procurator of Judea
- 53-57 AD** - **Paul's Third missionary Journey:** (Acts 18.23-21-25)



- 54 AD - Death of emperor Claudius, succeeded by Nero
- 54-55 - Paul writes 1 Corinthians in Ephesus
- 55-56 - Paul writes 2 Corinthians from Macedonia
- 55-56 - Paul writes Romans in Corinth

*Paul's Trials and Imprisonments:*

- 57** - Paul's arrest in Jerusalem, Trial before Felix (Acts 21.1-22.23.11)
- 57-59 AD** - Caesarea imprisonment (Acts 23.12-24.27)
- 59 AD - Festus succeeds Felix as Procurator of Judea
- 59-60 AD** - Paul's trial before Festus & Agrippa (Acts 25.1-26.32)
- 60-61 AD** - Sea Journey to Rome (Acts 27.1-28.16)
- 61-63 AD** - Paul under house arrest (Acts 28.16-31)
- 61-62 AD - Paul writes Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon
- 62-63 AD - Paul writes Philippians
- 62 AD - Luke completes Gospel of Luke & Acts (Rome)
- 62 AD** - Martyrdom of James, Jesus' brother, in Jerusalem
- 63-65 AD** - ?Paul possibly visits Spain and the Aegean
- 64-65 AD - Jude writes his letter in the East
- 64-65 AD - Peter writes 1 & 2 Peter in Rome
- 64-65 AD - Paul writes 1 Timothy and Titus from the Aegean
- 64-65 AD - First possible date for writing of Hebrews
- 64 AD - Great Fire of Rome. Roman Christians persecuted by Nero
- 64-65 AD** - Peter martyred in the Neronian persecution
- 64-67 - Mark finalises Peter's preaching as Mark's gospel
- 66-67 AD** - Paul's final imprisonment, writes 2 Timothy, martyrdom
- 65-67 AD - Matthew writes Gospel of Matthew in Antioch
- 65-67 AD - First possible date John writes Gospel of John in Ephesus
- 65-67 AD - Second possible date John writes 1,2,3 John in Ephesus
- 68 AD - Death of emperor Nero; year of 4 emperors till Vespasian
- 70 AD - Fall of Jerusalem
- 79 AD - Emperor Vespasian succeeded by Titus
- 81 AD - Emperor Titus succeeded by Domitian
- 90-96 AD** - Domitian persecution of Christians
- 91-92 AD - Second possible date for writing of Hebrews
- 91-92 AD - John writes Revelation on Patmos
- 96 AD - Death of emperor Domitian, succeeded by Nerva
- 98 AD - Death of emperor Nerva, succeeded by Trajan
- ?90-98 AD - Second possible date John writes Gospel of John in Ephesus
- ?90-98 AD - Second possible date John writes 1,2,3 John in Ephesus
- 98-99 AD** - John dies early in Trajan's reign.

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