

T H E
CEB
STUDY BIBLE

THE BOOK OF MARK
plus excerpts from Exodus and Leviticus

BY THE NUMBERS: THE CEB STUDY BIBLE

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

700 TOTAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE CEB STUDY BIBLE PROJECT

340 Scholars **260** Pastors **100** Laypeople



TRANSLATORS

120 Biblical Scholars
94 Men 26 Women



CONTRIBUTORS

69 Contributors
48 Men 21 Women



EDITORIAL BOARD

8 Editors
5 Men 3 Women

24 Denominations



COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE

66 books of the Bible
1,189 chapters in the Bible
18 books of the Apocrypha (separate edition)
204 chapters in the Apocrypha



THE CEB STUDY BIBLE

Thousands of study notes
297 sidebar articles
5 in-depth articles
21 maps
Concordance



Shedding new light on the journey of faith

God's Word doesn't change but our words do. Sometimes we need a little help to understand ancient meanings, cross cultural bridges, and line up the rich layers of mystery and revelation.

The CEB Study Bible was specifically designed to help the reader gain new insight, benefit from the wisdom of others, and embrace a new season of transformation. It sets the stage for new discoveries and causes the reader to experience the power of scripture in fresh ways.

In short, The CEB Study Bible is a readable, reliable, and relevant invitation to grow in God.

Your word is a lamp before my feet
and a light for my journey.

Psalms 119:105

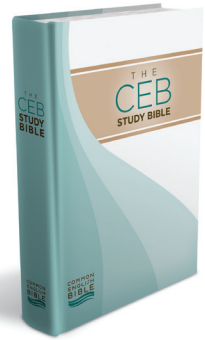
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Relate to the Study Bible that Relates to You

Who is using The CEB Study Bible?

- A pastor or small-group leader at a local church who is preparing for a sermon or to lead a Bible study
- Christians who want deeper understanding of the Bible and how it fits into the context of the culture and history of the time
- Adults and teens looking for a Bible and study notes that are extremely readable and undeniably reliable to original texts
- College professors teaching “Introduction to Religion” and “Introduction to the Bible” and their students
- Collectors of study Bibles
- Seekers wanting to know more about the Bible



Who are the translators?

Translated by a diverse group of:

- 120 biblical scholars
- 22 faith traditions represented
- Reviewed by 27 reading groups

What faith communities were represented in the creation of The CEB Study Bible?

The translators, reviewers, and editors represent the following faith communities:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • African Methodist Episcopal Church | • Moravian |
| • American Baptist | • National Baptist |
| • Anglican | • Presbyterian (USA) |
| • Baptist | • Progressive National Baptist |
| • Baptist General Conference | • Quaker |
| • Church of the Nazarene | • Reformed Church in America |
| • Disciples of Christ | • Reform Judaism |
| • Episcopal Church | • Roman Catholic Church |
| • Evangelical Free Church | • Seventh-Day Adventist |
| • Evangelical Lutheran Church | • United Church of Christ |
| • Free Methodist | • United Methodist |
| • Mennonite | |

Readability

It means more than traversing phrases on a page. It means truly comprehending the words, the sentences, the ideas, and their meaning. Within its refreshingly approachable format, The CEB Study Bible offers guidance through more than 300 thought-provoking articles and abundant study notes throughout, written by respected biblical authorities who amplify the meaning of the text and set the reader on the path to new understanding.

Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you really understand what you are reading?” The man replied, “Without someone to guide me, how could I?” Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him.

Acts 8:30–31

The CEB Study Bible Has Unique Features that Give the Reader Deeper Understanding

- The CEB Study Bible includes five insightful articles that give readers an in-depth foundation from which to approach this unique resource
 - *The Authority of Scripture*, Joel B. Green
 - *How We Got Our Bible*, Daniel G. Reid
 - *Guidelines for Reading the Bible*, Brian D. Russell
 - *Chronology of the Bible*, Pamela J. Scalise
 - *The Unity of the Bible*, Marianne Meyne Thompson
- 21 full-color maps from *National Geographic*, with indexes
- Weight and measure conversions to modern scales
- Additional in-text maps and informational charts
- Comprehensive concordance
- Beautifully printed in full color throughout

MARK

Mark's Gospel tells the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. As the shortest NT Gospel, it's often overlooked by those who want to know more about Jesus' ministry. Mark has no birth story. Leaves out many of Jesus' famous teachings, and ends before the risen Jesus appears to his disciples. At times its portrait of both Jesus and the disciples can be troubling. In Mark, Jesus confronts both friend and foe, and even seems to challenge God (Mark 14:36; 15:34). The disciples fail to grasp Jesus' message again and again (Mark 4:13; 6:52; 8:17-21) and disappear when Jesus faces death (Mark 14:27, 50).

In spite of these features—or perhaps because of them—readers appreciate the power of Mark's Gospel. It's probably the earliest written Gospel, and it brings an urgent message about God's coming kingdom. In Mark, Jesus shows the world what that kingdom looks like through deeds of power as well as suffering. Along the way he encourages others to trust

in God's kingdom and join forces with him as God's power defeats evil at every turn. In the end, Jesus' resurrection displays God's power over death itself.

No one knows exactly who wrote this Gospel. The title "according to Mark" was added in the 2nd century CE. Early Christian tradition claims that Mark wrote down the apostle Peter's memories. Others have identified this Mark as the John Mark who traveled with the apostle Paul (see Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37-39; Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; Phlm 24).

Mark is the second of the four Gospels in the NT, but it likely predates all of them for several reasons. First, it's shorter and less polished in style. Second, it tells the story with urgency, using the word "immediately" some 40 times, as though the whole story of Jesus' life rushes toward its climax in his crucifixion. Finally, although Matthew and Luke include much of Mark's message word for word in their Gospels, both add important information about



Full-page width photo size. This is a caption styled as CEBSEARCHPROM. This is a caption styled as CEBSEARCHPROM. This is a caption styled as CEBSEARCHPROM. This is a caption styled as CEBSEARCHPROM.

A full-color photograph or image pertinent to the book is present in each introduction

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 - A. Baptism by John the Baptist (1:1-11)
 - B. Jesus' wilderness testing (1:12-13)
 - C. Jesus proclaims God's coming kingdom (1:15-15)
- II. Jesus' Ministry of Word and Deed (1:16-6:52)
 - A. In and around Galilee (1:16-4:41)
 1. Calling disciples, healing, and proclamation (1:16-45)
 2. Encountering opposition (2:1-3:35)
 3. Defining and instructing his own (4:1-34)
 4. Failed discipleship at sea (4:35-41)
 - B. To the other side of the lake and back again (5:1-6:52)
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- IV. A Two-Stage Healing (8:22-26)
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- V. Epilogue: Resurrection and Silence (16:1-8)
 - a. The significance of Jesus' identity as Christ (8:27-9:1)
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 - a. Death and greatness redefined (9:30-37)
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 - c. A widow's offering (12:41-44)
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 - a. Preparation for death (14:1-15:47)
 - b. Jesus' case before the authorities (14:53-15:15)
 - c. Jesus' suffering and death (15:16-41)
 - d. Jesus' burial (15:42-47)

Suzanne Watts Henderson

An outline of the book helps readers see its structure and find significant sections

Reliability

The CEB Study Bible was built on the assembled knowledge of a diverse, cross-denominational group of 340 scholars, 260 pastors, and 100 laypeople drawing inspiration from scripture—not tradition or church doctrine. Exhaustive attention has been paid to ensure the work is impeccably balanced, rich in insight, and easily applied to everyday life. The reader is free to contemplate study materials and invite God's guidance to gain personal understanding.

Every scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for showing mistakes, for correcting, and for training character, so that the person who belongs to God can be equipped to do everything that is good.

2 Timothy 3:16–17

Relevance

The times change but the Word of God remains the same. It meets you where you are, providing guidance for every situation you face and every season of life. With its cross-references, footnotes, and articles, The CEB Study Bible builds bridges to everyday life, placing meaningful discovery at your fingertips. Whether used for individual reflection or group exploration, The CEB Study Bible provides a thought-provoking entrance into scripture.

Jesus Christ is the
same yesterday, today,
and forever.

Hebrews 13:8

The Authority of Scripture

Joel B. Green

UNCORRECTED PROOF

Around the world and across time, millions of Christians have gathered and continue to gather regularly to hear the scriptures read in worship. When the reading is finished, the worship leader recites the familiar words and God's people respond.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

These words, simple as they are, bear profound witness to the church's belief that, in the reading and proclaiming of scripture, we encounter God's own voice. The word spoken at creation (Gen 1), the word that is "sweeter than honey in my mouth" (Ps 119:103), the word that doesn't return empty but accomplishes what the Lord intends (Isa 55:10-11), the word that John identifies with Jesus (John 1:1-14), the word that sometimes leads to the harassment of God's people (Rev 1:9) and yet continues to grow (Acts 12:24)—this is the word we embrace as we attend to the scriptural voice of God. And the liturgy reminds us that we attend to scripture most faithfully when we do so together in worship.

Of course, the Bible can be read in many ways. The Bible is a collection of books, an anthology. We find in its pages poetry and letters, historical narratives and visions, proverbs and oracles. For good reason, then, we might turn to the Bible as literature. Or we might turn to it as history. We find among the biblical writings a keen interest in the beginnings of Abraham and Sarah's people, the gathering of a tribal people as a nation, the rise and fall of leaders and kings, the movements and counter-movements of nations, the story of Jesus' life and ministry, as well as the origins of the church and its spread across the Roman Empire. When we attend to these books as the church's Book, however, we do so because of our shared belief that this collection of documents is nothing less than the Christian scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Together, the Old and New Testaments make up the authoritative witness to God's work in the world.

We ought to consider the literary qualities of these documents. We need to reflect on the many ways that these books refer to the realities of ancient communities and cultures. Respecting the books of the Bible requires that we take seriously their literary artistry, their literary forms, and their literary purpose. Respecting the books of the Bible requires us to study them against the background of ancient customs, institutions, and geography. Reading the Old and New Testaments as scripture includes but also surpasses these kinds of methodological concerns, however. We come to scripture with ears attuned and hearts open to what the Holy Spirit is saying to God's people. Reading and hearing these words as the church's scriptures, we seek not only to understand the Bible's message but also to "stand under" its authority. We seek not only to know but to be known. We put into the practice the famed words of Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752): "Apply yourself wholly to the text; apply the text wholly to yourself." We open our lives, corporately and individually, to the ways, through scripture, we might grow in Christ-likeness and come to reflect more faithfully God's own image.

Embracing Scripture's Authority

Although the biblical books might be read for many reasons, the simple fact that these particular books have been gathered into this particular collection has nothing to do with

the Bible's status as a compilation of literary works or a history book. We open the Bible as God's people and return again and again to its pages because of its special status as the church's scriptures. We give the Bible to those who are baptized and confirmed, and we gather in circles around the Bible for study, because we believe that in and through the Bible we encounter God. Let's think together about what it means when we agree that the Bible is the authoritative witness to God's work in the world.

Reading the Bible with the Church

First, it means that we locate ourselves within the church, which finds its true identity in scripture. It is the church that affirms that the Bible is God's Word, and in doing so the church recognizes the origin, role, and aim of these texts in God's self-communication. We also recognize that the biblical documents were written by God's people for God's people, so that it is with and among God's people that we are best positioned to read the scriptures faithfully.

When we speak of the church, we naturally refer to God's people today as they gather for worship and fellowship and then are sent forth for mission and service. But we also refer to the church as it has heard and read the Bible over time, from the church's beginnings some two thousand years ago until today. Jesus' disciples learned to read the scriptures in the synagogues of their youth. They then became apprentices to Jesus himself, who led them further into the truth of scripture. These Christ-followers were filled with the Spirit at Pentecost, and believed that the Spirit guided them further in their understanding and proclamation of the scriptures. This is how the long history of the church begins—a history that can rightly be understood as the story of how Christians have read the Bible and learned to practice its teaching. Among the ways we take seriously the character of scripture as the church's Book, then, is to take seriously the ways Christians throughout the ages have found their lives shaped through their reading and engagement with the Bible.

We recognize that the church has not always provided good examples of how to read its scriptures. The Bible has been used to support injustices of many kinds, whether the persecution of the Jewish people, the institution of slavery, practices of racism, or the abuse of women. Our increased awareness of how the church has misused the Bible can be instructive, too, however. By keeping in mind some of the ways the Bible has been badly interpreted and misappropriated, we stay alert to the ways in which we allow our own assumptions and allegiances to hijack the Bible's message of liberation and love, holiness and hope.

Struggling with Scripture

Embracing scripture's authority doesn't mean that we turn a blind eye to those parts of the Bible that seem strange to us, or that seem to run counter to its overall message. The biblical documents were written in cultures that were male-dominated, so it shouldn't surprise us to discover that they often portray authority in families and social groups as generally reserved for men. But this doesn't mean that the church that acknowledges scripture's authority should likewise reserve positions of authority for men. And the same could be said for those parts of the Bible that presume various forms of institutional slavery, for example, or those biblical stories in which God's people take up and wield instruments of war. To embrace scripture's authority sometimes means struggling with scripture. In fact, it is precisely because we affirm scripture's authority that we sometimes must struggle with it, rather than ignore or dismiss texts that trouble us.

How might we struggle with scripture? To return to the question of the place of women, for example, we might do so by taking special notice of those texts that promote the status of women in positions of leadership in families, tribal groups, and churches. We might account for the historical contexts within which these documents were written. We might listen to how the global church, and the church across time, has listened to these texts. And we might work to understand individual texts within the whole of scripture's testimony.

Here's another example: We can recognize that scripture calls us to participate in actions that show that God has made us one people in spite of our racial, national, social, and other differences without thinking that the only way to do so is to "say hello to each other with a holy kiss." This is true even though several biblical texts direct us to do just that! (See Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; 1 Pet 5:14.)

Scripture Never Alone

Since the 16th century, Christians in the Protestant tradition of the church have used the slogan, *sola scriptura*, "by scripture alone." This is a useful reminder of the central, authoritative role of the Bible in the life and faith of the church. But it can be problematic when we take it to mean either that scripture is the only way God has revealed God's character and ways to us or that all we need to be faithful to God is the Bible. Scripture itself teaches that something of God's character is known through what God has made (e.g., Ps 19:1-6; Rom 1:20). And practically from the beginning of the church we have example after example of how easy it is to read the Bible in ways that aren't at all faithful to the God of the Bible. As the saying goes, even the devil can read the Bible (see Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)!

Irenaeus, the 2nd-century Christian theologian, offers this analogy: Someone might collect from Homer's poetry phrases and names, then use them to write a poem that might actually fool some people into thinking that it had been written by Homer. After all, it sounds like Homer. (Today, we might say the same thing about Shakespeare.) In the same way, Irenaeus wrote, people who hold to beliefs that differ markedly from those held by the Christian church try to collect terms, phrases, and names scattered throughout scripture, then use them to tell their own story. The result might sound like scripture, but it wouldn't have any genuine relation to the story scripture itself tells. This is because those people disregard what Irenaeus calls the "order and connection" of the scriptures. For Irenaeus—and for the church across time—the medicine needed to fend off these bad readings of scripture is not only careful reading of biblical texts (though this is certainly needed), we also need what the early church often called the Rule of Faith, which would soon take form in the great creeds that all branches of the church—Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant—affirm. We share three creeds: the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. And the purpose of these creeds is to teach us how to read scripture faithfully by reminding us of the Bible's order and connection. Part of what it means to read scripture within the church is that our readings of scripture take seriously what we might call the plotline of scripture as this is represented in the church's great creeds.

Authority as Invitation

Notice that the Bible doesn't spend a lot of time simply telling us what to do. This is mostly because the Bible isn't like an antiquated book of manners; it isn't really a handbook for living or a moral codebook. This is obvious enough when we recognize how often it addresses issues that don't concern us much (like whether to eat meat sacrificed to idols) and how often it doesn't address issues that do concern us (like where we should relocate Aunt Sue who is suffering from severe dementia—at home with us or in a healthcare facility). Scripture does call on God's people, but it does so in less direct ways. For example, scripture invites us to find the history of our people, God's people, and, therefore, our true identity in its story of God's relationship with Israel and the early church. The story we are telling or writing with our lives, then, wouldn't be tied to "the American dream." Instead, our life stories would continue the story of exodus and reconciliation in Christ, of the coming of the Spirit and the gathering of Christ's followers in communities of faith concerned with God's mission in the world. Scripture shapes our imaginations (what we take to be real and possible and true), reminds us of our commitments, asks us to consider reasoned arguments, and urges us to

reflect on the goodness of God and the nature of our responses to God's goodness. It molds and persuades, but rarely demands.

As we give ourselves to life in the Holy Spirit and to engagement with scripture, God works in our lives. God leads us further into scripture, and we find the Bible more and more to be true. This means that what is needed most are people deeply rooted in faithful communities of discipleship, people in whom the Spirit is making real God's Word, people who are learning firsthand that scripture gives us true access to God's voice.

God speaks, and this is the basis for scripture's authority. Through scripture, God convinces us that things between God and humanity—indeed, between God and all creation—are just as we find them described in scripture. By embracing scripture's authority, we are drawn into the story of scripture, and especially more deeply into relationship with scripture's primary character, that is, with God.

What does it mean to affirm the authority of the Bible, then? When we acknowledge scripture's authority, we reject attempts at revising its words so as to make them match our reality. Instead, we make sense of our reality, our lives, within its pages and according to its story. To embrace scripture's authority is to allow ourselves to be shaped by it thoroughly and fully. This shaping means that scripture's authority is less demand and more invitation. "Taste and see how good the Lord is!" (Ps 34:8). In scripture, we are invited to come and make our home in this story of God's ongoing and gracious purpose for God's people.

Attitudes and Postures

As with other books, Christians read the biblical documents by taking account of their literary forms, getting a sense of their historical background, and taking seriously the words on these pages. But Christians also read the Bible quite differently than they read other books. We don't come to scripture first and foremost in order to assess its historical basis or origins. We don't come to scripture primarily in order to summarize and organize its statements about God. Christians may do all of these things and more, but none of these represents a particularly Christian approach to scripture. Rather, Christians come to scripture to hear God's voice. They want to hear and do God's Word. Therefore, affirming scripture's authority can never be reduced to an academic exercise or logical argument by which we count the Bible as trustworthy. Our job isn't to prove or otherwise to protect the Bible. Indeed, attempts to protect the Bible assume that scripture's aims depend on human activity rather than on God's. What we need instead are attitudes of openness, humility, submission, and obedience. Christian readers of the Bible want to become familiar with ancient peoples and their cultures. We honor being schooled in the biblical languages. We want to cultivate good skills for reading the Bible. But, even more, we bring to the Bible our attitudes of acceptance, devotion, attention, and trust.

To affirm scripture's authority is to embrace habits of prayerful reading that lead to the conformity of our thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors to God's character and purpose as these are revealed in scripture. We find here in the pages of scripture who we are and what we are to become. We acknowledge and invite the ongoing work of scripture's divine author, the One who desires to shape us as a community, the church, God's people.

The Nature of Scripture

When we acknowledge scripture's authority, we recognize that the books gathered together in the Bible are special. The ancient world knew many books. Today, literally tens of millions of titles are cataloged, with some half-million new books added each year—in English alone! What makes this collection of books unique is its status as scripture. We can understand better what this means by thinking about the church's Book in the categories the Nicene Creed uses to describe the church: "We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church."

Scripture Is One

Although the books of the Bible are many, the church affirms scripture's unity. This unity is not a simple one, as though every book spoke with the same voice in the same way about the same things. Clearly, this isn't the case. For example, we have four Gospels in the New Testament. They all speak truthfully about the significance of Jesus of Nazareth, God's Son, but they do so in different ways. Mark and John have no stories of Jesus' birth, but Matthew and Luke do. Matthew, Mark, and Luke relate Jesus' teaching in parables, but we find no parables in John. All paint a portrait of Jesus, but these portraits aren't identical.

Instead, scripture's unity is a theological claim about the origins and aims of scripture, and especially about the God concerning whom scripture testifies. Unity rests in the church's recognition that the Bible finds its origins in the purpose and voice of the one God. The Bible tells the story of the Triune God as a single story, the plotline of which is set out in the church's creeds. The Bible reveals the one God: the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom Jesus called Father, who raised Jesus from the dead. And the Bible's message is interpreted to us with the help of the one Holy Spirit. The Bible's oneness can't and shouldn't be reduced to a statement about its historical contexts, its teaching on a given subject, or its literary character. Its unity is found in its witness to God.

Scripture Is Holy

We use the term "holy" to refer to a person or thing set aside for a particular purpose in service to God, for something or someone dedicated to God. This is a good way to think about authoritative scripture. On the one hand, these documents are like other ancient documents. Their authors are sometimes unknown. Some of these books reached their present form through down-to-earth processes of passing on and editing traditional stories and sayings. These documents were prepared with the usual writing materials, and the books of the Bible can be studied like any other document. On the other hand, these documents together form Holy scripture. Through the work of God's Spirit they have come to us as something more. God's Spirit was involved in the production of these texts. The church was led by God's Spirit to recognize these (and not other) documents as scripture. The church is enabled by God's Spirit to grasp the meaning of scripture, and to be grasped by it. We affirm that God has set these books aside to form the church's Book for the purpose of directing us into greater Christ-likeness.

Scripture Is Catholic

"Catholic" is another word for "universal." To affirm the catholicity of scripture is to affirm that all scripture is written for all of God's people in all times and in all places. The Christian scriptures aren't the possession of Americans only but are to be heard, read, and interpreted among Asians and Africans, and indeed throughout the world. The Christian scriptures aren't the possession of scholars only but belong to the whole church that gathers and scatters in the name of Jesus Christ. Nor are the Christian scriptures for Methodists or Baptists only but are the scriptures of all who call on the name of the Lord. Even if we always read the Bible in a local context, we remember that others throughout the church's history and around the world have turned and continue to turn to these same texts. God's Spirit empowers their reading, too, so what can we learn by hearing from these other students of scripture?

Scripture Is Apostolic

With the term "apostolic," we remind ourselves that Jesus and the band of apostles he gathered around himself were Jews who searched Israel's scriptures to learn of the nature and ways of God. We could hardly have a more firm affirmation of the significance of those scriptures, which we know as the Old Testament. Early Christians had no scriptures other than Israel's scriptures, which they read in relation to traditions about Jesus and letters from missionary leaders that would eventually be gathered into the New Testament. The books of

the New Testament were included in the New Testament largely because of their conformity with the gospel handed down by the apostles. Together, the Old and New Testaments bear witness to the eternal aims and particular workings of God. And they bear witness to the God who draws near to save and lead, both in exodus and in Jesus Christ. In the scriptures, then, we encounter the heart of our faith.

What Is Scripture For?

Christians have traditionally turned to 2 Timothy 3:16-17 as a way of talking about the nature of scripture's authority. "Every scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for showing mistakes, for correcting, and for training character, so that the person who belongs to God can be equipped to do everything that is good." This text is helpful for anyone thinking about scripture's authority, for two reasons. First, it reminds us of the claim of our faith, that scripture has its origins in the aims and voice of God. Like the Old Testament prophets, scripture speaks because God has first spoken. Scripture bears witness to God because God enables speech about God and God's activity in the world. Second, it reminds us of the purpose or direction of scripture's authority. The role of scripture isn't really to teach us lessons about history, medicine, archaeology, architecture, science, geography, and so on. The Bible has things to say about all of these subjects, and others besides, but this isn't the focus of the Bible's authority in the church. Instead, engagement with scripture should produce this: "that the person who belongs to God can be equipped to do everything that is good." We exhibit best our beliefs about the Bible not so much by what we say about the Bible but through scripture-shaped hearts and lives.

In addition to this article by Joel B. Green, The CEB Study Bible includes these in-depth articles:

How We Got Our Bible, Daniel G. Reid
Guidelines for Reading the Bible, Brian D. Russell
Chronology of the Bible, Pamela J. Scalise
The Unity of the Bible, Maryanne Meye Thompson

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Mark's Gospel tells the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. As the shortest NT Gospel, it's often overlooked by those who want to know more about Jesus' ministry. Mark has no birth story, leaves out many of Jesus' famous teachings, and ends before the risen Jesus appears to his disciples. At times its portrait of both Jesus and the disciples can be troubling. In Mark, Jesus confronts both friend and foe, and even seems to challenge God (Mark 14:36; 15:34). The disciples fail to grasp Jesus' message again and again (Mark 4:13; 6:52; 8:17-21) and disappear when Jesus faces death (Mark 14:27, 50).

In spite of these features—or perhaps because of them—readers appreciate the power of Mark's Gospel. It's probably the earliest written Gospel, and it brings an urgent message about God's coming kingdom. In Mark, Jesus shows the world what that kingdom looks like through deeds of power as well as suffering. Along the way he encourages others to trust in

God's kingdom and to join forces with him as God's power defeats evil at every turn. In the end, Jesus' resurrection displays God's power over death itself.

No one knows exactly who wrote this Gospel. The title "according to Mark" was added in the 2nd century CE. Early Christian tradition claims that Mark wrote down the apostle Peter's memories. Others have identified this Mark as the John Mark who traveled with the apostle Paul (see Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37-39; Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; Phlm 24).

Mark is the second of the four Gospels in the NT, but it likely predates all of them for several reasons. First, it's shorter and less polished in style. Second, it tells the story with urgency, using the word "immediately" some 40 times, as though the whole story of Jesus' life rushes toward its climax in his crucifixion. Finally, although Matthew and Luke include much of Mark's message word for word in their Gospels, both add important information about



The Mount of Olives from the Golden Gate (Mark 11:1)
Todd Bolen/Bibleplaces.com

Jesus' birth, his teachings, and his appearances after the resurrection. They also improve Mark's grammar and style. Most scholars believe, then, that the authors of Matthew and Luke used Mark as a written source.

When was Mark written and for whom? Most scholars think the evangelist wrote between 65 and 72 CE. Some believe Mark's audience was Roman Christians, those followers of Christ whom the emperor Nero blamed for a destructive fire in 64 CE. The Gospel's emphasis on Jesus' model of suffering (see 8:34-38) may have been intended to encourage those harassed by Roman authorities (see Mark 13:9) in the fire's aftermath. On the other hand, the Gospel may have first addressed Christians closer to Palestine, perhaps in Syria. Mark 13 seems to reflect the turmoil associated with the Jewish War (66-70 CE), and the theme of Jewish-Christian conflict emerges early in the story (see Mark 2:1-3:6). Whenever it originated, this Gospel emphasizes the cost of following Jesus.

What is a Gospel? Since it portrays Jesus' virtue, some view Mark as an example of Greco-Roman biography. Yet it is more than that. This Gospel also reads like Jewish religious history (e.g., 1-2 Kgs) because it reflects strong religious commitments. It includes the sort of prophecy we find in Jewish writings and reflects a belief that the end of the world is coming soon. Perhaps most important, Mark locates stories about Jesus within the larger story of God's coming kingdom. This Gospel presents a historical narrative that calls for a faithful response to the good news about God's kingdom.

The main story line establishes Jesus of Nazareth as the Jewish Christ, the one anointed to bring God's kingdom to earth. ("Christ" is the Greek word for the Hebrew term "Messiah." Both words can be used to refer to someone anointed by God.) From the beginning we learn that this is a story about the "good news" (or gospel) that "God's kingdom" is fast

approaching (Mark 1:14-15). While he heals the sick, casts out demons, tames nature, and challenges religious and political authorities, Jesus also wages hand-to-hand combat against the power of evil. As the story progresses, the tone grows more somber, and Jesus explains the sacrifice that's required from those who take God's side in this confrontation (Mark 8:34-37; 13:9-13). But that's not the end of the story. The women who search for his dead body find instead an empty tomb and this word of hope: "He has been raised. He isn't here" (Mark 16:6).

It's helpful to understand this story in relation to Jewish patterns of thinking that were common in Jesus' day. Many who suffered under Rome's rule desperately hoped that God's heavenly kingdom would gain a foothold on the earth. Mark's good news is that, in Jesus, that kingdom has indeed come near. Those loyal to God's kingdom will suffer in the meantime, but salvation will soon arrive throughout the earth. The message is clear. Followers of Jesus must hold on, keep the faith, and await God's renewal of the world (see Mark 13:14).

Perhaps what's most compelling about Mark is that Jesus' disciples are far from perfect in this story. Sometimes they misunderstand Jesus' teaching (Mark 4:13). At other times they fail to appreciate his power (Mark 4:40; 6:52). They also seek status instead of service (Mark 9:34-37; 10:35-40). They sleep when he's asked them to remain awake (Mark 14:32-42); they scatter when he's arrested (Mark 14:50); and Peter denies him not once but three times (Mark 14:66-72). Despite these faults, Jesus never gives up on his followers. He remains with them, nudging them toward faithfulness. Even after his death and resurrection, a messenger delivers word to the women at Jesus' tomb that Jesus is "going ahead" of the disciples to Galilee (Mark 16:7). Even after his death, the risen Jesus promises his presence as his followers continue to trust God's coming kingdom.

I. Prologue: Baptism and Opening Proclamation (1:1-15)

- A. Baptism by John the Baptist (1:1-11)
- B. Jesus' wilderness testing (1:12-13)
- C. Jesus proclaims God's coming kingdom (1:14-15)

II. Jesus' Ministry of Word and Deed (1:16-6:52)

- A. In and around Galilee (1:16-4:41)
 - 1. Calling disciples, healing, and proclamation (1:16-45)
 - 2. Encountering opposition (2:1-3:35)
 - 3. Defining and instructing his own (4:1-34)
 - 4. Failed discipleship at sea (4:35-41)
- B. To the other side of the lake and back again (5:1-6:52)
 - 1. Stemming the tide of evil (5:1-53)
 - 2. Rejection in Nazareth and commission of the Twelve (6:1-13)
 - 3. Recalling John the Baptist's death (6:14-29)
 - 4. Engaging the disciples in feeding 5,000 men (6:30-44)
 - 5. Failed discipleship at sea (6:45-52)

III. Among the Gentiles (6:53-8:21)

- A. Healing and opposition (6:53-7:37)
- B. Feeding 4,000 people and opposition (8:1-13)
- C. Failed discipleship at sea (8:14-21)

IV. A Two-Stage Healing (8:22-26)

V. Jesus' Sacrificial Ministry (8:27-15:47)

- A. The way of the cross (8:27-10:52)
 - 1. Jesus predicts his suffering and self-sacrifice for the first time (8:27-9:29)

- a. The significance of Jesus' identity as Christ (8:27-9:1)
 - b. The prophetic roots of Jesus' identity as Christ (9:2-13)
 - c. God's power through prayer (9:14-29)
- 2. Jesus predicts his suffering a second time and teaches about power reversal (9:30-10:31)
 - a. Death and greatness redefined (9:30-37)
 - b. The cause of the "little ones" (9:38-10:16)
 - c. Wealth as an obstacle (10:17-31)
 - 3. Jesus predicts his suffering a third time and teaches about servant leadership (10:32-45)
 - 4. Blindness restored (10:46-52)
- B. Jesus in Jerusalem (11:1-15:47)
 - 1. Jesus challenges the Jerusalem leaders (11:1-12:44)
 - a. Entry into Jerusalem (11:1-26)
 - b. Criticism of temple authorities (11:27-12:40)
 - c. A widow's offering (12:41-44)
 - 2. Jesus teaches his disciples about things to come (13:1-37)
 - 3. Jesus' trial and death (14:1-15:47)
 - a. Preparation for death (14:1-52)
 - b. Jesus' case before the authorities (14:53-15:15)
 - c. Jesus' suffering and death (15:16-41)
 - d. Jesus' burial (15:42-47)

VI. Epilogue: Resurrection and Silence (16:1-8)

Suzanne Watts Henderson

1:1 Mt 4:3,
Mt 14:33

1:2 Mal 3:1;
Mt 11:10;
Lk 1:76, Lk 7:27

1:3 Is 40:3;
Mt 3:3; Lk 3:4;
Jn 1:23

1:4 Mt 3:1;
Jn 1:26, Jn 3:23;
Ac 13:24,
Ac 19:3

1:5 Mt 3:5,
Mt 3:6; Jn 1:28

1:6 Lv 11:22;
2Ks 1:8; Mt 3:4

1:7 Ac 13:25
1:8 Jn 1:33;
Ac 1:5, Ac 11:16

1:9 Mt 2:23,
Mt 3:13; Lk 3:21,
Lk 3:22; Jn 1:32

1:10 Jn 1:32

1:11 Ps 2:7;
Is 42:1; Mt 3:17;
Mk 9:7

1:12 Mt 4:1;
Lk 4:1

1:13 Heb 4:15

Beginning of good news

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, God's Son, ²happened just as it was written about in the prophecy of Isaiah:

Look, I am sending my messenger before you.

He will prepare your way,

³*a voice shouting in the wilderness:*

*"Prepare the way for the Lord;
make his paths straight."^a*

John's preaching

⁴John was in the wilderness calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins. ⁵Everyone in Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to the Jordan River and were being baptized by John as they confessed their sins. ⁶John wore clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He announced, "One stronger than I am is coming after me. I'm not even worthy to bend over and loosen the strap of his sandals. ⁸I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Jesus is baptized and tempted

⁹About that time, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. ¹⁰While he was coming up out of the water, Jesus saw heaven splitting open and the Spirit, like a dove, coming down on him. ¹¹And there was a voice from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness."

¹²At once the Spirit forced Jesus out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among the wild animals, and the angels took care of him.

^aIsa 40:3; Mal 3:1; Exod 23:20

1:1 *good news*: The term "good news" (or gospel) describes the message that follows in Mark. In the Roman world good news followed victory in battle or the birth of an emperor. Mark traces the good news back to the OT, especially to Isaiah: the good news of God's coming to reign (Isa 40:3-9; 52:6). See note on Mark 1:2. *about Jesus Christ*: or of Jesus Christ. The good news includes Jesus' identity as the Christ, or anointed one. It's also Jesus' good news, since it's the message of his ministry (see Mark 1:14-15). Jesus' identity as the Christ gives him a special role in announcing the revelation of God's kingdom on earth. *God's Son*: This phrase is missing in some early copies of Mark, but it plays an important role throughout the Gospel (Mark 1:11; 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 12:6; 14:61; 15:39).

1:2 *as it was written*: Mark traces the story of Jesus back to Jewish scripture. *prophecy of Isaiah*: The quotation combines Isaiah 40:3 with Malachi 3:1 and Exodus 23:20. *prepare your way*: Isaiah looks forward to Israel's return from exile.

1:3 *wilderness*: In Jewish scripture the wilderness is often the place where God's people encounter God. Mark uses this setting throughout the Gospel (see Mark 1:12, 13, 35, 45; 6:31, 32, 35). Many Jews in Jesus' day thought God would deliver God's people, beginning in the wilderness.

1:4-8 See Matthew 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-20; John 1:19-28. Mark's story begins with John the Baptist. John was a Jewish prophet who challenged people to prepare for the arrival of God's kingdom.

1:4 *wilderness*: See note on Mark 1:3. *baptized*: Ritual cleansing from sin was a common practice in 1st-century

Judaism. Those who were pure were prepared for God's kingdom.

1:6 *John... honey*: These details connect John with the OT portrait of Elijah (see 2 Kgs 1:8). Many believed Elijah would return at the beginning of the end time (Mal 4:5-6).

1:9 *Nazareth of Galilee*: Jesus' hometown, Nazareth, is in the region of Galilee in modern-day northeastern Palestine. Jesus first appears in Mark as an adult.

1:10 *heaven splitting open*: Jesus' baptism bridges the gap between heaven and earth. Mark's language associates it with divine revelation (see Isa 64:1; 15:38). Later, in Mark 15:38-39, the ripping of the temple curtain precedes the centurion's confession of Jesus as God's Son.

1:11 *my Son, whom I dearly love*: See Mark 1:1; Psalm 2:7. In the OT the term "God's son" sometimes applied to kings, to the people of Israel, or to the faithful. For Mark's audience, the name designates Jesus' special role in God's coming kingdom (see Rom 1:1-4).

1:12-13 Mark's account of Jesus' time in the wilderness lacks the details found in the other Gospels (see Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13).

1:12 *At once*: Mark regularly uses phrases that convey the urgent nature of Jesus' ministry (see, for instance, Mark 1:18, 20, 21, 23, 28, 29, 30, 42, 43).

1:13 *forty days*: This length of time is important for Mark. In the OT the Israelites spent 40 years in the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt and before entering the promised land. *wild animals*: Jesus is apparently at ease in nature. Mark may be referring to the covenant promised in Hosea 2:18, where harmony with creation will be reestablished.

Jesus' message

¹⁴After John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee announcing God's good news, ¹⁵saying, "Now is the time! Here comes God's kingdom! Change your hearts and lives, and trust this good news!"

Jesus calls disciples

¹⁶As Jesus passed alongside the Galilee Sea, he saw two brothers, Simon and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷"Come, follow me," he said, "and I'll show you how to fish for people." ¹⁸Right away, they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹After going a little farther, he saw James and John, Zebedee's sons, in their boat repairing the fishing nets. ²⁰At that very moment he called them. They followed him, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired workers.

Jesus throws a demon out

²¹Jesus and his followers went into Capernaum. Immediately on the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and started teaching. ²²The people were amazed by his teaching, for he was teaching them with authority, not like the legal experts. ²³Suddenly, there in the synagogue, a person with an evil spirit screamed, ²⁴"What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are. You are the holy one from God."

²⁵"Silence!" Jesus said, speaking harshly to the demon. "Come out of him!" ²⁶The unclean spirit shook him and screamed, then it came out.

²⁷Everyone was shaken and questioned among themselves, "What's this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands unclean spirits and they obey him!" ²⁸Right away the news about him spread throughout the entire region of Galilee.

Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law

²⁹After leaving the synagogue, Jesus, James, and John went home with Simon and Andrew. ³⁰Simon's mother-in-law was in bed, sick with a fever, and they told Jesus about her at once. ³¹He went to her, took her by the hand, and raised her up. The fever left her, and she served them.

Jesus' ministry spreads

³²That evening, at sunset, people brought to Jesus those who were sick or demon-possessed. ³³The whole town gathered near the door. ³⁴He healed many who were sick with all kinds of diseases, and he threw out many demons. But he didn't let the demons speak, because they recognized him.

1:14 Mt 4:12, Mt 4:17, Mt 4:23

1:15 Mt 3:2; Ac 20:21; Ga 4:4; Eph 1:10

1:16 Mt 4:18; Jn 1:40

1:17 Mt 4:19

1:19 Mt 4:21; Mk 3:17; Ac 1:13

1:20 Mt 4:21

1:21 Mt 4:13; Mt 4:23; Mk 1:39; Lk 4:31

1:22 Mt 7:28, Mt 7:29; Mk 6:2, Mk 7:37, Mk 11:18

1:23 Mt 8:28, Mt 9:32, Mt 15:22; Mk 5:2; Lk 4:33

1:24 Mt 8:29; Mk 5:7; Lk 1:35, Lk 24:19; Ac 3:14

1:25 Mk 9:25

1:26 Mk 9:20, Mk 9:26

1:27 Mt 7:29, Mt 8:27, Mt 9:33, Mt 12:23, Mt 13:54

1:28 Mt 4:24

1:29 Mt 8:14; Lk 4:38

1:30 Mk 1:29; Lk 4:38; 1Co 9:5

1:31 Mt 4:23; Mt 8:14; Lk 4:38; Ac 9:41

1:32 Mt 4:24

1:33 Mt 4:25, Mt 13:2, Mt 19:2; Mk 2:2, Mk 3:20

1:34 Mt 4:23; Mk 3:12; Ac 16:18

1:14-15 See Matthew 4:12-17; Luke 4:14-15. Mark summarizes Jesus' message.

1:14 *After... arrested:* Mark portrays Jesus as John's successor. Their ministries don't overlap. *God's good news:* Mark clarifies the content of that good news in Mark 1:15. See note on Mark 1:1.

1:15 *Now is the time!:* or the time has been fulfilled. What people have been waiting for is now on the horizon. *God's kingdom:* See sidebar, "God's Kingdom" at Mark 3. *Change your hearts and lives:* Like John, Jesus calls for an active response to the good news. *trust this good news:* In Mark, Jesus builds people's trust in God and in the truth of God's kingdom (cf. John 20:30-31). See sidebar, "Faith/Trust" at Mark 11.

1:16-20 See Matthew 4:18-22; Luke 5:1-11. Jesus' first public act is to call four fishermen to follow him. See sidebar, "The Disciples in Mark" at Mark 5.

1:17 *follow me:* In Judaism rabbis often shared their wisdom with their followers. *fish for people:* The OT prophet Jeremiah writes about God calling people to "catch" others in the net of God's coming kingdom (see Jer 16:16).

1:21-28 See Matthew 7:28-29; Luke 4:31-37.

1:21 *Capernaum:* a seaside Galilean village. *synagogue:* a Jewish community center for instruction and prayer.

1:22 *amazed:* People often respond to Jesus with amazement (see Mark 6:2; 7:37; 10:26; 12:17). *legal experts:* This

group opposes Jesus throughout the Gospel (see Mark 2:6, 16). They were trained to interpret Jewish Law.

1:24 *us:* The plural pronoun suggests a host of evil spirits torment the man. *holy one from God:* Evil spirits often recognize Jesus' special relationship to God when humans don't (see Mark 1:34; 3:11).

1:25 *"Silence!":* Jesus rebukes the demon with a command that's common in ancient writings. In Mark, Jesus often keeps characters from telling others about his identity (see Mark 1:34; 3:11-12; 8:30; 9:30). See sidebar, "Secrecy" at Mark 8.

1:27 *"What's this? A new teaching... obey him!":* The crowd marvels at Jesus' authority in word and deed. Together, his instruction (Mark 1:22) and his power over evil (see also Mark 3:5; 6:7) suggest Jesus brings a divine presence into the world.

1:29-31 See Matthew 8:14-15; Luke 4:38-39.

1:31 *by the hand:* Jesus often heals by physical touch (see Mark 1:41; 5:41; 8:23, 25). This implies that health, rather than illness, is contagious. *she served them:* The verb recalls the angels' care for Jesus in the wilderness and is related to the term "deacon" (see Mark 1:13; 10:45). This healed woman plays an important role in the ministry of Jesus and his followers.

1:32-39 See Matthew 8:16-17; 4:23; Luke 4:40-44.

1:34 *threw out many demons:* Jesus removes evil from

1:35 Lk 4:42

1:37 Jn 12:19

1:38 Is 61:1

1:39 Mt 4:23,
Mt 9:35;
Mk 1:21; Lk 4:44

1:40 Mt 8:2;
Mk 10:17;
Lk 5:12

1:41 Mk 6:34

1:43 Mt 9:30

1:44 Lv 14:1,
Lv 14:2; Mt 8:4;
Mk 5:43,
Mk 7:36

1:45 Mk 2:2,
Mk 2:13; Mk 3:7;
Lk 5:15; Jn 6:2

2:1 Mt 9:1

2:2 Mk 1:33,
Mk 1:45,
Mk 2:13

2:3 Mt 9:2;
Lk 5:18

2:4 Lk 5:19

2:5 Mt 9:2

2:6 Mt 16:7

2:7 Is 43:25

2:8 Jn 2:25

2:9 Mk 2:5

2:10 Mt 9:6;
Ac 5:31;
Col 3:13

2:11 Jn 5:8

2:12 Mt 9:8,
Mt 9:33

³⁵Early in the morning, well before sunrise, Jesus rose and went to a deserted place where he could be alone in prayer. ³⁶Simon and those with him tracked him down. ³⁷When they found him, they told him, “Everyone’s looking for you!”

³⁸He replied, “Let’s head in the other direction, to the nearby villages, so that I can preach there too. That’s why I’ve come.” ³⁹He traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and throwing out demons.

A man with a skin disease

⁴⁰A man with a skin disease approached Jesus, fell to his knees, and begged, “If you want, you can make me clean.”

⁴¹Incensed,^b Jesus reached out his hand, touched him, and said, “I do want to. Be clean.”

⁴²Instantly, the skin disease left him, and he was clean. ⁴³Sternly, Jesus sent him away, ⁴⁴saying, “Don’t say anything to anyone. Instead, go and show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifice for your cleansing that Moses commanded. This will be a testimony to them.”

⁴⁵Instead, he went out and started talking freely and spreading the news so that Jesus wasn’t able to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, but people came to him from everywhere.

Healing and forgiveness

2After a few days, Jesus went back to Capernaum, and people heard that he was at home. ²So many gathered that there was no longer space, not even near the door. Jesus was speaking the word to them. ³Some people arrived, and four of them were bringing to him a man who was paralyzed. ⁴They couldn’t carry him through the crowd, so they tore off part of the roof above where Jesus was. When they had made an opening, they lowered the mat on which the paralyzed man was lying. ⁵When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Child, your sins are forgiven!”

⁶Some legal experts were sitting there, muttering among themselves, ⁷“Why does he speak this way? He’s insulting God. Only the one God can forgive sins.”

⁸Jesus immediately recognized what they were discussing, and he said to them, “Why do you fill your minds with these questions? ⁹Which is easier—to say to a paralyzed person, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take up your bed, and walk’? ¹⁰But so you will know that the Human One^c has authority on the earth to forgive sins”—he said to the man who was paralyzed, ¹¹“Get up, take your mat, and go home.”

¹²Jesus raised him up, and right away he picked up his mat and walked out in front of everybody. They were all amazed and praised God, saying, “We’ve never seen anything like this!”

^bMost critical editions of the Gk New Testament read *filled with compassion*. ^cOr *Son of Man*

those it possesses (see Mark 1:39; 3:13; 6:13). *didn’t let the demons speak*: See note on Mark 1:25.

1:35 a deserted place: or wilderness. See note on Mark 1:3.

1:38 the other direction: Jesus deliberately expands the scope of his ministry. Although he stays in Galilee for now, his travels will eventually take him into Gentile territory (see Mark 5:1; 6:53; 7:24, 31). This shows that God’s coming kingdom includes both Jewish and non-Jewish people (see Mark 13:27).

1:40–45 See Matthew 8:1–4; Luke 5:12–16.

1:40 skin disease: refers to different kinds of blemishes but probably not to what we today call leprosy (i.e., Hansen’s disease). According to Leviticus 13–14, skin disease disqualified people from participating in religious rituals. People with blemishes were kept apart from others to prevent the spread of their disease (see 2 Kgs 7:3–10; 2 Chron 26:19–21).

1:41 incensed: Some Greek manuscripts say that Jesus was “filled with compassion.” Scribes who made copies of Mark may have found Jesus’ anger troubling and softened the tone. This statement of Jesus’ fury, though, fits the aggressive nature of his combat against evil.

1:44 show yourself to the priest: Priests determined whether a person was clean or unclean. Jesus’ instruction is a reminder that he worked within Judaism, not outside of it.

1:45 the news: refers to Jesus’ message about God’s coming kingdom (see Mark 1:14–15; 2:2; 4:14–20; 5:36). *deserted places*: See note on Mark 1:3.

2:1–3:6 Mark presents a series of stories of conflict between Jesus and Jewish leaders.

2:1–12 See Matthew 9:1–8; Luke 5:17–26.

2:2 the word: See note on Mark 1:45.

2:5 their faith: In Mark faith is depending on the good news of God’s coming kingdom. These people show faith by trusting that Jesus offers God’s power over physical ailments. See sidebar, “Faith/Trust” at Mark 11.

2:6 legal experts: See note on Mark 1:22.

2:10 Human One: a common term in Mark (see Mark 2:28; 8:31, 38; 9:12; 10:45; 13:26; 14:21). As an agent of God’s coming kingdom, Jesus claims authority to forgive sins. He may suggest that people who trust God’s power will also have that authority. See sidebar, “The Human One in Mark” at Mark 14.

Eating with sinners

¹³Jesus went out beside the lake again. The whole crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. ¹⁴As he continued along, he saw Levi, Alphaeus' son, sitting at a kiosk for collecting taxes. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Levi got up and followed him.

¹⁵Jesus sat down to eat at Levi's house. Many tax collectors and sinners were eating with Jesus and his disciples. Indeed, many of them had become his followers. ¹⁶When some of the legal experts from among the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples, "Why is he eating with sinners and tax collectors?"

¹⁷When Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do. I didn't come to call righteous people, but sinners."

When to fast

¹⁸John's disciples and the Pharisees had a habit of fasting. Some people asked Jesus, "Why do John's disciples and the Pharisees' disciples fast, but yours don't?"

¹⁹Jesus said, "The wedding guests can't fast while the groom is with them, can they? As long as they have the groom with them, they can't fast. ²⁰But the days will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

²¹"No one sews a piece of new, unshrunk cloth on old clothes; otherwise, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and makes a worse tear. ²²No one pours new wine into old leather wineskins; otherwise, the wine would burst the wineskins and the wine would be lost and the wineskins destroyed. But new wine is for new wineskins."

Scripture and the Sabbath

²³Jesus went through the wheat fields on the Sabbath. As the disciples made their way, they were picking the heads of wheat. ²⁴The Pharisees said to Jesus, "Look! Why are they breaking the Sabbath law?"

²⁵He said to them, "Haven't you ever read what David did when he was in need, when he and those with him were hungry? ²⁶During the time when Abiathar was high priest, David went into God's house and ate the bread of the presence, which only the priests were allowed to eat. He also gave bread to those who were with him." ²⁷Then he said, "The Sabbath was created for humans; humans weren't created for the Sabbath. ²⁸This is why the Human One^d is Lord even over the Sabbath."

Healing on the Sabbath

3 Jesus returned to the synagogue. A man with a withered hand was there. ²Wanting to bring charges against Jesus, they were watching Jesus closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. ³He said to the man with the withered hand, "Step up where people can see you." ⁴Then he said to them, "Is it legal on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or

^dOr Son of Man

2:13 Mk 1:45, Mk 4:1
2:14 Mt 9:9; Mk 1:17, Mk 3:18; Lk 5:27
2:15 Mt 4:23, Mt 7:28, Mt 9:9, Mt 9:10, Mt 9:27
2:16 Mt 9:11; Mk 2:7; Lk 5:30, Lk 15:2; Ac 23:9
2:17 Lk 5:31, Lk 5:32; 1 Ti 1:15
2:18 Mt 9:14; Lk 5:33, Lk 18:12
2:19 Mt 9:15
2:20 Lk 17:22
2:21 Mt 9:16
2:22 Josh 9:4; Mt 9:17
2:23 Dt 23:25; Mt 12:1; Lk 6:1
2:24 Ex 20:10, Ex 31:15; Mt 12:2
2:25 1Sa 21:1; Mt 12:3, Mt 21:16; Mk 12:26; Lk 6:3
2:26 Lv 24:5; 1Sa 21:1; 2Sa 8:17; 1Ch 24:6
2:27 Ex 23:12; Dt 5:14; Col 2:16
2:28 Mt 12:8; Lk 6:5; Eph 1:22
3:1 Mt 12:9; Mk 1:21; Lk 6:6
3:2 Lk 11:54, Lk 14:1, Lk 20:20

2:13-17 See Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32. Mark combines another call to discipleship (2:13-14; see Mark 1:16-20) with a report about Jesus eating with *tax collectors and sinners* (2:15-17). These groups were typically excluded from normal social interaction.

2:16 *legal experts from among the Pharisees*: Here, Mark identifies these "legal experts" with another Jewish group, the Pharisees. Pharisees interpreted Jewish Law in a way that offered priestly status to everyone. Since that meant following standards of purity at home, table fellowship with sinners and tax collectors violated their reading of the Torah. See note on Mark 1:22.

2:17 Righteousness is a result, not a precondition, of sharing a meal with Jesus.

2:18-22 See Matthew 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39.

2:18 *fast*: Jewish Law required a yearly fast to prepare for God's forgiveness (Lev 16:29). Some Jews fasted more frequently as an act of devotion to God.

2:19 *wedding guests*: OT prophets often use wedding

imagery to express the joy that's a part of God's coming kingdom (see Isa 54:4-8; 62:4-5; Ezek 16:1-63; Hos 2:19).

2:21-22 Jesus points out the dangers of mixing *new* and *old*. His disciples aren't fasting because they belong to the new humanity as part of the community of Christ's followers.

2:23-28 See Matthew 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5. As a rabbi, Jesus is responsible for his disciples' actions.

2:26 *Abiathar*: 1 Samuel 21:1-6 says Ahimelech, not his son Abiathar, was high priest when David shared the sacred bread.

2:27 Jesus emphasizes the purpose of Jewish Law, which is to benefit humanity.

2:28 *This is why*: or so that. *Human One*: See sidebar, "The Human One in Mark" at Mark 14.

3:1-6 See Matthew 12:9-14; Luke 6:6-11. This story concludes the section that began in Mark 2:1.

3:2 *heal on the Sabbath*: The question of what was allowed on the Sabbath was debated. Mark portrays some Jews

3:5 Ro 11:25

3:6 Mt 12:14,
Mt 22:16;
Mk 12:13

3:7 Mt 4:25,
Mt 12:15;
Lk 6:17

3:8 Eze 35:15;
Mt 11:21;
Mk 7:24; Lk 6:17

3:9 Mk 4:1

3:10 Mt 4:23,
Mt 9:20,
Mt 14:36;
Mk 5:29,
Mk 6:56

3:11 Mt 4:3,
Mt 8:29,
Mt 14:33;
Mk 1:24; Lk 4:41

3:12 Mt 8:4,
Mt 12:16

3:13 Mt 10:1;
Lk 6:12

3:14 Mk 3:13,
Mk 6:7,
Mk 16:15;
Lk 9:1, Lk 10:1

3:15 Mt 10:1

3:16 Mt 10:2,
Mt 16:16;
Lk 6:14; Jn 1:42;
Ac 1:13

3:17 Mk 1:19,
Mk 5:37,
Mk 10:35,
Mk 14:33

3:18 Mt 9:9,
Mt 10:3, Mt 10:4;
Lk 6:14, Lk 6:15

3:19 Mt 10:4,
Mt 26:14,
Mt 26:47,
Mt 27:3,
Mk 14:10

to kill?” But they said nothing. ⁵Looking around at them with anger, deeply grieved at their unyielding hearts, he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” So he did, and his hand was made healthy. ⁶At that, the Pharisees got together with the supporters of Herod to plan how to destroy Jesus.

Healing and throwing demons out

⁷Jesus left with his disciples and went to the lake. A large crowd followed him because they had heard what he was doing. They were from Galilee, ⁸Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and the area surrounding Tyre and Sidon. ⁹Jesus told his disciples to get a small boat ready for him so the crowd wouldn’t crush him. ¹⁰He had healed so many people that everyone who was sick pushed forward so that they could touch him. ¹¹Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down at his feet and shouted, “You are God’s Son!” ¹²But he strictly ordered them not to reveal who he was.

Jesus appoints twelve apostles

¹³Jesus went up on a mountain and called those he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴He appointed twelve and called them apostles. He appointed them to be with him, to be sent out to preach, ¹⁵and to have authority to throw out demons. ¹⁶He appointed twelve: Peter, a name he gave Simon; ¹⁷James and John, Zebedee’s sons, whom he nicknamed Boanerges, which means “sons of Thunder”; ¹⁸and Andrew; Philip; Bartholomew; Matthew; Thomas; James, Alphaeus’ son; Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean,^e ¹⁹and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

God’s Kingdom In Mark the good news Jesus proclaims is that God’s kingdom is on the horizon. Historians agree this message was the trademark of Jesus’ earthly ministry. But how are we to understand the term “God’s kingdom”? For Mark it’s the very real hope, rooted in Jewish thought, that God’s power will soon overwhelm Rome’s. The book of Daniel, for instance, speaks of God’s kingdom at last prevailing over all the evil rulers who have gone before (Dan 7:26-27). In Mark, Jesus is the Jewish Christ who establishes God’s kingdom by fighting the forces of evil (Mark 3:27) wherever they appear—in demons, illness, human need, and abusive power. Even though he was writing several decades after Jesus’ death, Mark expects God’s kingdom will arrive at any moment. In the meantime, those who trust in God’s kingdom suffer at the hands of those whose power comes from the present evil age. By following a suffering Christ, Mark’s audience takes its place within God’s new world order, which uses power for good. Evil—even death itself—will finally lose its grip upon the earth.

^eOr zealot

who have a strict interpretation of the sabbath law, according to which healing on the Sabbath isn’t allowed.

3:5 with anger, deeply grieved: Mark notes Jesus’ emotional response to his opponents (see Mark 1:41; 14:19). *unyielding hearts:* Like Pharaoh in the OT (see Exod 7:3), the Pharisees resist God’s power.

3:6 supporters of Herod: Herod Antipas ruled Galilee during Jesus’ lifetime. The Pharisees joined forces with his supporters to achieve their destructive aims.

3:7-8 Galilee . . . Tyre and Sidon: Mark stresses the diversity of the crowd around Jesus. His followers come from both Jewish and non-Jewish locations.

3:7 lake: a term often used for the Sea of Galilee. Much of Jesus’ ministry takes place near this body of water (see Mark 1:16; 2:13; 4:1). *large crowd:* Mark contrasts the Pharisees’ destructive plans with Jesus’ increasing popularity.

3:10 touch him: See note on Mark 1:31.

3:11 God’s Son: See Mark 1:1, 11. *fell down at his feet:* a posture of worship (see Mark 5:33; 7:25). In Mark evil spirits recognize Jesus (see Mark 1:24).

3:12 strictly ordered them: See Mark 1:25, 43. See sidebar, “Secrecy” at Mark 8.

3:13-19 See Matthew 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16. Jesus calls and

equips his apostles to join his mission. See sidebar, “The Disciples in Mark” at Mark 5.

3:13 up on a mountain: Like Moses (Exod 19) and Elijah (1 Kgs 19:8), Jesus approaches God at a critical moment in his ministry. Unlike them, he enlists his followers to help reveal God’s kingdom.

3:14 twelve: In the OT Israel was made up of 12 tribes (see Gen 49:28; Num 1:4-16). In Jesus’ time, most of these had lost their identity through migration, exile, and intermarriage. By choosing 12 apostles, Jesus symbolized his mission to restore Israel as part of God’s coming kingdom (see Ezek 47:13). *apostles:* The term means “those who are sent out.” *be with him:* These apostles are called first to be “with” Jesus, to remain with him, and only then to be sent out. *preach:* The apostles will announce the same message (see Mark 1:45; 2:2) about God’s coming kingdom that Jesus proclaims (see Mark 1:14-15).

3:15 authority to throw out demons: Like Jesus, the apostles will exercise God’s power over evil spirits.

3:16-19 Peter . . . Judas Iscariot: Compare with the lists of apostles in Matthew 10:2-4; Luke 6:14-16; John 1:40-49; 21:2; Acts 1:13.

3:17 Boanerges . . . “sons of Thunder”: Mark translates the

Misunderstandings about Jesus

²⁰Jesus entered a house. A crowd gathered again so that it was impossible for him and his followers even to eat. ²¹When his family heard what was happening, they came to take control of him. They were saying, “He’s out of his mind!”

²²The legal experts came down from Jerusalem. Over and over they charged, “He’s possessed by Beelzebul. He throws out demons with the authority of the ruler of demons.”

²³When Jesus called them together he spoke to them in a parable: “How can Satan throw Satan out? ²⁴A kingdom involved in civil war will collapse. ²⁵And a house torn apart by divisions will collapse. ²⁶If Satan rebels against himself and is divided, then he can’t endure. He’s done for. ²⁷No one gets into the house of a strong person and steals anything without first tying up the strong person. Only then can the house be burglarized. ²⁸I assure you that human beings will be forgiven for everything, for all sins and insults of every kind. ²⁹But whoever insults the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. That person is guilty of a sin with consequences that last forever.” ³⁰He said this because the legal experts were saying, “He’s possessed by an evil spirit.”

³¹His mother and brothers arrived. They stood outside and sent word to him, calling for him. ³²A crowd was seated around him, and those sent to him said, “Look, your mother, brothers, and sisters are outside looking for you.”

³³He replied, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” ³⁴Looking around at those seated around him in a circle, he said, “Look, here are my mother and my brothers. ³⁵Whoever does God’s will is my brother, sister, and mother.”

Parable of the soils

4 Jesus began to teach beside the lake again. Such a large crowd gathered that he climbed into a boat there on the lake. He sat in the boat while the whole crowd was nearby on the shore. ²He said many things to them in parables. While teaching them, he said, ³“Listen to this! A farmer went out to scatter seed. ⁴As he was scattering seed, some fell on the path; and the birds came and ate it. ⁵Other seed fell on rocky ground where the soil was shallow. They sprouted immediately because the soil wasn’t deep. ⁶When the sun came up, it scorched the plants; and they dried up because they had no roots. ⁷Other seed fell among thorny plants. The thorny plants grew and choked the seeds, and they produced nothing. ⁸Other seed fell into good soil and bore fruit. Upon growing and increasing, the seed produced in one case a yield of thirty to one, in another case a yield of sixty to one, and in another case a yield of one hundred to one.” ⁹He said, “Whoever has ears to listen should pay attention!”

3:20 Mk 6:31

3:21 Jn 10:20;

Ac 26:24

3:22 Mt 9:34,

Mt 10:25,

Mt 12:24,

Mt 15:1;

Lk 11:15

3:23 Mt 4:10,

Mt 12:25;

Lk 11:17

3:24 1 Co 1:10

3:25 Gn 13:8;

Ga 5:15

3:26 Mt 4:10

3:27 Is 49:24

3:28 Mt 12:31,

Mt 12:32;

Lk 12:10;

1 Jn 5:16

3:29 Mt 12:31,

Mt 12:32,

Mt 25:46;

Lk 12:10;

Ac 7:51

3:30 Mk 3:22;

Jas 2:7

3:31 Mt 12:46;

Lk 8:19

3:34 Mt 12:49

3:35 Lk 11:28;

1 Jn 2:17

4:1 Mt 13:1;

Mk 2:13, Mk 3:7;

Lk 5:1, Lk 8:4

4:2 Mk 3:23

4:3 Mk 4:26

4:4 Mt 13:4

4:5 Mt 13:20;

Mk 4:17; Lk 8:13

4:6 Jas 1:11

4:7 Jer 4:3;

1 Tt 6:10

4:8 Gn 26:12;

Mk 4:20; Jn 15:5;

Col 1:6

4:9 Mt 11:15;

Mk 4:23

Aramaic word for his Greek-speaking audience (see Mark 5:41; 7:11, 34; 10:46; 11:9-10; 14:36; 15:22, 34, 42).

3:20-35 See Matthew 12:22-32; Luke 11:14-23; 12:10. These stories emphasize absolute loyalty to God’s will.

3:20 house: In Mark, Jesus’ ministry often takes place in homes (see Mark 1:29, 32-33; 2:1). Early Christian communities like Mark’s also met in homes. The church was the gathering of people, not a building.

3:22 legal experts... Jerusalem: For the first time, Mark connects Jesus’ opponents with the capital city. See note on Mark 1:22. *Beelzebul:* The name echoes an OT term that mocks competing gods (“Lord of the Flies”; see 2 Kgs 1:2). By Jesus’ time it was a name for Satan, who rules over the demons.

3:23 parable: a story that uses a familiar example from daily life to illustrate a point. Parables aren’t always easy to understand (see Mark 4:13).

3:27 strong person: As the “stronger” one (Mark 1:7), Jesus restrains even Satan’s power as part of the housecleaning that reveals God’s kingdom (see Isa 49:24-25).

3:29 insults the Holy Spirit: the only sin that can’t be forgiven. Since Jesus’ combat against Satan is the work of

God’s Spirit, the legal experts have offended God by calling it the work of Beelzebul (Mark 3:22).

3:32 mother, brothers, and sisters: Mark doesn’t mention Jesus’ father, either here or in Mark 6:3. This may imply that God is the true head of God’s family, or it may be that Jesus’ father has already died.

3:35 God’s will: Jesus understands family in terms of loyalty to God’s kingdom rather than as a bloodline. Since that loyalty can create division within families, this saying offers a new family of origin to those who follow Jesus.

4:1-34 The breathless pace of Mark’s story slows down in this chapter. Here Jesus teaches about God’s coming kingdom. He uses parables (see note on Mark 3:23) to portray the nature of that kingdom and its growth.

4:1-9 See Matthew 13:1-9; Luke 8:4-8. Because they depended on the land for their livelihood, Jesus’ hearers were familiar with the images in this story.

4:3 Listen to this! Hearing Jesus’ words isn’t enough. He wants people to genuinely understand what he’s saying (see Mark 4:12).

4:8 thirty to one... one hundred to one: Even good soil produces a variety of yields.

4:10 Mt 13:36;
Mk 4:34,
Mk 7:17,
Mk 9:28

4:11 Col 4:5;
1Th 4:12; 1Ti 3:7

4:12 Is 6:9,
Is 61:0; Jer 5:21;
Jn 12:40;
Ro 11:8

4:13 Mt 13:18,
Mt 16:8; Lk 8:11

4:14 Mt 13:37;
Mk 2:2; Lk 1:2,
Lk 8:11; Ac 8:4

4:15 Rev 20:7

4:16 Eze 33:31,
Eze 33:32;
Mk 6:20; Jn 5:35

4:17 Mt 11:6;
Mk 4:5;
1Co 10:13

4:19 1Ti 6:9,
1Ti 6:10,
1Ti 6:17

4:20 Jn 15:16

4:21 Mt 5:15;
Lk 8:16,
Lk 11:33

4:22 Mt 10:26;
Lk 8:17; Lk 12:2

4:23 Mt 11:15;
Mk 4:9

4:24 Mt 7:2;
Lk 6:38

4:25 Mt 13:12,
Mt 25:29;
Lk 8:18

4:26 Mt 13:24,
Mt 13:31,
Mt 13:33

4:27 Ecc 11:5

4:29 Jl 3:13;
Rev 14:15

4:30 Mt 13:24,
Mt 13:31,
Mt 13:32;
Lk 13:18,
Lk 13:19

4:31 Mt 13:31;
Lk 13:19

4:32 Ps 104:12;
Dn 4:12

Jesus explains his parable

¹⁰When they were alone, the people around Jesus, along with the Twelve, asked him about the parables. ¹¹He said to them, “The secret of God’s kingdom has been given to you, but to those who are outside everything comes in parables. ¹²This is so that they can look and see but have no insight, and they can hear but not understand. Otherwise, they might turn their lives around and be forgiven.

¹³“Don’t you understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables?”

¹⁴The farmer scatters the word. ¹⁵This is the meaning of the seed that fell on the path: When the word is scattered and people hear it, right away Satan comes and steals the word that was planted in them. ¹⁶Here’s the meaning of the seed that fell on rocky ground: When people hear the word, they immediately receive it joyfully. ¹⁷Because they have no roots, they last for only a little while. When they experience distress or abuse because of the word, they immediately fall away. ¹⁸Others are like the seed scattered among the thorny plants. These are the ones who have heard the word; ¹⁹but the worries of this life, the false appeal of wealth, and the desire for more things break in and choke the word, and it bears no fruit. ²⁰The seed scattered on good soil are those who hear the word and embrace it. They bear fruit, in one case a yield of thirty to one, in another case sixty to one, and in another case one hundred to one.”

Parables about lamps and measures

²¹Jesus said to them, “Does anyone bring in a lamp in order to put it under a basket or a bed? Shouldn’t it be placed on a lampstand? ²²Everything hidden will be revealed, and everything secret will come out into the open. ²³Whoever has ears to listen should pay attention!”

²⁴He said to them, “Listen carefully! God will evaluate you with the same standard you use to evaluate others. Indeed, you will receive even more. ²⁵Those who have will receive more, but as for those who don’t have, even what they don’t have will be taken away from them.”

More parables about God’s kingdom

²⁶Then Jesus said, “This is what God’s kingdom is like. It’s as though someone scatters seed on the ground, ²⁷then sleeps and wakes night and day. The seed sprouts and grows, but the farmer doesn’t know how. ²⁸The earth produces crops all by itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full head of grain. ²⁹Whenever the crop is ready, the farmer goes out to cut the grain because it’s harvest time.”

³⁰He continued, “What’s a good image for God’s kingdom? What parable can I use to explain it? ³¹Consider a mustard seed. When scattered on the ground, it’s the smallest of all the seeds on the earth; ³²but when it’s planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all vegetable plants. It produces such large branches that the birds in the sky are able to nest in its shade.”

4:10–20 See Matthew 13:10–23; Luke 8:9–15.

4:10 *people around Jesus*: Jesus turns from the “whole crowd” (Mark 4:1) to a smaller group of followers that includes the Twelve (see Mark 3:13–19), as well as others.

4:11 *secret . . . to you*: The phrase points to the mysterious nature of God’s kingdom. Not everyone understands the mystery, but it *has been given* to his followers. See sidebar, “Secrecy” at Mark 8. *those . . . outside*: notes the gap between insiders and outsiders (see Dan 2:18–19, 27–30). *in parables*: Outsiders grasp only the surface meaning of the story, not the deeper truth to which it points. See note on Mark 3:23.

4:12 See Isaiah 6:9–10. Parables are hard to understand, so they can prevent people from changing their lives and receiving forgiveness (cf. Matt 13:13–14; Luke 8:10).

4:13–20 Jesus interprets the parable.

4:13 *Don’t you understand this parable?*: Jesus accuses even insiders of missing the point of his story (see Mark 4:12). Because they’re “with him” (Mark 3:14), he explains it in detail. See sidebar, “The Disciples in Mark” at Mark 5.

4:14 *the word*: Jesus identifies the seed with the message about God’s coming kingdom. See note on Mark 1:45.

4:15 *Satan*: See Mark 1:13; 3:23–27. Satan represents, in the form of a person, those evil forces that challenge the

power of God’s kingdom. *planted in them*: See 1 Corinthians 3:6–8.

4:20 *hear the word . . . embrace it . . . bear fruit*: The verbs follow a deliberate sequence, from hearing to embracing to bearing fruit. Although the harvest varies (see note on Mark 4:1–9), the yield far exceeds the number of seeds spread (see Mark 4:30–32).

4:21–25 See Matthew 5:15; 7:2; 10:26; 13:12; 25:29; Luke 6:38; 8:16–18; 11:33; 12:2; 19:26. These parables suggest God’s mysterious kingdom will soon be revealed (cf. Mark 4:12). They also remind those who hear Jesus of their role in disclosing it.

4:24 *evaluate . . . same standard*: God measures results, just as humans do. Here the results relate to the growth of the kingdom (see Mark 4:9, 20).

4:25 *Those who have . . . taken away*: In Mark what hearers have refers to the mystery “given” to them (Mark 4:11). It’s a secret to be shared, not kept from others (Mark 4:21–22).

4:26–33 Jesus’ teachings end with two more examples from the earth.

4:28 *by itself*: or automatically. The farmer scatters seed but trusts God to produce results.

4:32 *the largest of all vegetable plants*: A very small

³³With many such parables he continued to give them the word, as much as they were able to hear. ³⁴He spoke to them only in parables, then explained everything to his disciples when he was alone with them.

Jesus stops a storm

³⁵Later that day, when evening came, Jesus said to them, “Let’s cross over to the other side of the lake.” ³⁶They left the crowd and took him in the boat just as he was. Other boats followed along.

³⁷Gale-force winds arose, and waves crashed against the boat so that the boat was swamped. ³⁸But Jesus was in the rear of the boat, sleeping on a pillow. They woke him up and said, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re drowning?”

³⁹He got up and gave orders to the wind, and he said to the lake, “Silence! Be still!” The wind settled down and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰Jesus asked them, “Why are you frightened? Don’t you have faith yet?”

⁴¹Overcome with awe, they said to each other, “Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him!”

Jesus frees a demon-possessed man

5 Jesus and his disciples came to the other side of the lake, to the region of the Gerasenes. ²As soon as Jesus got out of the boat, a man possessed by an evil spirit came out of the tombs. ³This man lived among the tombs, and no one was ever strong enough to restrain him, even with a chain. ⁴He had been secured many times with leg irons and chains, but he broke the chains and smashed the leg irons. No one was tough enough to control him. ⁵Night and day in the tombs and the hills, he would howl and cut himself with stones. ⁶When he saw Jesus from far away, he ran and knelt before him, ⁷shouting, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won’t torture me!”

⁸He said this because Jesus had already commanded him, “Unclean spirit, come out of the man!”

⁹Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

The Disciples in Mark Throughout Mark the disciples fail to understand what Jesus says and does. He must explain the parables to them (Mark 4:13-20, 33-34). They’re surprised by his power over the sea (Mark 4:40-41), they don’t understand “about the loaves” (Mark 6:52), they deny his predictions of his destiny (Mark 8:32), and they’re absent from the empty tomb (Mark 16:1-8). On the other hand, they’re involved with Jesus from early in his ministry (Mark 1:16-20), they play an active part in his mission (Mark 6:7-13), and he expects them to continue his witness after his death (Mark 13:9-14). What are we to make of such a mixed review? One popular view is that Mark contrasts these insiders with outsiders—such as women, children, and even a Roman centurion—who appear as more faithful followers. But Mark’s picture is even more complex. Mark may include the disciples’ flaws to make them seem more real to his audience. Like the original disciples, Mark’s audience probably followed Jesus at great personal cost (Mark 10:28-30). But if they see firsthand the power of evil at work in the world, they may still struggle to trust God’s coming kingdom. Perhaps Mark offers a realistic glimpse of fallible followers to encourage his audience along the way. After all, despite their faults and fears, the risen Lord promises to go “ahead of you into Galilee” (Mark 16:7).

4:33 Jn 16:12; 1Co 3:2
4:34 Lk 24:27; Jn 16:25
4:35 Mt 8:18; Mt 8:23; Lk 8:22
4:36 Mk 3:9; Mk 4:1
4:37 Jon 1:4; Ac 27:14
4:38 Ps 22:2; Ps 77:7; Is 40:27; Is 40:28; Is 49:14
4:39 Ps 65:7; Ps 89:9; Ps 107:29; Mt 8:26
4:40 Mt 14:31; Lk 8:25
4:41 Mk 1:27; Mk 5:33; Mk 7:37; Lk 4:36; Lk 8:25
5:1 Mt 8:28; Lk 8:26
5:2 Mk 1:23
5:3 Is 65:4
5:4 2Ch 33:11; Jas 3:7
5:5 1Ki 18:28
5:6 Mt 8:29; Mt 14:33; Mt 28:9; Mt 28:16; Mt 28:18
5:7 Mt 4:3; Mt 8:29; Mt 26:63; Mk 1:24; Ac 16:17
5:8 Mk 1:25
5:9 Mt 26:53; Mk 5:15; Lk 8:30

seed produces a very large bush. *birds... shade*: The image may refer to the wide reach of God’s kingdom, since Jewish literature sometimes portrays Gentiles as birds who take shelter in God’s tree (see Ezek 17:23; Dan 4:12).

4:35-41 See Matthew 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25. In all three sea-crossing stories (see Mark 6:45-52; 8:14-21), the disciples show more fear than faith.

4:35 *other side*: Jesus expands his sphere of influence. See note on Mark 1:38. *lake*: Ancient people often associated the lake/sea with the power of evil (see Rev 21:1). See note on Mark 3:7.

4:38 *sleeping*: The disciples find fault with Jesus for sleeping. Elsewhere, though, sleeping is evidence of trust in God (see Mark 4:27; Pss 3:5; 4:8; Job 11:18-19).

4:39 *gave orders*: Jesus often shows his authority over evil spirits by giving them orders (see Mark 1:25; 3:12; 9:25).

4:40 *frightened... faith*: Fear and faith are opposites. The disciples do trust Jesus—after all, they expected him to

rescue them (Mark 4:38). But they don’t seem to trust that God’s power over evil is available to them as well (see Mark 3:15).

4:41 *Who then is this?*: The disciples are surprised by Jesus’ power. Although Jesus doesn’t seek fame, characters in Mark’s story keep calling attention to his remarkable abilities (see Mark 1:27).

5:1-20 See Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39.

5:1 *other side of the lake*: See note on Mark 1:38.

5:2 *the tombs*: Traditions about evil spirits living in tombs were common in Mark’s day (see Isa 65:1-7).

5:7 *Son of the Most High God*: This is a typically Gentile name for God in the OT (see Isa 14:14; Dan 3:26; 4:2). The man’s request not to be tortured by Jesus is ironic, since the evil spirits have been busy torturing the possessed man (Mark 5:4-5). See note on Mark 1:24.

5:9 *Legion*: a Roman military term for a group of about 6,000 soldiers. Jesus may be outnumbered, but he easily takes command of his opponent(s).

5:11 Lk 8:32

5:13 Mt 8:32

5:15 Mk 5:9;
Lk 8:35

5:17 Mt 8:34;
Ac 16:39

5:19 Ps 66:16;
Mt 8:4; Mk 5:20;
Lk 8:35; Lk 8:39

5:20 Mt 4:25;
Mk 7:31

5:21 Mt 9:1;
Mk 4:1; Lk 8:40

5:22 Mt 9:18;
Lk 8:41;
Ac 13:15

5:23 Mk 6:5,
Mk 7:32,
Mk 16:18;
Lk 4:40;
Lk 13:13

5:24 Lk 8:45

5:25 Lv 15:25;
Mt 9:20; Lk 8:43

5:26 Jer 8:22

5:27 Mt 14:36

5:29 Mk 3:10,
Mk 5:34

5:30 Lk 5:17,
Lk 6:19

He responded, "Legion is my name, because we are many." ¹⁰They pleaded with Jesus not to send them out of that region.

¹¹A large herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside. ¹²"Send us into the pigs!" they begged. "Let us go into the pigs!" ¹³Jesus gave them permission, so the unclean spirits left the man and went into the pigs. Then the herd of about two thousand pigs rushed down the cliff into the lake and drowned.

¹⁴Those who tended the pigs ran away and told the story in the city and in the countryside. People came to see what had happened. ¹⁵They came to Jesus and saw the man who used to be demon-possessed. They saw the very man who had been filled with many demons sitting there fully dressed and completely sane, and they were filled with awe. ¹⁶Those who had actually seen what had happened to the demon-possessed man told the others about the pigs. ¹⁷Then they pleaded with Jesus to leave their region.

¹⁸While he was climbing into the boat, the one who had been demon-possessed pleaded with Jesus to let him come along as one of his disciples. ¹⁹But Jesus wouldn't allow it. "Go home to your own people," Jesus said, "and tell them what the Lord has done for you and how he has shown you mercy." ²⁰The man went away and began to proclaim in the Ten Cities all that Jesus had done for him, and everyone was amazed.

Jesus heals two people

²¹Jesus crossed the lake again, and on the other side a large crowd gathered around him on the shore. ²²Jairus, one of the synagogue leaders, came forward. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet ²³and pleaded with him, "My daughter is about to die. Please, come and place your hands on her so that she can be healed and live." ²⁴So Jesus went with him.

A swarm of people were following Jesus, crowding in on him. ²⁵A woman was there who had been bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶She had suffered a lot under the care of many doctors, and had spent everything she had without getting any better. In fact, she had gotten worse. ²⁷Because she had heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his clothes. ²⁸She was thinking, "If I can just touch his clothes, I'll be healed." ²⁹Her bleeding stopped immediately, and she sensed in her body that her illness had been healed.

³⁰At that very moment, Jesus recognized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?"

³¹His disciples said to him, "Don't you see the crowd pressing against you? Yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'" ³²But Jesus looked around carefully to see who had done it.

5:11 *herd of pigs:* Pigs are unclean according to Jewish Law (Lev 11:7-8; Isa 65:4; 66:17).

5:15 *filled with awe:* or they feared. The people's response to Jesus' throwing out the demons is the same as the disciples' response to Jesus' power over the wind and sea (see Mark 4:41).

5:17 *pleaded . . . leave their region:* For these people, evidence of God's power among them is unsettling.

5:19 *your own people:* Jesus sends the man home to share with his neighbors the good news that he is no longer possessed by an evil spirit. *what the Lord has done:* Jesus is probably referring to God, the giver of mercy. This command, then, is consistent with other instances when Jesus discourages attempts to spread the message about his power (see Mark 1:34, 44).

5:20 *Ten Cities:* Sometimes called the Decapolis, this region was to the east of the Jordan River, and many Jews lived there. *all that Jesus had done for him:* Jesus had urged him to go home to report God's merciful deed (Mark 5:19). The man, though, stays and proclaims Jesus' power over the demons.

5:21-43 See Matthew 9:18-26; Luke 8:40-56. Mark surrounds Jesus' encounter with a bleeding woman with a report about Jairus' daughter. The stories share similarities:

Both feature females, and the woman has suffered for the same number of years (12) the child has been alive.

5:22 *synagogue leaders:* Jesus is back on the Jewish side of the lake (see Mark 5:21; see note on Mark 1:38), where a community leader seeks his help. *fell at his feet:* a physical posture of worship or deep respect (see Mark 5:6). A powerful man throws himself at Jesus' mercy.

5:23 *place your hands:* This story recalls those about Elijah (1 Kgs 17:17-24) and Elisha (2 Kgs 4:18-37). See note on Mark 1:31.

5:25-26 The woman's case is a desperate one. She's been bleeding for 12 years, and even expensive doctors haven't healed her. Her bleeding makes her impure by religious standards, so she suffers physically, emotionally, socially, financially, and spiritually.

5:27 *touched his clothes:* The woman disobeys Jewish Law by touching a man while she's bleeding (see Lev 15:19).

5:29-30 Both the woman and Jesus simultaneously feel the healing power exchanged through their physical contact.

5:32 *looked around carefully:* In Mark seeing is more than physical vision; it's also spiritual insight. Jesus sometimes sees before he heals (see Mark 2:5), but here he gazes at the woman who has already been healed.

³³The woman, full of fear and trembling, came forward. Knowing what had happened to her, she fell down in front of Jesus and told him the whole truth. ³⁴He responded, “Daughter, your faith has healed you; go in peace, healed from your disease.”

³⁵While Jesus was still speaking with her, messengers came from the synagogue leader’s house, saying to Jairus, “Your daughter has died. Why bother the teacher any longer?”

³⁶But Jesus overheard their report and said to the synagogue leader, “Don’t be afraid; just keep trusting.” ³⁷He didn’t allow anyone to follow him except Peter, James, and John, James’ brother. ³⁸They came to the synagogue leader’s house, and he saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹He went in and said to them, “What’s all this commotion and crying about? The child isn’t dead. She’s only sleeping.” ⁴⁰They laughed at him, but he threw them all out. Then, taking the child’s parents and his disciples with him, he went to the room where the child was. ⁴¹Taking her hand, he said to her, “*Talitha koum*,” which means, “Young woman, get up.” ⁴²Suddenly the young woman got up and began to walk around. She was 12 years old. They were shocked! ⁴³He gave them strict orders that no one should know what had happened. Then he told them to give her something to eat.

Jesus in his hometown

6 Jesus left that place and came to his hometown. His disciples followed him. ²On the Sabbath, he began to teach in the synagogue. Many who heard him were surprised. “Where did this man get all this? What’s this wisdom he’s been given? What about the powerful acts accomplished through him? ³Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t he Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” They were repulsed by him and fell into sin.

⁴Jesus said to them, “Prophets are honored everywhere except in their own hometowns, among their relatives, and in their own households.” ⁵He was unable to do any miracles there, except that he placed his hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶He was appalled by their disbelief.

Sending out the disciples

Then Jesus traveled through the surrounding villages teaching.

⁷He called for the Twelve and sent them out in pairs. He gave them authority over unclean spirits. ⁸He instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a walking stick—no bread, no bags, and no money in their belts. ⁹He told them to wear sandals but not to put on two shirts. ¹⁰He said, “Whatever house you enter, remain there until you leave that place.

5:33 Lk 1:12

5:34 Mt 9:22; Mk 10:52; Lk 7:50

5:35 Mk 5:22
5:36 Mk 9:23; Lk 8:50

5:37 Mt 17:1; Mk 9:2; Mk 14:33; Lk 8:51

5:38 Mk 5:22

5:39 Jn 11:11

5:41 Mk 1:31; Lk 7:14

5:42 Mk 1:27

5:43 Mt 8:4; Mt 9:30; Mk 3:12; Mk 7:36; Mk 9:9

6:1 Mt 13:54; Lk 4:16

6:2 Mt 7:28; Mk 1:21; Mk 1:22

6:3 Mt 11:6; Mt 13:55; Ga 1:19

6:4 Mt 13:57; Lk 4:24; Jn 4:44

6:5 Mk 5:23

6:6 Mt 9:35; Lk 13:22

6:7 Mt 10:1; Mt 10:5; Mt 10:9; Mk 3:13; Lk 9:1

6:8 Mt 10:9; Mt 10:10

6:9 Ac 12:8

5:33 *fear and trembling*: a frequent response among those who witness Jesus’ power (see Mark 4:41; 5:15). *fell down*: See note on Mark 3:11.

5:34 *faith*: See note on Mark 5:27. See sidebar, “Faith/Trust” at Mark 11.

5:36 *Don’t be afraid; just keep trusting*: Although fear is a father’s natural response to his daughter’s death (reported in Mark 5:35), Jesus urges Jairus to depend on the possibility of life. See Mark 4:40 and note.

5:37 *Peter, James, and John*: These three disciples make up Jesus’ inner circle (see Mark 1:16, 19; 9:2; 14:33).

5:39 *She’s only sleeping*: To sleep is to give oneself over to God’s care. See note on Mark 4:38.

5:41 “*Talitha koum*”: Mark provides Jesus’ words in Aramaic (Jesus’ native tongue), then translates it for his Greek-speaking audience. See note on Mark 3:17.

5:43 *something to eat*: See Mark 6:37. Sharing a meal not only strengthens people physically but also celebrates the promise of new life in God’s kingdom.

6:1-6 See Matthew 13:53-58; Luke 4:16-30.

6:1 *hometown*: Nazareth is a village in Galilee (see Mark 1:24).

6:2 *teach in the synagogue*: See note on Mark 1:21. *surprised*: The people have known Jesus since he was a boy, so it’s hard for them to see what he’s become. See note on Mark 1:22. *wisdom . . . powerful acts*: Both Jesus’ words and deeds are impressive. See note on Mark 1:27.

6:3 *carpenter*: refers to a practiced skill, such as a handicraft. *Mary’s son . . . sisters*: See note on Mark 3:32. *repulsed . . . fell into sin*: Since Jesus doesn’t fit the people’s notions of who he is, they resist his ministry.

6:4 *honored everywhere . . . hometowns*: Jesus identifies himself with rejected prophets (see Mark 12:1-12; cf. Luke 4:24; John 4:44).

6:5 *unable to do any miracles*: Their lack of belief (see Mark 6:6a) limits Jesus’ power. On the connection between faith and healing, see Mark 2:5; 5:34.

6:6b-13 See Matthew 10:1, 9-14; 14:1-12; Luke 9:1-10a. Already Jesus has recruited disciples and given them a role in his mission (Mark 1:16-20; 3:13-19). They’ve stayed with him, and now he sends them out (see Mark 3:14) to reveal God’s coming kingdom in word and deed.

6:7 *in pairs*: The disciples go out in groups of two. This may be related to the need for two witnesses required by Jewish tradition (see Deut 17:6; 19:15; Num 35:30). *authority over unclean spirits*: See note on Mark 3:15.

6:8 *nothing for the journey*: Packing light requires trust in God and in others’ hospitality. *no bread, no bags, and no money*: Jesus’ requirements are even more strict than those of the ancient Roman Cynics, wandering philosophers who rejected material things yet carried the kinds of belongings Jesus tells the disciples to leave behind.

6:11 Mt 10:14

6:12 Mk 1:15

6:13 Jas 5:14

6:14 Mt 14:1,
Mt 14:2; Lk 9:7

6:15 Mt 16:14,
Mt 21:11;
Mk 8:28

6:16 Mt 14:2;
Mk 6:27

6:17 Mt 11:2,
Mt 14:3; Lk 3:19,
Lk 3:20

6:18 Lv 18:16;
Mt 14:3; Mt 14:4;
Mk 6:17

6:19 Mt 14:3,
Mt 14:6;
Mk 6:22; Lk 3:19

6:20 Mt 21:26

6:21 Gn 40:20;
Est 1:3, Est 2:18;
Lk 3:1

6:22 Mt 14:3,
Mt 14:6

6:23 Est 5:3,
Est 5:6, Est 7:2

6:24 Mt 14:8

6:25 Mt 14:8

6:27 Mk 6:16

6:30 Mt 10:2;
Lk 9:10, Lk 17:5,
Lk 22:14,
Lk 24:10

6:31 Mk 3:19

¹¹If a place doesn't welcome you or listen to you, as you leave, shake the dust off your feet as a witness against them." ¹²So they went out and proclaimed that people should change their hearts and lives. ¹³They cast out many demons, and they anointed many sick people with olive oil and healed them.

Death of John the Baptist

¹⁴Herod the king heard about these things, because the name of Jesus had become well-known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and this is why miraculous powers are at work through him." ¹⁵Others were saying, "He is Elijah." Still others were saying, "He is a prophet like one of the ancient prophets." ¹⁶But when Herod heard these rumors, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised to life."

¹⁷He said this because Herod himself had arranged to have John arrested and put in prison because of Herodias, the wife of Herod's brother Philip. Herod had married her, ¹⁸but John told Herod, "It's against the law for you to marry your brother's wife!" ¹⁹So Herodias had it in for John. She wanted to kill him, but she couldn't. ²⁰This was because Herod respected John. He regarded him as a righteous and holy person, so he protected him. John's words greatly confused Herod, yet he enjoyed listening to him.

²¹Finally, the time was right. It was on one of Herod's birthdays, when he had prepared a feast for his high-ranking officials and military officers and Galilee's leading residents.

²²Herod's daughter Herodias^f came in and danced, thrilling Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the young woman, "Ask me whatever you wish, and I will give it to you." ²³Then he swore to her, "Whatever you ask I will give to you, even as much as half of my kingdom."

²⁴She left the banquet hall and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?"

"John the Baptist's head," Herodias replied.

²⁵Hurrying back to the ruler, she made her request: "I want you to give me John the Baptist's head on a plate, right this minute." ²⁶Although the king was upset, because of his solemn pledge and his guests, he didn't want to refuse her. ²⁷So he ordered a guard to bring John's head. The guard went to the prison, cut off John's head, ²⁸brought his head on a plate, and gave it to the young woman, and she gave it to her mother. ²⁹When John's disciples heard what had happened, they came and took his dead body and laid it in a tomb.

Jesus feeds five thousand people

³⁰The apostles returned to Jesus and told him everything they had done and taught.

³¹Many people were coming and going, so there was no time to eat. He said to the apostles,

^fOr the daughter of Herodias herself; Gk uncertain

6:11 *shake the dust off your feet*: The gesture symbolizes a broken relationship (see Neh 5:13; Acts 18:6). Jesus makes it clear the mission won't be entirely successful (see Mark 4:11-12). *witness against them*: refers to the coming judgment associated with God's kingdom.

6:12-13 This summary of the missionary journey describes the apostles' actions in terms that recall Jesus' own mission. *proclaimed... hearts and lives*: See Mark 1:15; 3:14. *cast out... healed them*: See Mark 1:34; 3:15.

6:14-29 See Matthew 14:1-12; Luke 9:7-9. This story about John the Baptist's death is chronologically out of place (for John's arrest, see Mark 1:14). It fits here, though, for three reasons: (1) it shows that Jesus' reputation is spreading even among the powerful; (2) it contrasts the banquet of an earthly king with God's banquet in the wilderness (Mark 6:30-44); and (3) it reveals the hostility that people who proclaim God's kingdom may attract. If this is what happened to John, what will happen to Jesus? What will happen to Jesus' disciples?

6:14 *Herod the king*: Herod wasn't technically a king. Mark uses the term to draw a contrast between Herod's rule and God's rule. See notes on Mark 3:6; 6:14-29.

6:15 *Elijah*: See note on Mark 1:6.

6:16 *raised to life*: Jews who awaited God's kingdom expected it to bring the resurrection of the dead. In the 1st century the Pharisees were known for their belief in the resurrection (cf. Mark 12:18).

6:17-18 Herod's rule was authorized by Rome, but he was also a Galilean who was subject to Jewish Law. His marriage to his brother's wife (while his brother was alive) went against Leviticus 18:16; 20:21. As a prophet who was calling people to live holy lives, John would have spoken freely against Herod for his disobedience.

6:20 *righteous and holy person*: Herod recognizes John's religious integrity.

6:21-28 Mark portrays Herod as a weak ruler who falls victim to his wife's determination to kill John (see Mark 6:19).

6:23 *I will give it to you*: See Mark 6:28. Herod's plan to share his power leads to a horrible death. God's plan brings health and life (see Mark 6:7, 37, 41).

6:30-44 See Matthew 14:13-21; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-13. The miraculous feeding story recalls Israel's wilderness story and anticipates the abundance of God's kingdom (see Isa 49:10; 55:1; 58:7).

6:31-32 *secluded place... deserted place*: Both of these terms refer to a wilderness. See note on Mark 1:3.

“Come by yourselves to a secluded place and rest for a while.”³² They departed in a boat by themselves for a deserted place.

³³ Many people saw them leaving and recognized them, so they ran ahead from all the cities and arrived before them. ³⁴ When Jesus arrived and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Then he began to teach them many things.

³⁵ Late in the day, his disciples came to him and said, “This is an isolated place, and it’s already late in the day. ³⁶ Send them away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy something to eat for themselves.”

³⁷ He replied, “You give them something to eat.”

But they said to him, “Should we go off and buy bread worth almost eight months’ pay⁸ and give it to them to eat?”

³⁸ He said to them, “How much bread do you have? Take a look.”

After checking, they said, “Five loaves of bread and two fish.”

³⁹ He directed the disciples to seat all the people in groups as though they were having a banquet on the green grass. ⁴⁰ They sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹ He took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them, broke the loaves into pieces, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² Everyone ate until they were full. ⁴³ They filled twelve baskets with the leftover pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴ About five thousand had eaten.

Jesus walks on water

⁴⁵ Right then, Jesus made his disciples get into a boat and go ahead to the other side of the lake, toward Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ After saying good-bye to them, Jesus went up onto a mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ Evening came and the boat was in the middle of the lake, but he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ He saw his disciples struggling. They were trying to row forward, but the wind was blowing against them. Very early in the morning, he came to them, walking on the lake. He intended to pass by them. ⁴⁹ When they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost and they screamed. ⁵⁰ Seeing him was terrifying to all of them. Just then he spoke to them, “Be encouraged! It’s me. Don’t be afraid.” ⁵¹ He got into the boat, and the wind settled down. His disciples were so baffled they were beside themselves. ⁵² That’s because they hadn’t understood about the loaves. Their hearts had been changed so that they resisted God’s ways.

⁸Or two hundred denaria; a denarius was a typical day’s wage.

6:32 Mt 14:13; Mk 6:45; Lk 9:10
6:33 Mk 3:20; Mk 6:54; Mk 6:55; Jn 6:2
6:34 Mt 9:36
6:35 Mt 14:15; Lk 9:12; Jn 6:5
6:36 Mt 15:23
6:37 2Ki 4:42; Jn 6:7
6:38 Mt 15:34; Mk 8:5
6:41 Mt 14:19; Mk 14:22
6:45 Mt 11:21; Mt 14:22; Mk 6:32; Mk 8:22; Jn 6:15
6:48 Ex 14:24; 1Sa 11:11; Job 9:8; Mt 14:25; Lk 24:28
6:49 Mt 14:25; Mt 14:26; Lk 24:37
6:50 Is 43:2; Mt 14:27
6:51 Mk 4:39
6:52 Mk 3:5; Mk 8:17; Mk 16:14

6:34 *sheep without a shepherd*: See Numbers 27:15-17. *teach them many things*: Jesus addresses the crowd’s spiritual hunger by instructing them about God’s coming kingdom (see Mark 4:1-34).

6:37 *“You give them something to eat”*: The Greek emphasizes that the disciples should feed the crowd. Jesus’ command doesn’t seem very practical to them (see 2 Kgs 4:42-44). See note on Mark 6:23. *almost eight months’ pay*: or 200 denarii. Hired workers earned about one denarius per day.

6:39 *as though they were having a banquet*: Mark portrays the meal in the wilderness as though it were a formal celebration with invited guests (cf. Mark 6:14-29).

6:40 *hundreds and fifties*: See Exodus 18:21, 25.

6:41 *took... blessed... broke... gave*: Jesus handles the bread as if he’s at a traditional Jewish meal. *gave... people*: See notes on Mark 6:23, 37. Jesus’ disciples work with him as agents of God’s miraculous feeding power.

6:44 *five thousand*: The Greek text counts 5,000 men. Since women and children were also present, the size of the crowd here was much larger.

6:45-52 See Matthew 14:22-33; John 6:15-21. Jesus and his disciples cross the Sea of Galilee frequently in Mark.

This is the second story that happens there (see Mark 4:35-41; 8:14-21).

6:45 *go ahead*: Often in Mark, Jesus goes ahead of his disciples (Mark 14:28; 16:7), but here they go ahead of him. *the other side*: See note on Mark 1:38. *Bethsaida*: located on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

6:46 *up onto a mountain*: See note on 3:13. *to pray*: Prayer is a key weapon in Jesus’ battle against evil (see Mark 9:29).

6:48 *struggling*: The disciples fight against the wind and the sea, which represent evil in ancient thought. See note on Mark 4:35. *He intended to pass by them*: Jesus probably plans to reveal himself in order to encourage his disciples, not taunt them. God passed by both Moses (Exod 33:12-23) and Elijah (1 Kgs 19) in desperate moments as a way of strengthening them for what lay ahead.

6:50 *It’s me*: Jesus seems to identify himself with the divine name I Am (see Exod 3:13-15; Isa 41:4; 43:10-11). *Don’t be afraid*: See Mark 5:36. Fear is a natural human response, but Jesus encourages faith.

6:52 *they hadn’t understood about the loaves*: The disciples are both fearful and confused about what’s happened (see Mark 6:50, 51). Mark explains their response by linking it to the feeding story (Mark 6:30-44). What

6:53 Mt 14:34;
Jn 6:24, Jn 6:25

6:55 Mt 4:24

6:56 Mt 9:20;
Mk 3:10;
Lk 6:19; Ac 5:15

7:1 Mt 15:1

7:2 Mt 15:2;
Lk 11:38;
Ac 10:14,
Ac 10:28;
Ro 14:14

7:3 Mt 15:2;
Mk 7:5, Mk 7:13;
Ga 1:14; Col 2:8

7:4 Mt 23:25;
Lk 11:39;
Heb 9:10

7:5 Mk 7:3;
Ga 1:14

Healings at Gennesaret

⁵³When Jesus and his disciples had crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret, anchored the boat, ⁵⁴and came ashore. People immediately recognized Jesus ⁵⁵and ran around that whole region bringing sick people on their mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶Wherever he went—villages, cities, or farming communities—they would place the sick in the marketplaces and beg him to allow them to touch even the hem of his clothing. Everyone who touched him was healed.

What contaminates a life?

7The Pharisees and some legal experts from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus. ²They saw some of his disciples eating food with unclean hands. (They were eating without first ritually purifying their hands through washing. ³The Pharisees and all the Jews don't eat without first washing their hands carefully. This is a way of observing the rules handed down by the elders. ⁴Upon returning from the marketplace, they don't eat without first immersing themselves. They observe many other rules that have been handed down, such as the washing of cups, jugs, pans, and sleeping mats.) ⁵So the Pharisees and legal experts asked Jesus,



The Sea of Galilee

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they misunderstood about the loaves, though, is unclear. Perhaps they didn't recognize Jesus' divine power (see Mark 4:40-41; Luke 24:30-31). They also may have forgotten that they share that power (Mark 3:14-15; 6:7, 13, 41). *hearts . . . God's ways*: or their "hearts were hardened." This is ironic, because the expression normally applies to outsiders. See note on Mark 3:5.

6:53-57 See Matthew 14:34-36. Mark gives another summary report of Jesus' ministry around the Sea of Galilee.

6:53 *Gennesaret*: located on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee. Gennesaret is in a different direction from Bethsaida, the group's original destination (see Mark 6:45).

6:56 *hem of his clothing*: See note on Mark 5:27.

7:1-23 See Matthew 15:1-20. This is the second set of stories in which Jesus comes into conflict with Jewish leaders (see note on Mark 2:1-3:6).

7:1 *from Jerusalem*: See note on Mark 1:22, where legal experts came from Jerusalem to oppose Jesus. The story hints at Jesus' destiny, since his ministry takes him to Jerusalem, where he dies.

7:2 *eating food*: or eating the loaves (see Mark 6:38, 41). *unclean hands*: See Leviticus 15:11. Jesus' opponents focus on religious purity (see note on Mark 2:16).

7:2b-4 Mark explains to his audience the Jewish practices of becoming ritually pure. This suggests his audience includes people who aren't Jewish.

7:3 *rules handed down by the elders*: The Pharisees thought the authority of the written Law (instruction) applied equally to its oral interpretation by the elders. These rules were handed down through instruction by the rabbis. Paul uses similar language to describe the handing down of early Christian tradition (see 1 Cor 11:23).

“Why are your disciples not living according to the rules handed down by the elders but instead eat food with ritually unclean hands?”

⁶He replied, “Isaiah really knew what he was talking about when he prophesied about you hypocrites. He wrote,

*This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far away from me.*

⁷*Their worship of me is empty
since they teach instructions that are human words.*^h

⁸You ignore God’s commandment while holding on to rules created by humans and handed down to you.” ⁹Jesus continued, “Clearly, you are experts at rejecting God’s commandment in order to establish these rules. ¹⁰Moses said, *Honor your father and your mother,*ⁱ and *The person who speaks against father or mother will certainly be put to death.*^j ¹¹But you say, ‘If you tell your father or mother, “Everything I’m expected to contribute to you is *corban* (that is, a gift I’m giving to God),” ¹²then you are no longer required to care for your father or mother.’ ¹³In this way you do away with God’s word in favor of the rules handed down to you, which you pass on to others. And you do a lot of other things just like that.”

¹⁴Then Jesus called the crowd again and said, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand.

¹⁵Nothing outside of a person can enter and contaminate a person in God’s sight; rather, the things that come out of a person contaminate the person.”^k

¹⁷After leaving the crowd, he entered a house where his disciples asked him about that riddle. ¹⁸He said to them, “Don’t you understand either? Don’t you know that nothing from the outside that enters a person has the power to contaminate? ¹⁹That’s because it doesn’t enter into the heart but into the stomach, and it goes out into the sewer.” By saying this, Jesus declared that no food could contaminate a person in God’s sight. ²⁰“It’s what comes out of a person that contaminates someone in God’s sight,” he said. ²¹“It’s from the inside, from the human heart, that evil thoughts come: sexual sins, thefts, murders, ²²adultery, greed, evil actions, deceit, unrestrained immorality, envy, insults, arrogance, and foolishness. ²³All these evil things come from the inside and contaminate a person in God’s sight.”

An immigrant’s daughter is delivered

²⁴Jesus left that place and went into the region of Tyre. He didn’t want anyone to know that he had entered a house, but he couldn’t hide. ²⁵In fact, a woman whose young daughter was possessed by an unclean spirit heard about him right away. She came and fell at his feet.

²⁶The woman was Greek, Syrophenician by birth. She begged Jesus to throw the demon out

7:6 Is 29:13
7:8 Mk 7:3
7:9 Mk 7:13
7:10 Ex 20:12, Ex 21:17; Lv 20:9; Dt 5:16
7:11 Mt 15:5, Mt 23:18
7:13 Jer 8:9; Mk 7:9
7:15 Ac 10:14
7:17 Mt 13:36, Mt 15:15; Mk 9:28
7:18 Mt 16:11; Lk 24:25
7:19 Lk 11:41; Ac 10:15
7:21 Gn 6:5, Gn 8:21; Ex 20:13, Ex 20:17; Job 14:4
7:22 Mt 20:15; Ro 1:29; Ga 5:19
7:24 Gn 10:19; Mt 11:21; Mt 15:21; Mk 6:31
7:25 Mt 15:22; Mk 5:22
7:26 Mt 15:22; Ac 21:3; 1Co 12:13

^hIsa 29:13 ⁱExod 20:12; Deut 5:16 ^jExod 21:17; Lev 20:9 ^k7:16 is omitted in most critical editions of the Gk New Testament *Whoever has ears to listen should pay attention!*

7:6-7 See Isaiah 29:13. OT prophets often criticized superficial worship (see Jer 7:3-7; Amos 5:21-24).

7:8 *rules created by humans*: Jesus contrasts the rabbis’ interpretation of the Law with *God’s commandment*, or the written Law.

7:10 *Honor... death*: See Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9. Jesus quotes both the commandment to honor parents and the legal price for breaking it.

7:11 *corban... to God*: The term “corban” refers to an offering presented to God. Mark’s explanation of Jewish practice again suggests some in his audience are unfamiliar with it (see Mark 7:2b-4).

7:13 *do away with*: or invalidate. *God’s word*: The reference here is to the written Law, the first five books of the OT. When human rules serve as loopholes in the Law, they make the Law null and void.

7:15 *Nothing outside... contaminate*: Jesus returns to the question of purity.

7:17 *entered a house*: Jesus moves from a public to a private setting, where his disciples seek an explanation (see Mark 4:10-12, 20-34).

7:18 *Don’t you understand either?*: See Mark 4:13; 6:52. See sidebar, “The Disciples in Mark” at Mark 5.

7:19 *heart*: In ancient thought, moral decisions came from the heart. Jesus points out that true purity has to do with one’s attitude and actions, not one’s diet. *By saying this... God’s sight*: Mark applies Jesus’ saying to the rules about food found in the Law (Lev 11:1-47). Early Christian communities like Mark’s wrestled with the ongoing importance of these laws (see Acts 10:9-16; Gal 2:11-14).

7:21-22 Lists of sins like this one were common in ancient Judaism and the Greco-Roman world. As in 7:19, Jesus emphasizes the heart as the source of these sinful practices.

7:24-30 See Matthew 15:21-28.

7:24 *Tyre*: located to the northwest of Galilee, on the Mediterranean Sea. Jesus is again in Gentile territory (see Mark 3:8).

7:25 *fell at his feet*: See note on Mark 5:22.

7:26 *Greek, Syrophenician by birth*: Jesus talks with a Gentile woman. She’s an outsider both as a woman and as a Gentile.

7:27 Mt 7:6,
Mt 8:5, Mt 9:28,
Mt 10:5,
Mt 15:21

7:31 Mt 4:18,
Mt 4:25,
Mt 15:29;
Mk 5:20,
Mk 7:24

7:32 Mk 5:23

7:33 Mk 8:23

7:34 Mk 6:41,
Mk 8:12;
Jn 11:33,
Jn 11:41

7:35 Is 35:5,
Is 35:6

7:36 Mt 8:4;
Mk 1:45

7:37 Mt 15:31;
Mk 2:12

8:1 Mt 15:32

8:6 1Sa 9:13;
Jn 6:11, Jn 6:23;
Ac 27:35;
Ro 14:6

8:10 Mt 15:39

of her daughter. ²⁷He responded, “The children have to be fed first. It isn’t right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

²⁸But she answered, “Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.”

²⁹“Good answer!” he said. “Go on home. The demon has already left your daughter.”

³⁰When she returned to her house, she found the child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

A deaf man is healed

³¹After leaving the region of Tyre, Jesus went through Sidon toward the Galilee Sea through the region of the Ten Cities. ³²Some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly speak, and they begged him to place his hand on the man for healing. ³³Jesus took him away from the crowd by himself and put his fingers in the man’s ears. Then he spit and touched the man’s tongue. ³⁴Looking into heaven, Jesus sighed deeply and said, “*Ephphatha*,” which means, “Open up.” ³⁵At once, his ears opened, his twisted tongue was released, and he began to speak clearly.

³⁶Jesus gave the people strict orders not to tell anyone. But the more he tried to silence them, the more eagerly they shared the news. ³⁷People were overcome with wonder, saying, “He does everything well! He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who can’t speak.”

Jesus feeds four thousand people

OIn those days there was another large crowd with nothing to eat. Jesus called his disciples and told them, ²“I feel sorry for the crowd because they have been with me for three days and have nothing to eat. ³If I send them away hungry to their homes, they won’t have enough strength to travel, for some have come a long distance.”

⁴His disciples responded, “How can anyone get enough food in this wilderness to satisfy these people?”

⁵Jesus asked, “How much bread do you have?”

They said, “Seven loaves.”

⁶He told the crowd to sit on the ground. He took the seven loaves, gave thanks, broke them apart, and gave them to his disciples to distribute; and they gave the bread to the crowd. ⁷They also had a few fish. He said a blessing over them, then gave them to the disciples to hand out also. ⁸They ate until they were full. They collected seven baskets full of leftovers. ⁹This was a crowd of about four thousand people! Jesus sent them away, ¹⁰then got into a boat with his disciples and went over to the region of Dalmanutha.

7:27 *children’s bread . . . dogs*: Jesus’ response reflects his understanding of his mission as being directed to the Jews first. The OT sometimes uses “dogs” as an insulting term for Gentiles (see 1 Sam 17:43; 24:14).

7:28 *even the dogs . . . crumbs*: The woman cleverly takes Jesus’ insult as a reason for him to help her daughter.

7:29 *demon has already left*: The act of freeing the woman’s daughter from the demon doesn’t require Jesus’ presence (see Mark 5:39).

7:31–37 See Matthew 15:29–31.

7:31 The route isn’t a direct one. Together, Tyre and Sidon were used to refer to the Gentile territory on the Mediterranean coast northwest of the Sea of Galilee (see Mark 3:8). The Ten Cities (also called “Decapolis”) mark a region to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee (see Mark 5:20 and map 17).
7:33 *fingers in the man’s ears . . . spit . . . touched the man’s tongue*: Mark emphasizes physical details of the healing. See note on Mark 1:31; 8:23.

7:34 “*Ephphatha . . . Open up*”: Mark translates the Aramaic command for his Greek-speaking audience. See note on Mark 3:17.

7:36 *strict orders not to tell anyone*: See sidebar, “Secrecy” at Mark 8. *shared the news*: or announced (see Mark 1:14, 45;

3:14). In Mark the message connects Jesus’ amazing powers with God’s coming kingdom.

7:37 *overcome with wonder*: See note on Mark 1:22. *deaf . . . speak*: Jesus’ miracles reflect the power of God’s kingdom (see Isa 35:5–6).

8:1–10 See Matthew 15:32–39. Compare with the earlier feeding miracle in Mark 6:30–44. This time Jesus and his disciples provide for a group of Gentiles (see Mark 7:31).

8:2 *nothing to eat*: Jesus focuses on the crowd’s physical hunger (cf. Mark 6:34).

8:3 *If I send them away*: Jesus explains why it won’t work to send them away, which his disciples had recommended doing in the first feeding story (Mark 6:36).

8:4 *wilderness*: The disciples act as though they’ve learned nothing from the earlier feeding miracle or from Jewish traditions about food in the wilderness (see Exod 16:1–36). See notes on Mark 1:3; 6:30–44.

8:5 “*Seven loaves*”: Compare with Mark 6:38.

8:7 *gave them to the disciples to hand out also*: The disciples distribute fish as well as bread (cf. Mark 6:41).

8:8 *seven baskets*: The number of baskets equals the number of loaves in Mark 8:5.

8:10 *Dalmanutha*: an otherwise unknown region. Mark

Looking for proof

¹¹The Pharisees showed up and began to argue with Jesus. To test him, they asked for a sign from heaven. ¹²With an impatient sigh, Jesus said, “Why does this generation look for a sign? I assure you that no sign will be given to it.” ¹³Leaving them, he got back in the boat and crossed to the other side of the lake.

Understanding about the bread

¹⁴Jesus’ disciples had forgotten to bring any bread, so they had only one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵He gave them strict orders: “Watch out and be on your guard for the yeast of the Pharisees as well as the yeast of Herod.”

¹⁶The disciples discussed this among themselves, “He said this because we have no bread.”

¹⁷Jesus knew what they were discussing and said, “Why are you talking about the fact that you don’t have any bread? Don’t you grasp what has happened? Don’t you understand? Are your hearts so resistant to what God is doing? ¹⁸Don’t you have eyes? Why can’t you see? Don’t you have ears? Why can’t you hear? Don’t you remember? ¹⁹When I broke five loaves of bread for those five thousand people, how many baskets full of leftovers did you gather?”

They answered, “Twelve.”

²⁰“And when I broke seven loaves of bread for those four thousand people, how many baskets full of leftovers did you gather?”

They answered, “Seven.”

²¹Jesus said to them, “And you still don’t understand?”

A blind man is healed

²²Jesus and his disciples came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to Jesus and begged him to touch and heal him. ²³Taking the blind man’s hand, Jesus led him out of the village. After spitting on his eyes and laying his hands on the man, he asked him, “Do you see anything?”

Secrecy In Mark, Jesus frequently orders people and spirits not to tell others about his miracles. He also calls the message about God’s kingdom a “secret,” or mystery, that’s revealed to only a few (Mark 4:10-12). And he specifically charges his disciples not to tell anyone about him (Mark 8:30). In all these ways, according to Mark, Jesus works to contain the word of his ministry. It’s probably best to understand the theme of secrecy in light of Jesus’ aims. He may have avoided public recognition for his miracle-working because he didn’t want to be associated with other, fame-seeking healers of the day. He may have resisted the political hopes many attached to the title “Christ.” His identity and mission as the Christ is a secret partly because God’s kingdom is still hidden from view. From Mark’s perspective, Jesus’ status as Christ remains a mystery to some but only until God’s kingdom arrives.

seems to suggest it’s somewhere between the Ten Cities and Bethsaida.

8:11-13 See Matthew 16:1-4; Luke 11:29-32. The Pharisees return to the story, this time to test Jesus.

8:11 *sign from heaven*: God’s presence is often confirmed by signs in the OT (e.g., Gen 9:12, 13, 17; Exod 3:12; 4:28, 30).

8:12 *this generation*: refers to those who belong to the present evil age, rather than to the coming age of God’s reign (see Mark 8:38; 9:19; 13:30). *sign*: The Pharisees can’t see signs because they don’t belong to God’s coming kingdom (see Mark 4:12).

8:14-21 See Matthew 16:5-12; Luke 12:1; John 6:32-36. The disciples again share a boat with Jesus, and again he confuses and bewilders them (see Mark 4:35-41).

8:14 *one loaf*: Mark connects the story to the feeding that’s just occurred (Mark 8:1-10).

8:15 *yeast of the Pharisees... Herod*: The yeast metaphor illustrates the corrupting power of religious and political authorities (see Mark 8:11-13; 6:14-29; 1 Cor 5:6). See note on Mark 3:6.

8:16 *no bread*: See Mark 8:14. The disciples miss Jesus’ point and exaggerate their lack of food.

8:17-18 Jesus speaks to his own followers in harsh terms. In this series of questions, he returns to earlier charges against the disciples (Mark 4:13; 6:52) and compares them to the Pharisees (see Mark 3:5) and to outsiders (Mark 4:11-12).

8:19-20 *baskets full of leftovers*: The disciples are focused on the shortage (see Mark 8:16), but Jesus emphasizes the surplus.

8:21 *still don’t understand*: The disciples have answered Jesus’ questions correctly, but they don’t grasp his point. Where they see a shortfall, God’s coming kingdom is known for its abundance.

8:22-26 See John 9:1-7. This story serves as a turning point in Mark. On one level, it seems to imply that even the disciples’ blindness (see Mark 8:18) is only temporary. On another level, it shows that clear vision may come in stages and include a time when the world doesn’t look quite right.

8:22 *Bethsaida*: See note on Mark 6:45.

8:23 *out of the village*: Jesus removes himself from the public eye (see Mark 5:37). He isn’t like those miracle workers who seek fame.

8:11 Mt 12:38, Mt 16:1; Lk 11:16; Jn 4:48
8:12 Mk 7:34; Jn 11:33
8:15 Mt 14:1, Mt 16:6; Lk 12:1
8:17 Mk 6:52
8:18 Jer 5:21; Eze 12:2; Mk 4:12
8:19 Mk 6:41
8:20 Mk 8:6
8:21 Mk 6:52
8:22 Mt 9:27, Mt 11:21; Mk 6:45, Mk 10:46; Jn 9:1
8:23 Mk 5:23, Mk 7:33; Jn 9:6

8:26 Mt 8:4;
Mk 8:23

8:27 Mt 16:13;
Lk 9:18

8:28 Mk 6:14;
Lk 9:7

8:29 Jn 6:69;
Jn 11:27

8:30 Mt 8:4,
Mt 16:20;
Mk 9:9; Lk 9:21

8:31 Mt 16:21;

Mk 9:31,
Mk 10:34;
Lk 9:22

8:32 Mt 16:22;
Jn 16:25

8:33 Mt 4:10,
Mt 16:23

8:34 Mt 10:38;
Lk 14:27

8:35 Mt 10:39;
Lk 17:33;
Jn 12:25

8:36 Mt 16:26;
Lk 12:20

8:37 Ps 49:7,
Ps 49:8

8:38 Mt 10:33,
Mt 16:27,
Mt 25:31;
Lk 12:9; Ro 1:16

9:1 Mt 16:28,
Mt 25:31;
Mk 13:30;
Lk 9:27

²⁴The man looked up and said, “I see people. They look like trees, only they are walking around.”

²⁵Then Jesus placed his hands on the man’s eyes again. He looked with his eyes wide open, his sight was restored, and he could see everything clearly. ²⁶Then Jesus sent him home, saying, “Don’t go into the village!”

Jesus predicts his death

²⁷Jesus and his disciples went into the villages near Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?”

²⁸They told him, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and still others one of the prophets.”

²⁹He asked them, “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?”

Peter answered, “You are the Christ.” ³⁰Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: “The Human One¹ must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the legal experts, and be killed, and then, after three days, rise from the dead.” ³²He said this plainly. But Peter took hold of Jesus and, scolding him, began to correct him. ³³Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, then sternly corrected Peter: “Get behind me, Satan. You are not thinking God’s thoughts but human thoughts.”

³⁴After calling the crowd together with his disciples, Jesus said to them, “All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross, and follow me. ³⁵All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me and because of the good news will save them. ³⁶Why would people gain the whole world but lose their lives?

³⁷What will people give in exchange for their lives? ³⁸Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this unfaithful and sinful generation, the Human One^m will be ashamed of that person when he comes in the Father’s glory with the holy angels.” ¹Jesus continued, “I assure you that some standing here won’t die before they see God’s kingdom arrive in power.”

¹Or *Son of Man* ^mOr *Son of Man*

8:24 This story is unique in the NT in that the healing happens in two stages. Mark’s account, however, has an important, symbolic significance as well: Clarity about Jesus’ mission comes only after confusion. Mark’s account even includes the strange idea of a Christ who suffers (see Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34).

8:25 eyes . . . clearly: Mark uses repetition to emphasize the man’s restored vision (see Mark 7:33).

8:26 the village: Jesus continues to avoid popular recognition (see Mark 1:44-45; 5:43; 7:24, 36; 8:23).

8:27-9:1 See Matthew 16:21-28; Luke 9:22-27. Jesus predicts his own death and resurrection for the first time in Mark. Just as his suffering is inseparable from his role as the Christ (see Mark 1:1), so his followers’ lives, too, will be defined by self-sacrifice.

8:27 Caesarea Philippi: Located some 30 miles north of Bethsaida, this was the site of a temple built by Herod the Great and dedicated to Caesar Augustus.

8:29 Christ: or the anointed one (see Mark 1:1). This term carried a range of meanings among 1st-century Jews. In the OT it usually refers to human religious and/or political leaders. Other texts from this period affirm the role of the anointed one in revealing God’s reign on the earth.

8:30 ordered them not to tell anyone: See Mark 1:25; 3:12; 4:39; 9:25; 10:34. See sidebar, “Secrecy.”

8:31 Human One: Jesus refers to himself as the one who goes before the new humanity that will live in God’s coming kingdom. See notes on Mark 2:10, 28. See sidebar, “The

Human One in Mark” at Mark 14. *elders, chief priests, and the legal experts:* These Jewish authorities together form the Sanhedrin, the ruling council in Jerusalem.

8:32 plainly: Jesus freely announces the outcome of his mission as the Christ (cf. Mark 8:30).

8:33 Satan: See Mark 1:13; 3:22-27. By calling out Satan, Jesus exposes an evil force behind Peter’s response. The problem is that Peter denies that Jesus’ mission as the Christ includes suffering. He isn’t thinking from God’s point of view. See note on Mark 4:15.

8:34 say no . . . follow me: Jesus defines discipleship in terms of self-denial and suffering. Like Jesus, his followers actively choose their destiny; they aren’t passive victims.

8:35 because of me and because of the good news: Jesus’ followers *lose their lives* because they have learned from him the pattern of self-sacrifice that reflects God’s kingdom. Notice Jesus’ distinction between himself and the good news. While Jesus proclaims and demonstrates God’s good news, Mark doesn’t equate it with Jesus’ identity, strictly speaking (see also Mark 10:29).

8:38 ashamed: Jesus’ call for self-sacrifice would have been humiliating to ancient hearers, since he’s urging voluntary weakness in a culture that avoids it. *comes in the Father’s glory:* probably a reference to Daniel 7:13-14. As God’s kingdom arrives on earth, the Human One will practice judgment according to divine, not human, standards.

9:1 God’s kingdom: See Mark 1:15. Jesus says God’s kingdom will soon be revealed on earth (cf. Mark 13:32).

Jesus transformed

²Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain where they were alone. He was transformed in front of them, ³and his clothes were amazingly bright, brighter than if they had been bleached white. ⁴Elijah and Moses appeared and were talking with Jesus. ⁵Peter reacted to all of this by saying to Jesus, “Rabbi, it’s good that we’re here. Let’s make three shrines—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁶He said this because he didn’t know how to respond, for the three of them were terrified.

⁷Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice spoke from the cloud, “This is my Son, whom I dearly love. Listen to him!” ⁸Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

⁹As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them not to tell anyone what they had seen until after the Human One^a had risen from the dead. ¹⁰So they kept it to themselves, wondering, “What’s this ‘rising from the dead’?” ¹¹They asked Jesus, “Why do the legal experts say that Elijah must come first?”

¹²He answered, “Elijah does come first to restore all things. Why was it written that the Human One^o would suffer many things and be rejected? ¹³In fact, I tell you that Elijah has come, but they did to him whatever they wanted, just as it was written about him.”

A demon-possessed boy

¹⁴When Jesus, Peter, James, and John approached the other disciples, they saw a large crowd surrounding them and legal experts arguing with them. ¹⁵Suddenly the whole crowd caught sight of Jesus. They ran to greet him, overcome with excitement. ¹⁶Jesus asked them, “What are you arguing about?”

¹⁷Someone from the crowd responded, “Teacher, I brought my son to you, since he has a spirit that doesn’t allow him to speak. ¹⁸Wherever it overpowers him, it throws him into a fit. He foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and stiffens up. So I spoke to your disciples to see if they could throw it out, but they couldn’t.”

¹⁹Jesus answered them, “You faithless generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I put up with you? Bring him to me.”

²⁰They brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a fit. He fell on the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. ²¹Jesus asked his father, “How long has this been going on?”

He said, “Since he was a child. ²²It has often thrown him into a fire or into water trying to kill him. If you can do anything, help us! Show us compassion!”

²³Jesus said to him, “If you can do anything? All things are possible for the one who has faith.”

^aOr Son of Man ^oOr Son of Man

9:2-13 See Matthew 17:1-8; Luke 9:28-36.

9:2 *Peter, James, and John*: See note on Mark 5:37. *very high mountain*: See note on Mark 3:13. *transformed*: or changed in form. The word indicates Jesus’ divine status (see Mark 9:7).

9:4 *Elijah and Moses*: Jewish tradition expected one or both of these OT figures to return to earth at the arrival of God’s kingdom. See note on Mark 1:6.

9:5 *three shrines*: Peter intends to build dwelling places for God’s special agents. In the OT, before the temple was built, God lived in a shrine (see Exod 25:9; 2 Sam 7:2, 6).

9:7 *my Son, whom I dearly love*: Here the voice speaks to Jesus’ disciples. See note on Mark 1:11. *Listen to him!*: Jesus is the prophet who was to come (see Deut 18:15). See note on Mark 4:3.

9:10 *“rising from the dead”*: Resurrection was a familiar concept in Jewish thought. Those who expected God’s kingdom to come believed that the dead would be raised to participate in end-time judgment. See note on Mark 6:16.

9:11 *Elijah must come first*: See note on Mark 1:6.

9:12 *written . . . many things*: See sidebar, “The Human One

in Mark” at Mark 14. Jesus’ words would seem strange to his disciples because no known writings say the Human One would suffer (cf. Dan 7:1-27). Jesus isn’t referring to a particular text, then, but is trying to get his followers to adopt his point of view on how to read all of the scriptures.

9:14-29 See Matthew 17:14-20; Luke 9:37-43a. Compare with Mark 6:5; 3:15; 6:7.

9:14 *legal experts*: See note on Mark 1:22.

9:18 *fit . . . stiffens up*: The boy’s condition is similar to what happens during an epileptic seizure. *they couldn’t*: or they weren’t strong enough. Elsewhere Mark portrays power over evil as a matter of strength against strength (see Mark 1:7; 3:27; 5:4; 14:37).

9:19 *faithless generation*: Jesus expresses regret over the faithless condition of those who belong to the present evil age (see Mark 1:15). It’s unclear whether the term refers to his disciples, to the boy’s father, or to both—or even to a broader group. See note on Mark 8:12.

9:23 *All things . . . faith*: In Mark, God’s power works effectively among those who trust in God’s kingdom (see Mark 2:5; 5:34; 11:22-23; cf. 6:5-6).

9:2 Mt 17:1;

Mk 5:37;

Mk 14:33;

Lk 9:28

9:3 Dn 7:9;

Mt 28:3

9:4 Dt 34:5;

Mt 17:3, Mt 17:4;

Lk 9:30;

Rev 19:10

9:5 Ex 33:17;

Mt 17:4, Mt 23:7;

Mt 26:49;

Mk 11:21

9:6 Mk 14:40

9:7 Mt 3:17;

Mk 1:11;

2Pt 1:17

9:8 Lk 9:36

9:9 Mk 8:30

9:10 Jn 16:17

9:11 Mal 4:5;

Mt 11:14;

Mt 17:10;

Mk 9:4

9:12 Lk 1:17

9:13 Mt 11:14;

Mt 17:12;

Lk 1:17

9:14 Mt 17:14;

Lk 9:37

9:17 Mk 9:25

9:18 Ac 7:54

9:19 Mt 17:17

9:20 Mk 1:26

9:21 Mk 5:25;

Jn 5:5, Jn 9:1;

Ac 3:2

9:22 Mt 9:28

9:23 Mt 17:20;

Mt 21:21;

Mk 11:23;

Jn 11:40

9:24 Lk 17:5

9:25 Is 35:6;
Mt 9:33,
Mt 12:22;
Mk 1:25,
Mk 9:15

9:26 Mk 1:26

9:27 Mk 1:31,
Mk 1:41

9:28 Mk 7:17

9:29 Eph 6:18

9:30 Mt 17:22,
Mt 17:23; Lk 9:43

9:31 Mt 16:21;
Mk 8:31,
Mk 9:12; Lk 9:44

9:32 Mk 9:10;
Lk 2:50, Lk 9:45,
Lk 18:34;
Jn 12:16

9:33 Mt 18:1;
Lk 9:46

9:34 Lk 22:24

9:35 Mt 23:11;
Mk 10:43,
Mk 10:44;
Lk 22:26

9:36 Mk 10:16

9:37 Mt 10:40

9:38 Lk 9:49,
Lk 9:50

9:39 Mt 9:10,
Mt 10:5,
Mt 16:24;
Lk 9:50; 1Co 12:3

9:40 Mt 12:30;
Lk 11:23

9:41 Mt 10:42

9:42 Mt 18:6;
Lk 17:2

9:43 Mt 5:22,
Mt 5:29, Mt 5:30,
Mt 18:8,
Mt 25:41

9:44 Is 66:24

9:45 Mt 5:22,
Mt 18:8; Mk 9:43

9:47 Mt 5:22,
Mt 5:29, Mt 18:9;
Mk 9:43

9:48 Is 66:24;
Mt 25:41

9:49 Lv 2:13

²⁴At that the boy's father cried out, "I have faith; help my lack of faith!"

²⁵Noticing that the crowd had surged together, Jesus spoke harshly to the unclean spirit, "Mute and deaf spirit, I command you to come out of him and never enter him again." ²⁶After screaming and shaking the boy horribly, the spirit came out. The boy seemed to be dead; in fact, several people said that he had died. ²⁷But Jesus took his hand, lifted him up, and he arose.

²⁸After Jesus went into a house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we throw this spirit out?"

²⁹Jesus answered, "Throwing this kind of spirit out requires prayer."

Jesus predicts his death

³⁰From there Jesus and his followers went through Galilee, but he didn't want anyone to know it. ³¹This was because he was teaching his disciples, "The Human One^P will be delivered into human hands. They will kill him. Three days after he is killed he will rise up." ³²But they didn't understand this kind of talk, and they were afraid to ask him.

³³They entered Capernaum. When they had come into a house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about during the journey?" ³⁴They didn't respond, since on the way they had been debating with each other about who was the greatest. ³⁵He sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be least of all and the servant of all." ³⁶Jesus reached for a little child, placed him among the Twelve, and embraced him. Then he said, ³⁷"Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me isn't actually welcoming me but rather the one who sent me."

Recognize your allies

³⁸John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone throwing demons out in your name, and we tried to stop him because he wasn't following us."

³⁹Jesus replied, "Don't stop him. No one who does powerful acts in my name can quickly turn around and curse me. ⁴⁰Whoever isn't against us is for us. ⁴¹I assure you that whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will certainly be rewarded.

⁴²"As for whoever causes these little ones who believe in me to trip and fall into sin, it would be better for them to have a huge stone hung around their necks and to be thrown into the lake. ⁴³If your hand causes you to fall into sin, chop it off. It's better for you to enter into life crippled than to go away with two hands into the fire of hell, which can't be put out. ⁴⁴If your foot causes you to fall into sin, chop it off. It's better for you to enter life lame than to be thrown into hell with two feet." ⁴⁷If your eye causes you to fall into sin, tear it out. It's better for you to enter God's kingdom with one eye than to be thrown into hell with two. ⁴⁸That's a place *where worms don't die and the fire never goes out.* ⁴⁹Everyone will be salted with

^POr *Son of Man* ^{9:44} is omitted in most critical editions of the Gk New Testament *where worms don't die and the fire never goes out.* ^{9:46} is omitted in most critical editions of the Gk New Testament *where worms don't die and the fire never goes out.* ^{9:49} ^aIsa 66:24

9:24 "I have faith; help my lack of faith!": The father uses the language of prayer (see Mark 9:29; Pss 109:26; 119:86).

9:29 *prayer*: Jesus may be referring to the father's request for help (Mark 9:24).

9:30-37 See Matthew 17:22-23; 18:1-9; Luke 9:43b-48. This passage combines Jesus' prediction of his death and resurrection with instruction about discipleship (see Mark 8:27-9:1).

9:30 *didn't want anyone to know it*: See sidebar, "Secrecy" at Mark 8.

9:31 *delivered*: or handed over. This verse mostly repeats Mark 8:31 but adds a note about betrayal (see Mark 14:11, 18).

9:32 *didn't understand... afraid to ask*: See sidebar, "The Disciples in Mark" at Mark 5.

9:33 *Capernaum*: See note on Mark 1:21.

9:35 *least... servant*: Jesus turns common notions of greatness upside down (see Mark 9:34). In God's kingdom, leaders are the lowest on the social ladder (see Mark 8:34-35).

9:36 *little child*: Children held a very low social status in the ancient world.

9:37 *one who sent me*: See John 12:44-45. Jesus is an agent of God. Since his ministry reflects the power structure of God's kingdom, those who welcome him also welcome God.

9:38-50 See Matthew 18:6-9; Luke 9:49-50; 17:1-2.

9:39 *powerful acts in my name*: Jesus doesn't claim he's the only one who can access God's power. Since he's secured a foothold for God's kingdom on earth, he makes it possible for others to do miracles (see Mark 3:15; 6:7, 13).

9:40 *you belong to Christ*: Jesus' followers participate in his mission as the Christ.

9:42-47 Jesus warns against causing others or oneself to *fall into sin* (Mark 9:42, 43, 45, 47).

9:42 *little ones*: specifically, the children Jesus has just "embraced" (Mark 9:36-37). More broadly, the term may include anyone whose trust in God's kingdom exposes them to abuse by earthly power structures.

9:43 *chop it off*: Jesus uses a violent image to make his point (see also Mark 9:45, 47). *hell*: or Gehenna, a place of eternal punishment (Matt 5:30; Luke 12:5).

9:49 *salted with fire*: Salt is a preservative. Together, the

fire. ⁵⁰Salt is good; but if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? Maintain salt among yourselves and keep peace with each other.”

Divorce and remarriage

10 Jesus left that place and went beyond the Jordan and into the region of Judea. Crowds gathered around him again and, as usual, he taught them. ²Some Pharisees came and, trying to test him, they asked, “Does the Law allow a man to divorce his wife?”

³Jesus answered, “What did Moses command you?”

⁴They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a divorce certificate and to divorce his wife.”

⁵Jesus said to them, “He wrote this commandment for you because of your unyielding hearts. ⁶At the beginning of creation, *God made them male and female.* ⁷*Because of this, a man should leave his father and mother and be joined together with his wife, and the two will be one flesh.* ⁸So they are no longer two but one flesh. ⁹Therefore, humans must not pull apart what God has put together.”

¹⁰Inside the house, the disciples asked him again about this. ¹¹He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; ¹²and if a wife divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

Jesus blesses children

¹³People were bringing children to Jesus so that he would bless them. But the disciples scolded them. ¹⁴When Jesus saw this, he grew angry and said to them, “Allow the children to come to me. Don’t forbid them, because God’s kingdom belongs to people like these children. ¹⁵I assure you that whoever doesn’t welcome God’s kingdom like a child will never enter it.” ¹⁶Then he hugged the children and blessed them.

A rich man’s question

¹⁷As Jesus continued down the road, a man ran up, knelt before him, and asked, “Good Teacher, what must I do to obtain eternal life?”

¹⁸Jesus replied, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except the one God. ¹⁹You know the commandments: *Don’t commit murder. Don’t commit adultery. Don’t steal. Don’t give false testimony. Don’t cheat. Honor your father and mother.*”^v

²⁰“Teacher,” he responded, “I’ve kept all of these things since I was a boy.”

²¹Jesus looked at him carefully and loved him. He said, “You are lacking one thing. Go, sell

^tGen 1:27 ^uGen 2:24 ^vExod 12:16; Deut 16:20

9:50 Mt 5:13; Lk 14:34; Ro 12:18; 2Co 13:11; 1Th 5:13

10:1 Mt 19:1

10:2 Mt 5:31; Mt 19:3; Jn 8:6

10:4 Dt 24:1; Dt 24:3; Mt 5:31

10:5 Mk 16:14

10:6 Gn 1:27; Gn 5:2; Mk 13:19; 2Pt 3:4

10:8 Gn 2:24; 1Co 6:16

10:9 1Co 7:10

10:10 Mk 9:28

10:11 Mt 5:32; Mt 19:9; Lk 16:18

10:12 1Co 7:11; 1Co 7:13

10:13 Mt 19:13; Lk 18:15

10:14 Mt 5:3; Mt 14:14; Mt 15:32; Mt 19:14; Lk 18:16

10:15 Mt 18:3; Lk 18:17; Jn 3:3

10:16 Gn 48:14; Mk 9:36

10:17 Mt 19:16; Mt 25:34; Mk 1:40; Lk 10:25; Lk 18:18

10:18 Lk 18:19

10:19 Ex 20:12; Dt 5:16; Ro 13:9

10:20 Mt 19:20

10:21 Mt 16:24; Lk 12:33

images of salt and fire portray the judgment that comes with God’s kingdom (see 1 Cor 3:13).

9:50 *peace with each other*: God’s kingdom brings harmony to social relationships. Peace among Jesus’ followers in turn reflects the character of God’s kingdom to the world (see Matt 5:13).

10:1-12 See Matthew 19:1-9. Jesus’ view of divorce comes from his belief that God’s coming kingdom will restore creation to its original design.

10:1 *beyond the Jordan and into the region of Judea*: Jesus and his disciples make their way toward Jerusalem.

10:2 *Pharisees*: See note on Mark 2:16. *test*: See Mark 8:11; 12:15.

10:3 *“What did Moses command you?”*: Jesus appeals to the written Jewish Law (see Mark 7:9-10).

10:4 See Deuteronomy 24:1-4.

10:5 *unyielding hearts*: or hardened hearts. The phrase describes those who belong to the present evil age and resist God’s kingdom.

10:6-8 Jesus combines Genesis 1:27 with Genesis 2:24. Those who looked for God’s coming kingdom considered Genesis a blueprint for the new creation.

10:9 *pull apart*: Jesus’ concerns about divorce are consistent with the “peace” he’s commanded in Mark 9:50.

10:11-12 Jesus interprets Jewish Law strictly, while introducing equality between men and women. Traditionally,

both Jewish and Roman law restricted women’s right to divorce.

10:13-16 See Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17; Mark 9:36-37.

10:14 *angry*: See Mark 1:41; 3:5; 10:41. Jesus often displays anger when people resist the values of God’s kingdom. Society’s weakest members inherit God’s kingdom because they so freely welcome it (see Mark 10:15).

10:17-31 See Matthew 19:16-30; Luke 18:18-30. Children welcome God’s kingdom (Mark 10:14-16), but a wealthy man walks away from it.

10:17 *eternal life*: The man asks Jesus about the way of life associated with God’s coming kingdom (see Mark 10:24).

10:18 *No one . . . one God*: Jesus affirms the Jewish belief in one and only one God.

10:19 *commandments*: Jesus omits the laws that refer to people’s devotion to God and focuses instead on those that address relationships among people (see Exod 20:12-16; Deut 5:16-20). He adds one law, *Don’t cheat*, that isn’t among the Ten Commandments (but see Exod 20:17; Deut 24:14).

10:21 *the poor*: Jewish tradition shows consistent concern for the poor. Jesus’ radical command goes a step further by insisting the man sell what he owns before following Jesus (see Mark 10:28).

10:22 Eze 33:31

10:23 Mt 19:23;
Lk 18:24

10:24 Ps 49:6,
Ps 52:7;
Prov 11:28;
1Ti 6:17

10:25 Mt 19:24

10:27 Gn 18:14;
Job 42:2;
Jer 32:17;
Jer 32:27;
Mt 19:26

10:28 Mt 19:27

10:29 Mt 10:37,
Mt 16:24,
Mt 19:21;
Mk 8:35;
Lk 14:26

10:30 Mt 12:32

10:31 Mt 19:30,
Mt 20:16;
Lk 13:30

10:32 Mt 20:17;
Lk 18:31

10:33 Mt 16:21,
Mt 27:2;
Mk 8:31

10:34 Mt 26:67;
Mk 14:65

10:35 Mt 20:20;
Mk 11:19

10:36 Mk 10:51

10:37 Mt 19:28

10:38 Mt 20:22;
Mk 14:36;
Lk 12:50;
Jn 18:11

10:39 Ac 12:2;
Rev 1:9

10:40 Mt 20:23,
Mt 25:34

10:41 Lk 22:24,
Lk 22:25

what you own, and give the money to the poor. Then you will have treasure in heaven. And come, follow me.”²² But the man was dismayed at this statement and went away saddened, because he had many possessions.

²³ Looking around, Jesus said to his disciples, “It will be very hard for the wealthy to enter God’s kingdom!”²⁴ His words startled the disciples, so Jesus told them again, “Children, it’s difficult to enter God’s kingdom! ²⁵It’s easier for a camel to squeeze through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter God’s kingdom.”

²⁶ They were shocked even more and said to each other, “Then who can be saved?”

²⁷ Jesus looked at them carefully and said, “It’s impossible with human beings, but not with God. All things are possible for God.”

²⁸ Peter said to him, “Look, we’ve left everything and followed you.”

²⁹ Jesus said, “I assure you that anyone who has left house, brothers, sisters, mother, father, children, or farms because of me and because of the good news ³⁰will receive one hundred times as much now in this life—houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and farms (with harassment)—and in the coming age, eternal life. ³¹But many who are first will be last. And many who are last will be first.”

Jesus predicts his death and resurrection

³² Jesus and his disciples were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, with Jesus in the lead. The disciples were amazed while the others following behind were afraid. Taking the Twelve aside again, he told them what was about to happen to him. ³³“Look!” he said. “We’re going up to Jerusalem. The Human One^w will be handed over to the chief priests and the legal experts. They will condemn him to death and hand him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴They will ridicule him, spit on him, torture him, and kill him. After three days, he will rise up.”

A request from James and John

³⁵ James and John, Zebedee’s sons, came to Jesus and said, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”

³⁶ “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

³⁷ They said, “Allow one of us to sit on your right and the other on your left when you enter your glory.”

³⁸ Jesus replied, “You don’t know what you’re asking! Can you drink the cup I drink or receive the baptism I receive?”

³⁹ “We can,” they answered.

Jesus said, “You will drink the cup I drink and receive the baptism I receive, ⁴⁰but to sit at my right or left hand isn’t mine to give. It belongs to those for whom it has been prepared.”

⁴¹ Now when the other ten disciples heard about this, they became angry with James and

^wOr *Son of Man*

10:22 *dismayed*: Jesus’ response deeply offends the man.

10:25 *eye of a needle*: Wealth prevents entry into God’s kingdom because it’s easier to rely on money and things than on God.

10:26 *saved*: that is, enter eternal life at the judgment.

10:27 *All things are possible for God*: See Mark 9:23; Genesis 18:14; Zechariah 8:6.

10:29 *because of me and because of the good news*: See note on Mark 8:35.

10:30 *one hundred times... (with harassment)*: See Mark 13:9-13. Jesus promises his followers both rich reward and public scorn. He omits “father” when repeating the list of Mark 10:29. The community of Jesus’ disciples has God as its Father. See note on Mark 3:32.

10:31 *first... first*: See Mark 9:35; 10:44.

10:32-34 See Matthew 20:17-19; Luke 18:31-33. This is the third prediction of Jesus’ death and resurrection in Mark (See Mark 8:27-9:29; 9:30-10:31).

10:32 *amazed... afraid*: The Greek text doesn’t say who was amazed, but it does distinguish between

amazement (see Mark 1:27; 10:24) and fear (see Mark 4:41; 6:50).

10:34 *ridicule... spit... torture*: The final prediction includes graphic details about Jesus’ destiny (see Mark 15:15-32).

10:35-45 See Matthew 20:20-27. For a third time, Jesus’ prediction about his death leads to instruction about discipleship.

10:35 *James and John*: See Mark 1:19. With Peter, these two brothers belong to the inner circle of Jesus’ disciples. See note on Mark 5:37.

10:37 *right*: a place of honor (see Ps 110:1). *enter your glory*: The brothers assume they’ll join Jesus in the heavenly throne room once God’s kingdom arrives.

10:39 *cup... baptism*: Both images belong to the coming kingdom of God. “Cup” is shorthand for destiny (see Pss 11:6; 23:5; 116:13). “Baptism” here refers to the final cleansing of sin in preparation for God’s kingdom. See note on Mark 1:4. Jesus’ disciples will share his destiny.

10:40 *it has been prepared*: The passive verb suggests God is the one in charge of people’s destinies.

John. ⁴²Jesus called them over and said, “You know that the ones who are considered the rulers by the Gentiles show off their authority over them and their high-ranking officials order them around. ⁴³But that’s not the way it will be with you. Whoever wants to be great among you will be your servant. ⁴⁴Whoever wants to be first among you will be the slave of all, ⁴⁵for the Human One^x didn’t come to be served but rather to serve and to give his life to liberate many people.”

Healing of blind Bartimaeus

⁴⁶Jesus and his followers came into Jericho. As Jesus was leaving Jericho, together with his disciples and a sizable crowd, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, Timaeus’ son, was sitting beside the road. ⁴⁷When he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was there, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, show me mercy!” ⁴⁸Many scolded him, telling him to be quiet, but he shouted even louder, “Son of David, show me mercy!”

⁴⁹Jesus stopped and said, “Call him forward.”

They called the blind man, “Be encouraged! Get up! He’s calling you.”

⁵⁰Throwing his coat to the side, he jumped up and came to Jesus.

⁵¹Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?”

The blind man said, “Teacher, I want to see.”

⁵²Jesus said, “Go, your faith has healed you.” At once he was able to see, and he began to follow Jesus on the way.

Jesus enters Jerusalem

11 When Jesus and his followers approached Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives. Jesus gave two disciples a task, ²saying to them, “Go into the village over there. As soon as you enter it, you will find tied up there a colt that no one has ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘Its master needs it, and he will send it back right away.’”

⁴They went and found a colt tied to a gate outside on the street, and they untied it. ⁵Some people standing around said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” ⁶They told them just what Jesus said, and they left them alone. ⁷They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes upon it, and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread out their clothes on the road while others spread branches cut from the fields. ⁹Those in front of him and those following were shouting, “*Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*”

^xOr *Son of Man* ^yPs 118:26

10:42 Mt 20:25

10:43 Mt 20:26; Mk 9:35; Lk 9:48

10:44 Mk 10:43

10:45 Mt 20:28

10:46 Mt 20:29; Mt 20:30; Lk 18:35; Jn 9:8

10:47 Mt 9:27; Mt 20:30; Mt 22:42; Mk 1:24

10:48 Mt 9:27; Mt 15:22; Mt 20:31; Mt 21:9; Mk 10:47

10:49 Mt 9:2; Mt 20:32; Lk 18:40

10:51 Jn 20:16

10:52 Mt 9:22; Mk 5:34

11:1 Mt 21:1; Lk 19:29; Ac 1:12

11:2 Nm 19:2; 1Sa 6:7; Mt 21:2

11:7 Lk 19:35; Jn 12:12

11:8 2Ki 9:13; Lk 4:15; Jn 12:13

11:9 Ps 118:25; Ps 118:26; Mt 21:9; Mt 23:39

10:42 *considered the rulers*: Jesus hints at the fragile power of earthly rulers. They only seem to be in charge. *authority over*: Earthly power is top-down power.

10:43 *with you*: or among you. Like Jesus, the disciples reflect God’s power, which is bottom-up power.

10:45 *Human One . . . people*: Like Jesus, his followers will give their lives (see Mark 13:12) as part of God’s redemption of the world. See note on Mark 2:10. See sidebar, “The Human One in Mark” at Mark 14.

10:46-52 See Matthew 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43. The story of Bartimaeus concludes the Gospel’s middle section, which began with a story of restored sight (see Mark 8:22-26).

10:46 *Jericho*: about 20 miles from Jerusalem.

10:47 *Son of David*: a rare use of this title in Mark. Jewish tradition often linked hopes for God’s coming kingdom with the renewal of David’s kingdom (2 Sam 7:4-17; Mark 11:10). Elsewhere in Mark, Jesus distances himself from this tradition (Mark 12:35-37), probably because it implies a military and/or political grab for power. *show me mercy*: See Mark 5:19.

10:52 *your faith has healed you*: See note on Mark 5:27. *on the way*: an early Christian expression for the life of

discipleship. In the book of Acts, for example, the Christian movement is sometimes called “the Way” (e.g., Acts 9:2; 19:9; 24:14).

11:1-13:37 Jesus and his disciples enter Jerusalem for the Passover Festival (see Mark 14:1).

11:1-11 See Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19.

11:1 *Bethphage and Bethany*: The two towns are just outside Jerusalem. Because the city was crowded during Passover, many pilgrims found places to stay in nearby towns and villages.

11:2 *colt*: This act symbolizes Jesus’ humble authority (see Zech 9:9; cf. Matt 21:5; John 12:15).

11:6 *just what Jesus said*: Mark shows that Jesus knows what lies ahead.

11:8 *clothes . . . branches*: The OT associates similar details with Israel’s kings (see 2 Kgs 9:13). For Mark, though, Jesus is a different kind of king (see Mark 11:2, 9).

11:9 The reference to Psalm 118:26 draws attention to Jesus’ royal status. The shout *Hosanna!* literally means “Save now!” The people think Jesus will save them from Roman occupation. Ironically, this misplaced hope will ultimately lead to his death.

11:10 Lk 1:32

11:11 Mt 21:12,
Mt 21:17

11:12 Mt 4:2,
Mt 21:18

11:13 Mt 21:19;
Lk 13:6

11:14 Mt 3:10,
Mt 21:19,
Mt 21:33;
Mk 11:20,
Mk 11:21

11:15 Mt 21:12;
Lk 19:45; Jn 2:13

11:17 Is 56:7;
Jer 7:11

11:19 Mk 11:11;
Lk 21:37

11:20 Mt 21:19
11:21 Mk 9:5,
Mk 14:72

11:22 2Ch
20:20; Ps 62:8;
Mt 10:5,
Mt 16:24,
Mt 17:18

11:23 Mt 17:20,
Mt 21:21;
1Co 13:2; Jas 1:6

11:24 Mt 7:7

11:25 1Ki 8:22;
Mt 6:5, Mt 6:14;
Eph 4:32;
Col 3:13

11:26 Mt 6:15,
Mt 18:35

10Blessings on the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest!”

11Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. After he looked around at everything, because it was already late in the evening, he returned to Bethany with the Twelve.

Fig tree and the temple

12The next day, after leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. **13**From far away, he noticed a fig tree in leaf, so he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing except leaves, since it wasn't the season for figs. **14**So he said to it, “No one will ever again eat your fruit!” His disciples heard this.

15They came into Jerusalem. After entering the temple, he threw out those who were selling and buying there. He pushed over the tables used for currency exchange and the chairs of those who sold doves. **16**He didn't allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. **17**He taught them, “Hasn't it been written, *My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?*”^a But you've turned it into a *hideout for crooks.*”^a **18**The chief priests and legal experts heard this and tried to find a way to destroy him. They regarded him as dangerous because the whole crowd was enthralled at his teaching. **19**When it was evening, Jesus and his disciples went outside the city.

Power, prayer, and forgiveness

20Early in the morning, as Jesus and his disciples were walking along, they saw the fig tree withered from the root up. **21**Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look how the fig tree you cursed has dried up.”

22Jesus responded to them, “Have faith in God! **23**I assure you that whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea’—and doesn't waver but believes that what is said will really happen—it will happen. **24**Therefore I say to you, whatever you pray and ask for, believe that you will receive it, and it will be so for you. **25**And whenever you stand up to pray, if you have something against anyone, forgive so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your wrongdoings.”^b

^aIsa 56:7; ^aJer 7:11 ^b11:26 is omitted in most critical editions of the Gk New Testament *And if you don't forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive you your wrongdoings.*

11:11 *looked around:* Although his ride into Jerusalem has drawn a crowd, no one seems to notice Jesus' first visit to the temple.

11:12-25 See Matthew 21:12-22; Luke 19:45-48; John 2:13-22. Mark places the story of the temple incident within his account of the cursing of the fig tree (he uses a similar style in Mark 5:21-43; 14:1-11). The effect is to highlight his criticism of the Jewish leaders.

11:13 *season:* The Greek word translated here as “season” implies that God orders time for certain purposes. In Mark it's the season for God's kingdom (see Mark 1:15).

11:14 “*No one... fruit!*”: On one level, Jesus' response to the fig tree is disturbing. This is because he seems to punish the tree for not producing fruit out of season (see Mark 11:20). The real point, though, is to show that the coming of God's kingdom marks the end of the time of Jerusalem's temple.

11:15 *threw out:* See note on Mark 1:34. *currency exchange... sold doves:* People who came to worship God in Jerusalem exchanged their coins for temple currency to

Faith/Trust These two words, along with “belief,” are translated from the same Greek word, and they're an important concept in Mark's Gospel. Faith in Mark is active. It isn't simply believing in a set of doctrines; faith is about those things people entrust their lives with. Jesus urges people to “trust this good news” (Mark 1:15) about God's coming kingdom. And throughout the Gospel, he draws a close connection between faith/trust and the power of God at work in the world. When people act as if God's power is available through Jesus, they turn to him for healing (Mark 2:5; 5:34). When they're more skeptical or fail to believe, even he can't do much good (Mark 6:5-6). In Mark, Jesus calls for “faith in God” (Mark 11:22), not faith in himself (cf. John 20:30-31). But Jesus is God's Christ, the one who serves as an authorized agent of divine power. So people turn to him in faith when they trust that power—and they find life.

be used within the temple area itself. They then purchased animals (such as doves) to sacrifice (see Lev 1:15; 5:7).

11:17 *My house... crooks:* Like OT prophets, Jesus condemns temple activity that violates its sacred purpose (see Isa 56:7; Jer 7:1-11). The crooks probably include those who corrupt the temple by their deeds as well as those who profit from the temple economy at the expense of the poor.

11:18 *destroy him:* The Jewish leadership wants to destroy Jesus (see Mark 3:6). This time Mark says it's because Jesus has the attention and support of the *whole crowd*.

11:22-25 These sayings turn from Jesus' power over the fig tree to the power available to those who have *faith in God*.

11:22 *faith:* See Mark 2:5; 5:34; 10:52. Compare with Mark 6:5-6a. See sidebar, “Faith/Trust.”

11:25 *so that... forgive you:* See Matthew 6:5; Luke 18:11, 13. Effective prayer depends on forgiveness. In other words, a right relationship with God requires right relationships with other people.

Controversy over authority

²⁷Jesus and his disciples entered Jerusalem again. As Jesus was walking around the temple, the chief priests, legal experts, and elders came to him. ²⁸They asked, “What kind of authority do you have for doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?”

²⁹Jesus said to them, “I have a question for you. Give me an answer, then I’ll tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things. ³⁰Was John’s baptism of heavenly or of human origin? Answer me.”

³¹They argued among themselves, “If we say, ‘It’s of heavenly origin,’ he’ll say, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ ³²But we can’t say, ‘It’s of earthly origin.’” They said this because they were afraid of the crowd, because they all thought John was a prophet. ³³They answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”

Jesus replied, “Neither will I tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things.”

Parable of the tenant farmers

12 Jesus spoke to them in parables. “A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a tower. Then he rented it to tenant farmers and took a trip. ²When it was time, he sent a servant to collect from the tenants his share of the fruit of the vineyard. ³But they grabbed the servant, beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴Again the landowner sent another servant to them, but they struck him on the head and treated him disgracefully. ⁵He sent another one; that one they killed. The landlord sent many other servants, but the tenants beat some and killed others. ⁶Now the landowner had one son whom he loved dearly. He sent him last, thinking, They will respect my son. ⁷But those tenant farmers said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ ⁸They grabbed him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

⁹“So what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others. ¹⁰Haven’t you read this scripture, *The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone*. ¹¹*The Lord has done this, and it’s amazing in our eyes?*”^c

¹²They wanted to arrest Jesus because they knew that he had told the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd, so they left him and went away.

A question about taxes

¹³They sent some of the Pharisees and supporters of Herod to trap him in his words. ¹⁴They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you’re genuine and you don’t worry about what people think. You don’t show favoritism but teach God’s way as it really is. Does the Law allow people to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay taxes or not?”

^cPs 118:22-23

11:27-33 See Matthew 21:23-27; Luke 20:1-8. This is the first of several exchanges between Jesus and the temple authorities.

11:27 *chief priests, legal experts, and elders*: On legal experts, see note on Mark 1:22. On chief priests and elders, see note on Mark 8:31. The list combines some of Jesus’ opponents from Galilee with Jerusalem leaders.

11:28 *authority*: People have noticed Jesus’ authority from early in the Gospel (see Mark 1:22, 27; 2:10).

11:29-30 *question for you*: Like a true rabbi, or Jewish teacher, Jesus answers a question with another question. *John’s baptism*: Jesus’ words suggest he had a relationship with the prophet John (see Mark 1:4-11; 6:14).

11:32 *afraid of the crowd*: The Jewish leaders probably fear the crowd’s opinion, as well as a possible Roman reaction against a popular uprising.

11:33 *“We don’t know”*: Jesus’ opponents provide a safe answer. For Mark their reply is probably ironic as well. They truly don’t know the nature of John’s authority.

12:1-12 See Matthew 21:33-46; Luke 20:9-19.

12:1 *in parables*: See note on Mark 4:11. *vineyard*: The comparison of a vineyard to God’s people is a familiar one (see Isa 5:1-7).

12:2 *When it was time*: By highlighting the harvesttime,

this parable supports Jesus’ claim that God’s kingdom is near (Mark 1:15). See note on Mark 11:13. *servant*: OT prophets are often called God’s servants (see Amos 3:7; Zech 1:6).

12:5 *beat some and killed others*: The messengers’ fate fits 2 Chronicles 36:15-16, which says many prophets have warned about Israel’s defeat.

12:6 *son whom he loved dearly*: The contrast between the servants and the son is striking. In Mark, Jesus has now twice been called God’s dearly loved Son (Mark 1:11; 9:7).

12:7 *heir*: The tenant farmers recognize the son. Instead of respecting him, they plot to steal his property.

12:9 *destroy those tenants*: The son’s death isn’t the end of the story. Rather, the murderers will face judgment. *to others*: Jesus suggests other people, probably Gentiles, will take their place among God’s people.

12:10-11 See Psalm 118:22-23. Early Christians often explained Jesus’ death by turning to the OT.

12:12 *afraid of the crowd*: See note on Mark 11:32.

12:13-17 See Matthew 22:15-22; Luke 20:20-26.

12:13 *supporters of Herod*: Jewish leaders oppose Jesus. Mark includes groups that represent Galilean interests. See note on Mark 3:6.

11:27 Mt 21:23; Lk 20:1

11:28 Ex 2:14

11:29 Mt 21:24

11:30 Mt 3:1, Mt 3:13, Mt 21:25; Mk 1:4; Lk 7:29

11:31 Mt 21:32

11:32 Mt 3:5, Mt 14:5, Mt 21:32; Mk 12:12; Lk 20:6

11:33 Mt 21:27; Lk 10:21, Lk 20:8; Jn 3:10

12:1 Is 5:1, Is 5:2; Mt 21:33; Mk 13:34; Lk 20:9

12:2 Jer 35:15

12:3 2Ch 24:19, 2Ch 36:16; Neh 9:26; Jer 37:15; Mt 23:34

12:5 Jer 7:25; Mt 23:37

12:6 Heb 1:1

12:9 Mt 8:11, Mt 21:41, Mt 21:43; Lk 19:27; Lk 20:16

12:10 Ps 118:22, Ps 118:23; Ac 4:11

12:11 Ps 118:22, Ps 118:23

12:12 Mt 22:22; Mk 11:18, Mk 11:32

12:13 Mt 22:15, Mt 22:16; Mk 3:6; Lk 11:54, Lk 20:20

12:14 Mt 22:17; Lk 20:22

12:16 Lk 20:24

12:17 Mt 22:21; Ro 13:7

12:18 Mt 22:23; Lk 20:27; Ac 4:1, Ac 4:2, Ac 23:8

12:19 Dt 25:5

12:24 2Ti 3:15

12:25 Mt 22:30; Lk 20:35; 1Co 15:42; Heb 12:22

12:26 Ex 3:6; Lk 20:37

12:27 Jn 11:26; 2Ti 1:10; Heb 11:13

12:28 Mt 22:34; Lk 10:25

12:29 Dt 6:4

12:30 Dt 6:4; Dt 6:5; Josh 22:5

12:31 Lv 19:18; Mt 19:19; Ga 5:14; Jas 2:8

12:32 Dt 4:35; Is 45:21

12:33 Isa 15:22; Hos 6:6; Mi 6:6

¹⁵Since Jesus recognized their deceit, he said to them, “Why are you testing me? Bring me a coin. Show it to me.” ¹⁶And they brought one. He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

¹⁷Jesus said to them, “Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.” His reply left them overcome with wonder.

A question about the resurrection

¹⁸Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Jesus and asked, ¹⁹“Teacher, Moses wrote for us that *if a man’s brother dies, leaving a widow but no children, the brother must marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.*” ²⁰Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman; when he died, he left no children. ²¹The second married her and died without leaving any children. The third did the same. ²²None of the seven left any children. Finally, the woman died. ²³At the resurrection, when they all rise up, whose wife will she be? All seven were married to her.”

²⁴Jesus said to them, “Isn’t this the reason you are wrong, because you don’t know either the scriptures or God’s power? ²⁵When people rise from the dead, they won’t marry nor will they be given in marriage. Instead, they will be like God’s angels. ²⁶As for the resurrection from the dead, haven’t you read in the scroll from Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God said to Moses, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?*” ²⁷He isn’t the God of the dead but of the living. You are seriously mistaken.”

God’s most important command

²⁸One of the legal experts heard their dispute and saw how well Jesus answered them. He came over and asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?”

²⁹Jesus replied, “The most important one is *Israel, listen! Our God is the one Lord,* ³⁰*and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your mind, and with all your strength.*” ³¹The second is this, *You will love your neighbor as yourself.*” No other commandment is greater than these.”

³²The legal expert said to him, “Well said, Teacher. You have truthfully said that God is one and there is no other besides him. ³³And to love God with all of the heart, a full understanding, and all of one’s strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself is much more important than all kinds of entirely burned offerings and sacrifices.”

^dDeut 25:5; Gen 38:8 ^eExod 3:6, 15-16 ^fDeut 6:4-5 ^gLev 19:18

12:15 *Jesus recognized their deceit:* See Mark 2:8. *coin:* a denarius. See note on Mark 6:37.

12:16 *image and inscription:* Roman coins bore the imprint of the emperor.

12:17 Jesus doesn’t specify *what belongs* to both Caesar and God, leaving his audience to wrestle with it for themselves. This ambiguity, though, invites the faithful to reflect on the tension between loyalties to political power and religious commitment. Rather than affirming separate-but-equal power for these two spheres, Jesus seems to imply that God’s image, reflected in humanity, merits higher devotion than Caesar’s, which is found on the face of a coin. *wonder:* See Mark 5:20.

12:18-27 See Matthew 22:23-33; Luke 20:27-40.

12:18 *Sadducees:* probably a group of wealthy priests of the Jerusalem temple (see Acts 4:1; 5:17). They don’t believe in either the resurrection or the oral interpretation of the Law. See note on Mark 7:3.

12:19 The Sadducees refer to the Law of Moses. See note on Mark 12:18.

12:24 *the scriptures or God’s power:* Jesus detects two levels of ignorance: (1) the Sadducees don’t understand the

writings themselves, and (2) they deny God’s authority over human life.

12:25 *God’s angels:* At the resurrection, people will be changed into a different form altogether (see 1 Cor 15:35-50).

12:27 *God . . . of the living:* Jesus stresses God’s connection to human beings (Mark 12:26; see Exod 3:6, 15-16). *seriously mistaken:* Their concern with the afterlife misses the point of living in relationship with God in the here and now.

12:28-34 See Matthew 22:34-40; Luke 10:25-28.

12:28 *legal experts:* Usually in Mark this group opposes Jesus. See note on Mark 1:22.

12:29-30 Jesus offers an obvious answer, taken from the opening of the Ten Commandments (see Deut 6:4-5; cf. 10:19). Jews in his day routinely memorized and recited these verses. In Mark’s account Jesus expands the sacred text by adding *with all your mind* (see Deut 6:6).

12:31 Jesus names the love of neighbor (Lev 19:18) as the second commandment. Jews and early Christians generally thought one couldn’t love God without loving others (see Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8).

12:33 *more important . . . sacrifices:* See Hosea 6:6. Jesus echoes a common view of the OT prophets.

³⁴When Jesus saw that he had answered with wisdom, he said to him, “You aren’t far from God’s kingdom.” After that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Jesus corrects the legal experts

³⁵While Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said, “Why do the legal experts say that the Christ is David’s son? ³⁶David himself, inspired by the Holy Spirit, said, *The Lord said to my lord, ‘Sit at my right side until I turn your enemies into your footstool.’*^h ³⁷David himself calls him ‘Lord,’ so how can he be David’s son?” The large crowd listened to him with delight.

³⁸As he was teaching, he said, “Watch out for the legal experts. They like to walk around in long robes. They want to be greeted with honor in the markets. ³⁹They long for places of honor in the synagogues and at banquets. ⁴⁰They are the ones who cheat widows out of their homes, and to show off they say long prayers. They will be judged most harshly.”

A poor widow’s contribution

⁴¹Jesus sat across from the collection box for the temple treasury and observed how the crowd gave their money. Many rich people were throwing in lots of money. ⁴²One poor widow came forward and put in two small copper coins worth a penny.ⁱ ⁴³Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I assure you that this poor widow has put in more than everyone who’s been putting money in the treasury. ⁴⁴All of them are giving out of their spare change. But she from her hopeless poverty has given everything she had, even what she needed to live on.”

The temple’s fate

13As Jesus left the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Teacher, look! What awesome stones and buildings!”

²Jesus responded, “Do you see these enormous buildings? Not even one stone will be left upon another. All will be demolished.”

³Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives across from the temple. Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴“Tell us, when will these things happen? What sign will show that all these things are about to come to an end?”

^hPs 110:1 ⁱOr two *lepta* (the smallest Greek copper coin, each worth 1/128 of a single day’s pay), that is, a *kodrantēs* (the smallest Roman coin, equal in value to two *lepta*)

12:34 Mt 22:46; Lk 20:40

12:35 Mt 22:41; Lk 20:41; Jn 7:42

12:36 Ps 110:1; Ac 2:34; 1Co 15:25

12:37 Lk 19:48; Lk 21:38; Jn 12:9; Ro 1:3

12:38 Mt 23:1; Mt 23:2; Mk 12:39; Lk 11:43; Lk 20:45

12:39 Lk 11:43

12:40 Lk 20:47

12:41 2Ki 12:9; Lk 21:1; Jn 8:20

12:42 1Ki 17:9; Mt 5:26; Lk 21:2

12:43 2Co 8:2; 2Co 8:12

12:44 Lk 8:43

13:1 Mt 24:1; Lk 21:5

13:2 Mt 24:2; Lk 19:44; Lk 21:6

13:3 Mt 17:1; Mt 21:1

13:4 Mt 24:3; Ac 1:6, Ac 1:7

12:34 “You aren’t far from God’s kingdom”: The statement may have a double meaning. To Jesus, God’s kingdom is fast approaching (see Mark 1:15). The man’s favorable response qualifies him to enter God’s kingdom.

12:35–40 See Matthew 22:41–46; Luke 20:41–47.

12:35 *David’s son*: Some Jews in Jesus’ day expected a Davidic king to liberate Palestine from the Romans. Early Christians thought Christ had to come from David’s family (see Matt 1:20; Luke 2:4; Rom 1:3). See note on Mark 10:47.

12:36 *my lord*: Jesus uses Psalm 110:1 to prove that David’s son couldn’t be the anointed one, or Christ. Perhaps Jesus wants to dismiss any political hopes people have about the Davidic line. *turn your enemies into your footstool*: God’s kingdom will defeat all human and spiritual opposition (see 1 Cor 15:25).

12:37 *delight*: The crowd’s favorable response continues (see Mark 6:20). They may not understand that Jesus’ question has already undermined any hopes they might have had that Jesus would deliver them from Roman rule.

12:38–40 The legal experts have stopped questioning Jesus (see Mark 12:34), but he hasn’t stopped questioning them.

12:38 *long robes*: The legal experts wore robes that declared how important they were. *greeted with honor*: Ancient peoples associated honor with privileged social status (see also Mark 12:29).

12:40 *widows*: OT prophets condemn the powerful for taking advantage of widows (see Isa 10:1–2). *show off*: See Matthew 6:5–6; 23:5–6.

12:41–44 See Luke 21:1–4. The *poor widow* is a good example of devotion to God.

12:42 *two small copper coins*: worth a tiny fraction of a day’s wage.

12:44 *spare change*: The widow’s offering counts for more than the rich people’s leftovers. *what she needed to live on*: or her whole life. The woman’s offering represents her sacrificial devotion to God (see Mark 8:35–36; cf. Mark 10:22).

13:1–37 See Matthew 24:1–44; Luke 21:5–33. Jesus teaches about the temple and its coming destruction. His message about endurance (13:13) seems especially focused on Mark’s audience.

13:1 *awesome stones and buildings*: Jesus’ disciples are filled with wonder at the temple complex. Herod the Great had significantly expanded the structure decades earlier.

13:2 *Not even one stone*: Jesus predicts complete destruction of Jerusalem’s second temple. When Rome destroyed the temple in 70 CE, it left stones and rubble visitors can see today. Jesus’ words echo Jewish prophecy about the destruction of the first temple. Both Jeremiah (26:6) and Micah (3:12) believed that religious abuses by the authorities would lead to such an outcome.

13:3 *Peter, James, John, and Andrew*: See Mark 1:16–20. See note on Mark 5:37.

13:4 *all these things... come to an end*: Jesus has mentioned only the temple’s destruction. The disciples’ question uses words (“all... things” and “end”) that hint at the sweeping impact of God’s coming kingdom.

13:5 Jer 29:8;
Mt 16:6;
Mt 24:1, Mt 24:4;
Eph 5:6

13:6 Mt 24:5

13:7 Jer 51:46;
Mt 24:6; Lk 21:9

13:8 Is 19:2

13:9 Mt 10:17

13:10 Mt 24:14,
Mt 28:19;
Col 1:23

13:11 Mt 10:19,
Mt 10:20;
Lk 12:12

13:12 Mt 10:21

13:13 Mt 10:22

13:14 Dn 9:27,
Dn 11:31,
Dn 12:11;
Mt 24:15;
Lk 21:21

13:15 Lk 17:31

13:17 Lk 23:29

13:19 Dn 12:1;
Jl 2:2; Mk 10:6

13:20 Mt 24:22;
Mk 13:22

13:21 Lk 17:23,
Lk 21:8

13:22 Mt 7:15,
Mt 24:24

13:23 2Pt 3:17

13:24 Is 13:10;
Eze 32:7; Jl 2:10,
Jl 2:31; Rev 6:12

13:25 Is 34:4;
Rev 6:13

13:26 Mt 7:13;
Rev 1:7

Keep watch!

⁵Jesus said, “Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁶Many people will come in my name, saying, ‘I’m the one!’ They will deceive many people. ⁷When you hear of wars and reports of wars, don’t be alarmed. These things must happen, but this isn’t the end yet. ⁸Nations and kingdoms will fight against each other, and there will be earthquakes and famines in all sorts of places. These things are just the beginning of the sufferings associated with the end.

⁹“Watch out for yourselves. People will hand you over to the councils. You will be beaten in the synagogues. You will stand before governors and kings because of me so that you can testify before them. ¹⁰First, the good news must be proclaimed to all the nations. ¹¹When they haul you in and hand you over, don’t worry ahead of time about what to answer or say. Instead, say whatever is given to you at that moment, for you aren’t doing the speaking but the Holy Spirit is. ¹²Brothers and sisters will hand each other over to death. A father will turn in his children. Children will rise up against their parents and have them executed. ¹³Everyone will hate you because of my name. But whoever stands firm until the end will be saved.

¹⁴“When you see the disgusting and destructive thing standing where it shouldn’t be (the reader should understand this), then those in Judea must escape to the mountains. ¹⁵Those on the roof shouldn’t come down or enter their houses to grab anything. ¹⁶Those in the field shouldn’t come back to grab their clothes. ¹⁷How terrible it will be at that time for women who are pregnant and for women who are nursing their children. ¹⁸Pray that it doesn’t happen in winter. ¹⁹In those days there will be great suffering such as the world has never before seen and will never again see. ²⁰If the Lord hadn’t shortened that time, no one would be rescued. But for the sake of the chosen ones, the ones whom God chose, he has cut short the time.

²¹“Then if someone says to you, ‘Look, here’s the Christ,’ or ‘There he is,’ don’t believe it. ²²False christs and false prophets will appear, and they will offer signs and wonders in order to deceive, if possible, those whom God has chosen. ²³But you, watch out! I’ve told you everything ahead of time.

²⁴“In those days, after the suffering of that time, the sun will become dark, and the moon won’t give its light. ²⁵The stars will fall from the sky, and the planets and other heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see the Human One^j coming in the clouds with great

^jOr *Son of Man*

13:6 *in my name*: Elsewhere Jesus praises those who work miracles in his name (see Mark 9:39). Here he warns against those who claim to be *the one*.

13:8 *sufferings . . . the end*: Jesus explains that human suffering plays an inevitable part in the unfolding redemption of the world. The end is really the full arrival of God’s kingdom.

13:9-13 These verses predict in detail the destiny of Jesus’ followers.

13:9 *hand you over*: See Mark 9:31; 10:33. This prediction suggests some in Mark’s audience have been or will be betrayed. *beaten in the synagogues*: See Mark 14:65.

13:10 *good news*: News about God’s coming kingdom must be shared with *all the nations* so they can prepare to participate in it. See note on Mark 1:14.

13:11 *Holy Spirit*: See Mark 1:8. God’s Spirit is at work among those who join forces with God’s kingdom.

13:12 Earlier Jesus redefined family relationships (see Mark 3:31-35). Here he notes that traditional family units will divide over the question of loyalty to God’s kingdom.

13:13 *stands firm until the end*: See Mark 13:4, 7, 8. “The end” means the end of the world in its present state, not the destruction of the created order. *saved*: See Mark 10:26. Salvation is a future reality. The faithful will receive it at Judgment Day.

13:14 *disgusting and destructive thing*: This description recalls the statue placed in the Jerusalem temple in the 2nd century when the Jewish people were under foreign rule (Dan 7:27; 11:31; 12:11). It could also point to corruption in the temple during the Jewish War (66–70 CE), which

occurred about the time scholars believe Mark was written. (*the reader should understand this*): Jesus’ words apply not only to the disciples in the story but also to Mark’s audience. *escape to the mountains*: The chaos of the Jewish War left Christians vulnerable to attack. Outsiders saw them as a fringe movement devoted to a leader who had failed (see Mark 13:9-13).

13:18 *in winter*: This season typically brings heavy rains that make travel more difficult.

13:19 *great suffering*: Intense suffering is only to be expected as part of God’s unfolding plan.

13:20 *shortened that time*: Those who think God’s kingdom is near often count the days until the coming end. By shortening the time span, God has also diminished the suffering. *the ones whom God chose*: Those who trust in God’s kingdom have first been chosen by God (see Mark 13:22). See note on Mark 10:40.

13:21-22 See Mark 13:5. Ancient historians note that there were many in 1st-century Judea who claimed to be *the Christ*. See notes on Mark 1:1; 8:29.

13:23 *watch out*: Jesus urges wide-eyed attentiveness to the signs of God’s kingdom breaking into the earthly realm (see Mark 4:24; 8:15, 18).

13:24-25 Even heavenly bodies will display the drama of God’s coming kingdom (see Ezek 32:7-8; Joel 2:10, 31; Amos 8:9).

13:24 *In those days*: In the OT the phrase often refers to the “day of the Lord,” when God’s kingdom will come to earth (see Isa 13:10; 34:4; 50:2-3).

13:26-27 *Human One coming in the clouds*: In Daniel, the

power and splendor. ²⁷Then he will send the angels and gather together his chosen people from the four corners of the earth, from the end of the earth to the end of heaven.

A lesson from the fig tree

²⁸“Learn this parable from the fig tree. After its branch becomes tender and it sprouts new leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that he’s near, at the door. ³⁰I assure you that this generation won’t pass away until all these things happen. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will certainly not pass away.

³²“But nobody knows when that day or hour will come, not the angels in heaven and not the Son. Only the Father knows. ³³Watch out! Stay alert! You don’t know when the time is coming. ³⁴It is as if someone took a trip, left the household behind, and put the servants in charge, giving each one a job to do, and told the doorkeeper to stay alert. ³⁵Therefore, stay alert! You don’t know when the head of the household will come, whether in the evening or at midnight, or when the rooster crows in the early morning or at daybreak. ³⁶Don’t let him show up when you weren’t expecting and find you sleeping. ³⁷What I say to you, I say to all: Stay alert!”

Preparation for burial

14 It was two days before Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and legal experts through cunning tricks were searching for a way to arrest Jesus and kill him. ²But they agreed that it shouldn’t happen during the festival; otherwise, there would be an uproar among the people.

³Jesus was at Bethany visiting the house of Simon, who had a skin disease. During dinner, a woman came in with a vase made of alabaster and containing very expensive perfume of pure nard. She broke open the vase and poured the perfume on his head. ⁴Some grew angry. They said to each other, “Why waste the perfume? ⁵This perfume could have been sold for almost a year’s pay^k and the money given to the poor.” And they scolded her.

⁶Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you make trouble for her? She has done a good thing for me. ⁷You always have the poor with you; and whenever you want, you can do something good for them. But you won’t always have me. ⁸She has done what she could. She has anointed my body ahead of time for burial. ⁹I tell you the truth that, wherever in the whole world the good news is announced, what she’s done will also be told in memory of her.”

^kOr three hundred denaria; a denarion was equivalent to a day’s pay.

Human One who joins God in the heavenly throne room takes the place of the beasts who have gone before (see Dan 7:13-14). According to Mark, the figure will arrive on earth to establish God’s kingdom. See sidebar, “The Human One in Mark” from the four corners of the earth: In God’s kingdom the *chosen people* are those who trust God and reflect God’s reign, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or even religious tradition (see Mark 13:20).

13:28-31 See Mark 11:12-14, 20-21. Jesus says God’s kingdom is in season, that is, the signs of its arrival are all around. **13:30** *this generation... happen*: Jesus implies God’s kingdom will arrive within a lifetime. Some read “this generation” as a metaphor for the era when evil persists unchecked. See notes on Mark 8:12; 9:1; 13:4.

13:33 *Stay alert!*: Since only God knows when the kingdom will arrive (Mark 13:32), Jesus repeats his warning to be ready at any moment (Mark 13:35, 37; 13:34).

13:34 *someone took a trip*: See Matthew 24:37-51; 25:13-30; Luke 12:35-46; 19:11-27. God is like an absentee landlord who will soon return to reclaim the estate. In the meantime, the tenants are *in charge*.

13:35 *in the evening... at daybreak*: Romans divided the night watch into four segments. The owner could return at night, so staying awake required people to be especially alert (see Mark 14:32-42; Rom 13:11-14; 1 Thess 5:1-11).

13:37 *to all*: See Mark 13:14. This private conversation

between Jesus and his disciples (see Mark 13:3) applies to everyone.

14:1-15:27 See Matthew 26:1-27:66; Luke 22:1-23:56; John 13:1-19:42.

14:1-11 See Matthew 26:1-16; Luke 22:1-6. Mark contrasts the story of an unnamed woman’s sacrifice (14:3-9) with reports about the plot against Jesus (14:1-2, 10-11).

14:1 *Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread*: See Exodus 12:1-13:16; 2 Chronicles 35:17. These holy days celebrate the miracle of Israel’s deliverance from slavery in Egypt (Exod 12:1-13:16).

14:2 *uproar among the people*: At Passover both the crowds and the religious excitement made Jerusalem ripe for rebellion.

14:3 *skin disease*: Jesus finds himself among those who are unclean by religious standards (see Mark 1:40-45). *alabaster... nard*: Both the vase and the perfume were very costly.

14:7 *You always have the poor... won’t always have me*: See Deuteronomy 15:11. Jesus doesn’t deny the importance of serving the poor when he affirms the woman’s gift (see Mark 2:19-20).

14:8 *She has done what she could*: See Mark 12:41-44. She’s spent everything on Jesus. *anointed my body*: In her symbolic act, the woman has shown that this is the Christ, the anointed one.

14:9 *whole world*: God’s kingdom doesn’t have boundaries

13:27 Dt 30:4

13:28 Mt 24:32

13:29 Jas 5:9

13:30 Mk 9:1

13:31 Is 40:8, Is 51:6, Mt 5:18

13:32 Mt 24:36, Mt 25:13; Ac 1:7; 1 Th 5:2

13:33 Mt 25:13; Mk 14:38; Eph 6:18

13:34 Mt 25:14; Lk 12:36, Lk 19:12

13:35 Mt 24:42

13:36 Ro 13:11

13:37 Mk 13:35

14:1 Mt 12:14, Mt 26:2, Mt 26:4; Lk 22:1, Lk 22:2

14:3 Mt 26:6, Mt 26:7; Lk 7:37; Jn 12:1, Jn 12:3

14:4 Mt 26:8, Mt 26:9; Mk 14:5; Jn 12:5

14:5 Mk 14:4; Jn 12:5, Jn 13:29; Eph 4:28

14:6 Mt 26:10; Jn 10:32; Eph 2:10; Heb 13:21

14:7 Dt 15:11; Mt 26:11

14:8 Mk 16:1; Jn 19:40

14:9 Mt 26:13

14:10 Mt 26:14;
Lk 22:3; Jn 13:2

14:11 2Ki 5:26;
Jer 32:10;
Mt 26:15,
Mt 28:12;
Mk 14:10

14:12 Dt 16:1;
Mt 26:17;
Lk 22:7; 1Co 5:7

14:13 Mt 26:18,
Mt 26:19;
Lk 22:10

14:14 Mk 11:3;
Jn 11:28

14:15 Ac 1:13

14:17 Mt 26:20;
Lk 22:14

14:18 Ps 41:9

14:19 Mt 26:22

14:21 Mt 18:7,
Mt 26:24

14:22 Mt 26:26;
1Co 10:16,
1Co 11:23

14:23 Mt 15:36,
Mt 26:27;
Mk 14:22;
Lk 22:17;
Ro 14:6

14:24 Ex 24:8;
Mk 10:45;
1Co 10:16,
1Co 11:25

14:25 Mt 26:29

14:26 Mt 26:30

14:27 Zec 13:7;
Mt 26:31

14:28 Mt 16:21,
Mt 20:19,
Mt 26:32,
Mt 28:16;
Mk 16:7

14:29 Mt 26:33;
Lk 22:33,
Lk 22:34;
Jn 13:36

14:30 Mt 26:34;
Mk 14:68,
Mk 14:72;
Jn 13:38

Passover meal

¹⁰Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to give Jesus up to them. ¹¹When they heard it, they were delighted and promised to give him money. So he started looking for an opportunity to turn him in.

¹²On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, the disciples said to Jesus, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?”

¹³He sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city. A man carrying a water jar will meet you. Follow him. ¹⁴Wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, “The teacher asks, “Where is my guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?” ¹⁵He will show you a large room upstairs already furnished. Prepare for us there.” ¹⁶The disciples left, came into the city, found everything just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

¹⁷That evening, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. ¹⁸During the meal, Jesus said, “I assure you that one of you will betray me—someone eating with me.”

¹⁹Deeply saddened, they asked him, one by one, “It’s not me, is it?”

²⁰Jesus answered, “It’s one of the Twelve, one who is dipping bread with me into this bowl. ²¹The Human One^l goes to his death just as it is written about him. But how terrible it is for that person who betrays the Human One!^m It would have been better for him if he had never been born.”

²²While they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” ²³He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴He said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵I assure you that I won’t drink wine again until that day when I drink it in a new way in God’s kingdom.” ²⁶After singing songs of praise, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Predictions about disciples leaving Jesus

²⁷Jesus said to them, “You will all falter in your faithfulness to me. It is written, *I will hit the shepherd, and the sheep will go off in all directions.*”ⁿ ²⁸But after I’m raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.”

²⁹Peter said to him, “Even if everyone else stumbles, I won’t.”

³⁰But Jesus said to him, “I assure you that on this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.”

^lOr Son of Man ^mOr Son of Man ⁿZech 13:7

like a nation or a group of people (see Mark 13:10, 27). *good news*: See note on Mark 1:14. *in memory of her*: The gospel isn’t just about Jesus; it’s also about how others play a role in his mission.

14:10 *Judas Iscariot*: See Mark 3:19. *chief priests*: See note on Mark 11:18. *give Jesus up*: See Mark 9:31; 10:33; 14:11; 13:9.

14:11-26 See Matthew 26:17-25; Luke 22:7-14.

14:12 *first day... when the Passover lamb was sacrificed*: The timing isn’t clear, since the lamb is usually killed the day before the festival begins. Mark may depart from Jewish custom by counting days from sunrise rather than from sunset.

14:16 *as he had told them*: Jesus’ directions about preparing for the meal are flawless (see Mark 11:2-6).

14:18 *someone eating with me*: In the ancient world shared meals nurtured friendship bonds. Jesus’ prediction of his betrayal, then, is tinged with irony (see Ps 41:9).

14:21 *just as it is written about him*: Jesus doesn’t seem to be referring to any particular scriptural texts, since the OT nowhere speaks of the death of the Human One. Instead, he’s identifying with traditions in the OT where righteous people are made to suffer.

14:22-25 Jesus’ words about the bread and the cup

support early Christian worship habits. His followers often shared a memorial meal when they gathered (see 1 Cor 11:23-26).

14:22 *my body*: The metaphor connects the bread to Jesus’ own flesh. In Paul’s letters “body” also refers to communities of Jesus’ followers after his death (see 1 Cor 12:12-27; Rom 12:4).

14:24 *my blood... for many*: In the OT blood was used to authorize legal contracts (see Exod 24:6-8). The saying probably recalls Jeremiah’s hope for a “new covenant” (see Jer 31:31-34), which is written on the heart, not on stone. It’s also wide-reaching; the phrase “for many” echoes Mark 10:45.

14:25 *that day*: See Mark 13:32. The appointed time for God’s reign to arrive. *God’s kingdom*: See note on Mark 1:15.

14:27-31 See Matthew 26:30-35; Luke 22:31-34; John 13:36-38.

14:27 *falter in your faithfulness to me*: or stumble (see Mark 9:42-47). Jesus predicts his disciples will abandon him (see Zech 13:7; 14:50).

14:28 *I will go before you*: Jesus will lead his disciples even after the resurrection. *to Galilee*: Mark’s audience may have ties to this region (see Mark 16:7).

³¹But Peter insisted, “If I must die alongside you, I won’t deny you.” And they all said the same thing.

Jesus in prayer

³²Jesus and his disciples came to a place called Gethsemane. Jesus said to them, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³He took Peter, James, and John along with him. He began to feel despair and was anxious. ³⁴He said to them, “I’m very sad. It’s as if I’m dying. Stay here and keep alert.” ³⁵Then he went a short distance farther and fell to the ground. He prayed that, if possible, he might be spared the time of suffering. ³⁶He said, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible. Take this cup of suffering away from me. However—not what I want but what you want.”

³⁷He came and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Couldn’t you stay alert for one hour? ³⁸Stay alert and pray so that you won’t give in to temptation. The spirit is eager, but the flesh is weak.”

³⁹Again, he left them and prayed, repeating the same words. ⁴⁰And, again, when he came back, he found them sleeping, for they couldn’t keep their eyes open, and they didn’t know how to respond to him. ⁴¹He came a third time and said to them, “Will you sleep and rest all night? That’s enough! The time has come for the Human One^o to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴²Get up! Let’s go! Look, here comes my betrayer.”

Arrest

⁴³Suddenly, while Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, came with a mob carrying swords and clubs. They had been sent by the chief priests, legal experts, and elders. ⁴⁴His betrayer had given them a sign: “Arrest the man I kiss, and take him away under guard.”

⁴⁵As soon as he got there, Judas said to Jesus, “Rabbi!” Then he kissed him. ⁴⁶Then they came and grabbed Jesus and arrested him.

⁴⁷One of the bystanders drew a sword and struck the high priest’s slave and cut off his ear. ⁴⁸Jesus responded, “Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me, like an outlaw?”

The Human One in Mark This title is an ambiguous term that appears frequently in Mark (Mark 2:10, 28; 3:28; 8:31, 38; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 13:26; 14:21, 41, 62). Sometimes Jesus uses it indirectly to name himself. In other cases, he seems to refer to humanity as a whole or to a special figure who will preside over God’s kingdom. How then might we understand the term? It’s helpful to remember that, in Jesus’ world, individual figures often represented groups of people. The Human One probably is a symbol—an ideal human being who embodies the new humanity that reflects God’s kingdom. From this perspective, Jesus is the Human One because he is the Christ who is entrusted with the task of showing the world what God’s power looks like. But his followers, too, get involved in his mission. So they also become part of the Human One. In this way, the Human One is both Jesus—God’s anointed one—and the people who, through him, trust the power of God’s kingdom.

^oOr Son of Man

14:32–42 See Matthew 26:36–46; Luke 22:39–46.

14:33 *Peter, James, and John*: See Mark 9:2; 13:3. Jesus’ closest friends witness his prayerful struggle. See note on Mark 5:37. *despair . . . anxious*: As part of his role as a Christ who suffers, Jesus agonizes as he faces his death.

14:34 *keep alert*: See note on Mark 13:33.

14:35–36 Jesus asks God to spare him the suffering he expects (see Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34). *if possible*: See Mark 9:22–23; 10:27. *Abba*: an Aramaic word for “father.” *not what I want but what you want*: Jesus finally embraces God’s will (see Mark 3:35).

14:38 *spirit is eager, but the flesh is weak*: A contrast between flesh and spirit as two aspects of a person was common in the ancient world. The spirit was generally viewed as more receptive to the divine will, while the body was more vulnerable to human weakness.

14:41 *time has come*: See Mark 13:32. Jesus links his

betrayal and death to God’s coming kingdom (see Mark 1:14).

14:43–51 See Matthew 26:47–56; Luke 22:47–53; John 18:3–12. Judas’ betrayal is full of irony. He betrays Jesus with a gesture of friendship, and Jesus responds to a frantic, armed mob with a calm acceptance of his impending, violent end.

14:43 *swords and clubs*: The mob has violent plans for Jesus (see Mark 14:28). *sent by the chief priests, legal experts, and elders*: The religious leaders keep a safe distance from the action. See notes on Mark 1:22; 8:31.

14:47 *high priest’s slave*: The high priest was Caiaphas, who ruled from 18 to 36/7 CE. The identity of the bystander is unclear. Jesus doesn’t say anything about the deed (cf. Matt 26:52–54).

14:48 *like an outlaw*: The mob treats Jesus as if he’s an armed rebel.

14:31 Lk 22:33; Jn 13:37

14:32 Mt 26:36; Lk 22:39; Lk 22:40; Jn 18:1

14:33 Mk 5:37; Mk 9:2

14:34 Ps 42:5; Jn 12:27

14:35 Mk 14:41; Heb 5:7

14:36 Jn 18:11; Ro 8:15; Ga 4:6

14:37 Mt 26:40; Mk 1:16; Mk 14:29; Lk 9:32

14:38 Mt 6:13; Mt 24:42; Mt 25:13; Mt 26:41; Lk 22:40

14:39 Mt 26:42; Mt 26:44; Mk 14:36

14:40 Mk 9:6

14:41 Mk 14:35

14:42 Mt 26:46; Jn 18:1

14:43 Mt 26:47; Lk 22:47; Jn 18:3; Ac 1:16

14:45 Mt 23:7; Mt 23:8; Mk 9:5; Jn 13:13; Jn 13:14

14:46 Jn 18:12

14:47 Mt 26:51; Jn 18:10

14:48 Mt 20:22; Mt 26:4; Mt 26:55; Mt 26:59; Lk 22:52

14:49 Mk 12:35;
Lk 19:47;
Jn 18:20

14:50 Ps 88:18;
Mk 14:27;
Jn 16:32

14:53 Mt 26:57

14:54 Jn 18:15,
18:18

14:55 Mt 26:59

14:58 Mk 15:29;
Jn 2:19

14:60 Mt 26:63;
Jn 19:9

14:61 Is 53:7;
Mt 26:63

14:62 Ps 110:1;
Dn 7:13;
Mt 26:64

14:63 Nm 14:6;
Ac 14:14

14:64 Lv 24:16

14:65 Is 50:6;
Mt 26:67,
26:68;
Mk 10:34,
15:19

14:66 Mt 26:69;
Mk 14:54;
Lk 22:54;
Jn 18:16,
18:25

14:68 Mk 14:30,
14:72

14:70 Mt 26:73;
Ac 2:7

49Day after day, I was with you, teaching in the temple, but you didn't arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled." 50And all his disciples left him and ran away. 51One young man, a disciple, was wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They grabbed him, 52but he left the linen cloth behind and ran away naked.

A hearing before the Sanhedrin

53They led Jesus away to the high priest, and all the chief priests, elders, and legal experts gathered. 54Peter followed him from a distance, right into the high priest's courtyard. He was sitting with the guards, warming himself by the fire. 55The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they couldn't find any. 56Many brought false testimony against him, but they contradicted each other. 57Some stood to offer false witness against him, saying, 58"We heard him saying, 'I will destroy this temple, constructed by humans, and within three days I will build another, one not made by humans.'" 59But their testimonies didn't agree even on this point.

60Then the high priest stood up in the middle of the gathering and examined Jesus. "Aren't you going to respond to the testimony these people have brought against you?" 61But Jesus was silent and didn't answer. Again, the high priest asked, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the blessed one?"

62Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Human One^P sitting on the right side of the Almighty^Q and coming on the heavenly clouds."

63Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we need any more witnesses?"

64You've heard his insult against God. What do you think?"

They all condemned him. "He deserves to die!"

65Some began to spit on him. Some covered his face and hit him, saying, "Prophecy!" Then the guards took him and beat him.

Peter denies Jesus

66Meanwhile, Peter was below in the courtyard. A woman, one of the high priest's servants, approached 67and saw Peter warming himself by the fire. She stared at him and said, "You were also with the Nazarene, Jesus."

68But he denied it, saying, "I don't know what you're talking about. I don't understand what you're saying." And he went outside into the outer courtyard. A rooster crowed.

69The female servant saw him and began a second time to say to those standing around, "This man is one of them." 70But he denied it again.

A short time later, those standing around again said to Peter, "You must be one of them, because you are also a Galilean."

^POr Son of Man ^QOr the Power

14:50 *all his disciples*: The report fulfills Jesus' prediction (see Mark 14:27).

14:51-52 Mark leaves no good hints to aid us in our desire to know who this is. Some interpreters identify the young man as the angel in the empty tomb (Mark 16:5), and some think he's actually Mark himself.

14:53-65 See Matthew 26:57-68; Luke 22:63-65; John 18:19-24. Jesus' first trial is before the Jewish council known as the Sanhedrin (see note on Mark 8:31).

14:53 *high priest*: a reference to Caiaphas. See note on Mark 14:47. *chief priests, elders, and legal experts*: See notes on Mark 1:22; 8:31.

14:54 *from a distance*: Peter follows with caution. He's loyal to Jesus but worried about the danger his loyalty might bring.

14:56 *false testimony... contradicted each other*: Jewish Law required two witnesses to confirm a charge (Num 35:30; Deut 19:15).

14:58 See Mark 11:15-16; 13:1-2.

14:61 *Jesus was silent and didn't answer*: See Psalm 38:12-14; Isaiah 53:7.

14:62 *I am*: See note on Mark 6:50. *And you will*

see... heavenly clouds: As the Christ, Jesus announces the coming of the Human One to establish God's kingdom. See note on Mark 13:26-27.

14:64 *insult against God*: The offense of blasphemy carries a death penalty (Lev 24:16). It's unclear, though, exactly how Jesus has committed this crime.

14:65 *"Prophecy!"*: This taunt reveals Jesus' reputation as a prophet. It may also refer to his prediction about the Human One in Mark 14:62. The hostile treatment he receives resembles the treatment of God's servant in Isaiah 53:7.

14:66-72 See Matthew 26:69-75; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-18. Peter's denials fulfill Jesus' prophecy (Mark 14:30). He's the last disciple to fade from view.

14:66 *woman... high priest's servants*: Caiaphas' household is involved at every turn in the plot against Jesus (see Mark 14:47). Peter denies this servant's accusation twice (Mark 14:68, 70).

14:68 *don't understand*: Peter's response is ironic, since the disciples repeatedly misunderstand Jesus' mission and teaching (see Mark 4:13; 6:52; 8:17, 12; 9:32). See sidebar, "The Disciples in Mark" at Mark 5.

⁷¹But he cursed and swore, “I don’t know this man you’re talking about.” ⁷²At that very moment, a rooster crowed a second time. Peter remembered what Jesus told him, “Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down, sobbing.

Trial before Pilate

15 At daybreak, the chief priests—with the elders, legal experts, and the whole Sanhedrin—formed a plan. They bound Jesus, led him away, and turned him over to Pilate. ²Pilate questioned him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

Jesus replied, “That’s what you say.” ³The chief priests were accusing him of many things.

⁴Pilate asked him again, “Aren’t you going to answer? What about all these accusations?”

⁵But Jesus gave no more answers, so that Pilate marveled.

⁶During the festival, Pilate released one prisoner to them, whomever they requested. ⁷A man named Barabbas was locked up with the rebels who had committed murder during an uprising. ⁸The crowd pushed forward and asked Pilate to release someone, as he regularly did. ⁹Pilate answered them, “Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” ¹⁰He knew that the chief priests had handed him over because of jealousy. ¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas to them instead. ¹²Pilate replied, “Then what do you want me to do with the one you call king of the Jews?”

¹³They shouted back, “Crucify him!”

¹⁴Pilate said to them, “Why? What wrong has he done?”

They shouted even louder, “Crucify him!”

¹⁵Pilate wanted to satisfy the crowd, so he released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus whipped, then handed him over to be crucified.

Jesus is tortured and killed

¹⁶The soldiers led Jesus away into the courtyard of the palace known as the governor’s headquarters,^f and they called together the whole company of soldiers.^g ¹⁷They dressed him up in a purple robe and twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on him. ¹⁸They saluted him, “Hey! King of the Jews!” ¹⁹Again and again, they struck his head with a stick. They spit on him and knelt before him to honor him. ²⁰When they finished mocking him, they stripped him of the purple robe and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹Simon, a man from Cyrene, Alexander and Rufus’ father, was coming in from the countryside. They forced him to carry his cross.

14:72 Mt 26:34, Mt 26:75; Mk 11:21, Mk 14:30, Mk 14:68

15:1 Mt 27:1, Mt 27:2; Lk 22:66, Lk 23:1; Jn 18:28

15:2 Mt 27:11; Lk 23:3

15:4 Jn 19:10

15:5 Is 53:7; Mk 14:61, Mk 15:4; Jn 19:9

15:6 Mt 27:15; Jn 18:39, Jn 18:40

15:7 Mt 27:16; Lk 23:18; Jn 18:40

15:9 Mt 27:17; Mk 15:2

15:10 Mt 27:18; Ti 3:3

15:11 Mt 27:20; Ac 3:14

15:12 Mk 15:2

15:14 Mt 27:24; Lk 23:4, Lk 23:11, Lk 23:23; Jn 19:6

15:15 Mt 27:26; Jn 19:1

15:16 Mt 27:27; Jn 18:28, Jn 18:33; Jn 19:9

15:17 Lk 23:11; Jn 19:2

15:18 Mk 15:2

15:19 Mk 14:65

15:20 Mt 27:31; Jn 19:16

15:21 Mt 27:32; Lk 23:26; Ro 16:13

^fOr *praetorium* ^gOr *cohort* (approximately six hundred soldiers)

14:72 *broke down, sobbing*: Mark stresses the story’s emotional impact (see Mark 14:33–34).

15:1–15 See Matthew 27:1–2, 11–23; Luke 23:1–5, 13–25; John 18:28–40. The Jewish leaders have condemned Jesus (Mark 14:64), but they don’t have the power to kill him. They hand him over to Pilate, the Roman governor, who does.

15:1 *daybreak*: Mark divides the last day of Jesus’ life into four specific time periods (see Mark 15:25, 33, 42) *plan*: In Mark’s view the Jewish leaders’ plan is really God’s plan. *Pilate*: the Roman governor (called a prefect) of Judea from 26 to 36 CE.

15:2 *king of the Jews*: See Mark 15:9, 12, 18, 26. The Jewish leaders indicate that Jesus poses a political threat. Jesus neither confirms nor denies the claim.

15:5 *no more answers*: Jesus refuses to answer questions directly (see Mark 14:61; 15:2). *marveled*: See Mark 5:20. Pilate doesn’t seem convinced Jesus is guilty.

15:7 *Barabbas*: Ironically, the crowds want Pilate to release a member of an armed resistance group. Rebellions were common while Rome occupied Palestine. They were both political and religious in nature.

15:10 *because of jealousy*: Mark suggests Pilate is reluctant to condemn Jesus.

15:13 *“Crucify him!”*: The same crowd that welcomed Jesus (Mark 11:1–11, 18) now demands his execution.

15:15 *handed him over*: See Mark 3:19; 8:31; 9:31; 14:10, 11. Pilate appears to be a weak ruler who is only following the crowd. According to other 1st-century reports, he was a ruthless tyrant who crucified troublemakers without a second thought.

15:16–41 See Matthew 27:27–56; Luke 23:26–49; John 19:16b–37.

15:16 *governor’s headquarters... whole company of soldiers*: Mark reports that several hundred soldiers watched as Jesus was mocked and tortured.

15:17 *purple robe... crown of thorns*: The soldiers make fun of Jesus’ royal status by dressing him as a king (see Mark 10:34).

15:19 *struck his head... spit on him*: See Mark 10:34; Isaiah 50:6.

15:21 *Simon* is probably a Jew in Jerusalem for the Passover. *Cyrene*: a city in North Africa (modern-day Libya). *Alexander and Rufus’ father*: Mark’s audience may have

15:23 Ps 69:21;
Mt 27:34;
Lk 23:36

15:24 Ps 22:18;
Mt 27:35;
Jn 19:23,
Jn 19:24

15:25 Mk 15:33

15:27 Mt 27:38

15:28 Is 53:12;
Lk 22:37;
Jn 19:37

15:29 Ps 22:7,

Ps 109:25;

Mt 27:39;

Mk 14:58

15:31 Lk 23:35

15:32 Mk 14:61;
Lk 23:39; Jn 1:49,
Jn 12:13

15:33 Am 8:9;

Mt 27:45;

Mk 15:25;

Lk 23:44

15:34 Ps 22:1;

Mt 27:46

15:35 Mt 17:11,

Mt 27:47;

Mk 9:4, Mk 9:11

15:36 Ps 69:21;

Mk 15:23

15:37 Mt 27:50;

Mk 15:34;

Lk 23:46;

Jn 19:30

15:38 Ex 26:31;

Mt 27:51;

Lk 23:4

²²They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means Skull Place. ²³They tried to give him wine mixed with myrrh, but he didn't take it. ²⁴They crucified him. They divided up his clothes, drawing lots for them to determine who would take what. ²⁵It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶The notice of the formal charge against him was written, "The king of the Jews." ²⁷They crucified two outlaws with him, one on his right and one on his left. [†]

²⁹People walking by insulted him, shaking their heads and saying, "Ha! So you were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, were you? ³⁰Save yourself and come down from that cross!"

³¹In the same way, the chief priests were making fun of him among themselves, together with the legal experts. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself. ³²Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross. Then we'll see and believe." Even those who had been crucified with Jesus insulted him.

³³From noon until three in the afternoon the whole earth was dark. ³⁴At three, Jesus cried out with a loud shout, "*Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani*," which means, "My God, my God, why have you left me?"

³⁵After hearing him, some standing there said, "Look! He's calling Elijah!" ³⁶Someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, and put it on a pole. He offered it to Jesus to drink, saying, "Let's see if Elijah will come to take him down." ³⁷But Jesus let out a loud cry and died.

³⁸The curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹When the centurion, who stood facing Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "This man was certainly God's Son."

⁴⁰Some women were watching from a distance, including Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James (the younger one) and Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹When Jesus was in Galilee, these women had followed and supported him, along with many other women who had come to Jerusalem with him.

Jesus' burial

⁴²Since it was late in the afternoon on Preparation Day, just before the Sabbath, ⁴³Joseph from Arimathea dared to approach Pilate and ask for Jesus' body. (Joseph was a prominent

[†]15:28 is omitted in most critical editions of the Gk New Testament *The scripture was fulfilled, which says, He was numbered among criminals.*

15:39 Mt 27:54; Mk 1:11; Lk 23:47 **15:40** Mk 15:47, Mk 16:1; Lk 8:2; Jn 19:25 **15:41** Mt 27:55, Mt 27:56; Lk 8:3 **15:42** Mt 27:57, Mt 27:62; Lk 23:50; Jn 19:38 **15:43** Lk 2:25, Lk 2:38

known Simon's sons. *carry his cross*: Convicted criminals typically carried only the crossbar, not the entire cross.

15:22 *Golgotha, which means Skull Place*: Roman crucifixion usually took place outside the city walls. Executed criminals provided a graphic symbol of Rome's strength. See note on Mark 3:17.

15:23 *wine . . . myrrh*: The combination was used to relieve pain.

15:24 *divided up his clothes, drawing lots*: See Psalm 22:18. The story of the crucifixion includes many details from this lament psalm (see also Mark 15:29, 34).

15:25 *nine in the morning*: See note on Mark 15:1.

15:26 *formal charge*: Notices often announced the charges leading to crucifixion. The title "The king of the Jews" offers a good reason for Jesus' death, since the Romans dealt violently with those whom they regarded as a threat to Caesar.

15:27 *two outlaws*: Jesus hangs between two political rebels.

15:29 *shaking their heads*: See Psalm 22:7. *destroy the temple*: See Mark 11:15-16; 13:1-2.

15:30 *Save yourself*: See Mark 11:9. An ironic command, especially in light of Jesus' teaching in Mark 8:35. For Mark, by not saving himself, Jesus saves others.

15:31-32 *chief priests . . . legal experts*: Jewish leaders appear again, this time to mock Jesus. See notes on Mark 1:22; 8:31. *Christ, the king of Israel*: The title combines words that make sense to Jews (Christ) and Romans (king). *Then we'll see and believe*: In Mark authentic faith comes before,

not after, evidence that confirms it (see Mark 8:11-12; cf. Mark 16:17-18).

15:33 *whole earth was dark*: cosmic proof of the coming end (see Mark 13:24-25).

15:34 "*My God, my God, why have you left me?*": Jesus' words come from Psalm 22:1. They both express his anguish (see Mark 14:32-42) and look forward to the time when "all the nations" will worship God (see Ps 22:27).

15:35 *Elijah*: See Mark 9:11-13; see note on Mark 1:6.

15:36 *sour wine*: or vinegar (see Ps 69:21).

15:38 *curtain . . . was torn*: The temple curtain marked the space reserved for God's presence (see Exod 26:31-37). Its tearing *from top to bottom* means God is loose in the world. See note on Mark 1:10.

15:39 *centurion*: A Roman soldier—a Gentile—is the first human in Mark to call Jesus *God's Son*. See note on Mark 1:11.

15:40 *watching from a distance*: See note on Mark 14:54. *Mary Magdalene*: See Mark 15:47; 16:1. *Mary . . . Joses*: possibly Jesus' mother (see Mark 6:3). Mark's audience may know James and Joses. *Salome*: She appears only in Mark (see Matt 28:1; John 20:1). *followed and supported him*: The women are part of a larger group of disciples (see Luke 8:1-3).

15:42-47 See Matthew 27:57-61; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42.

15:42 *late in the afternoon*: Jewish Law said that all work must be completed before the Sabbath begins at sundown. See note on Mark 15:1.

council member who also eagerly anticipated the coming of God's kingdom.)⁴⁴ Pilate wondered if Jesus was already dead. He called the centurion and asked him whether Jesus had already died.⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that Jesus was dead, Pilate gave the dead body to Joseph.⁴⁶ He bought a linen cloth, took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped him in the cloth, and laid him in a tomb that had been carved out of rock. He rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb.⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was buried.

Empty tomb

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they could go and anoint Jesus' dead body.² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they came to the tomb.³ They were saying to each other, "Who's going to roll the stone away from the entrance for us?"⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away. (And it was a very large stone!)⁵ Going into the tomb, they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right side; and they were startled.⁶ But he said to them, "Don't be alarmed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified." He has been raised. He isn't here. Look, here's the place where they laid him.⁷ Go, tell his disciples, especially Peter, that he is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you."⁸ Overcome with terror and dread, they fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.⁹

Endings Added Later

[⁹They promptly reported all of the young man's instructions to those who were with Peter. Afterward, through the work of his disciples, Jesus sent out, from the east to the west, the sacred and undying message of eternal salvation. Amen.]

[[⁹After Jesus rose up early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons.¹⁰ She went and reported to the ones who had been with him, who were mourning and weeping.¹¹ But even after they heard the news, they didn't believe that Jesus was alive and that Mary had seen him.

¹²After that he appeared in a different form to two of them who were walking along in

⁴⁴Or *the Crucified One* ^vIn most critical editions of the Gk New Testament, the Gospel of Mark ends at 16:8.

15:43 *Joseph from Arimathea*: a Judean who was an active leader in Jerusalem. His request for Jesus' body is risky in many respects. Pilate might execute him as well. Joseph might violate sabbath law if sundown comes too quickly. He might lose status on the council, the group that turned Jesus over to the Romans.

15:46 *Archaeology confirms these burial practices. stone . . . tomb*: The tomb was probably a small cave, sealed by a large stone chiseled to fit over its entrance.

16:1-8 See Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-10. This is the earliest existing ending to Mark. See note on Mark 16:9-20.

16:1 *Salome*: See note on Mark 15:40. *anoint Jesus' dead body*: Care for the dead required ritual cleansing (see Mark 14:8).

16:3 *roll the stone away*: The stone was cut in a disk shape so it would roll easily (see note on Mark 15:46). The question implies that its size required physical strength not typical for women.

16:5 *young man in a white robe*: the clothing of angels (see Mark 9:3). Some interpreters think this young man is the same one who ran away in Mark 14:51-52. His dress, however, suggests he's a divine messenger.

16:6 *Don't be alarmed!*: The women shouldn't be surprised to find an empty tomb (see Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34). *raised . . . isn't here*: The man assures them that Jesus' body has been raised.

16:7 *tell his disciples, especially Peter*: Peter was the first

to follow and the last to desert Jesus (see Mark 1:16-18; 14:50, 66-72). *ahead of you*: See Mark 14:28. Despite their faults and his death, the disciples can still count on Jesus to lead them.

16:8 *terror and dread*: See Mark 4:41. *said nothing to anyone*: The women ignore the man's directions to "tell his disciples" (Mark 16:7). *because they were afraid*: The chapter ends abruptly. Some scholars think Mark wrote an open-ended Gospel on purpose; others think an original ending was lost early on.

[[**16:9**]] This is one of two separate endings added to Mark. This verse, called the "Shorter Ending," comes from the 4th century CE at the earliest. It's found without the longer ending in only one ancient copy of the Gospel. *sacred and undying message of eternal salvation*: This language is atypical of Mark.

[[**16:9-20**]] Most ancient copies of Mark include this "Longer Ending." Scribes copying the Gospel probably added it sometime in the 2nd century CE, perhaps after the original ending was lost or because they thought Mark's Gospel—compared to the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John—was incomplete (see note on Mark 16:8). This ending adapts details from the other NT Gospels to report Jesus' final encounter with his disciples.

[[**16:9**]] The verse summarizes events found in Mark 16:1-8. *seven demons*: See Luke 8:2.

[[**16:11**]] See Luke 24:9-11, 22-25; John 20:19-29.

[[**16:12-13**]] See Luke 24:13-35.

15:44 Mk 15:39; Jn 19:31; Ac 21:32, Ac 22:25, Ac 23:17

15:45 Mk 15:39; Mk 15:44; Jn 19:38

15:46 Mt 27:60; Mk 16:3

15:47 Mt 27:56; Mt 27:61, Mt 28:1; Mk 15:40, Mk 16:1

16:1 Mt 28:1; Mk 15:40, Mk 15:47; Lk 23:56; Jn 20:1

16:2 Mt 28:1; Lk 24:1

16:3 Mt 27:60; Mk 15:46

16:5 Jn 20:11, Jn 20:12

16:6 Mt 28:6; Mk 1:24; Ac 4:10

16:7 Mt 26:32; Mk 14:28; Jn 21:1

16:9 Mk 15:47; Lk 8:2; Jn 20:14, Jn 20:18

16:10 Lk 24:17; Jn 16:20, Jn 20:18

16:11 Mk 16:13; Mk 16:14; Lk 24:11

16:12 Lk 24:13

16:13 Lk 24:11,
Lk 24:33;
Jn 20:25

16:14 Lk 24:36;
Jn 20:19

16:15 Mt 28:19;
Mk 13:10;
Lk 24:47; Ac 1:8;
Col 1:23

16:16 Mt 28:19;
Jn 3:18, Jn 3:36;
Ac 2:38, Ac
16:31

16:17 Lk 10:17;
Ac 2:4, Ac 10:46,
Ac 19:6;
1Co 12:10

the countryside. ¹³When they returned, they reported it to the others, but they didn't believe them. ¹⁴Finally he appeared to the eleven while they were eating. Jesus criticized their unbelief and stubbornness because they didn't believe those who saw him after he was raised up. ¹⁵He said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to every creature. ¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever doesn't believe will be condemned. ¹⁷These signs will be associated with those who believe: they will throw out demons in my name. They will speak in new languages. ¹⁸They will pick up snakes with their hands. If they drink anything poisonous, it will not hurt them. They will place their hands on the sick, and they will get well."

¹⁹After the Lord Jesus spoke to them, he was lifted up into heaven and sat down on the right side of God. ²⁰But they went out and proclaimed the message everywhere. The Lord worked with them, confirming the word by the signs associated with them.]]

16:18 Lk 10:19; Ac 28:3, Ac 28:8 **16:19** Lk 24:51; Eph 1:20; 1Ti 3:16; Heb 1:3; 1Pt 3:22 **16:20** Ac 8:4, Ac 14:3; Ro 15:19; Heb 2:4

[[16:14]] *while they were eating*: See Luke 24:41-42. *unbelief and stubbornness*: These themes are prominent in Mark. On unbelief, see Mark 6:6; 9:24. On stubbornness, see Mark 3:5; 6:52; 8:17; 10:5.

[[16:15]] See Matthew 18:19. Compare with Luke 24:47; John 20:21.

[[16:16]] This claim is found in later NT writings (see Titus 3:5; 1 Pet 3:21; John 3:18).

[[16:17-18]] The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke generally view signs with suspicion (see Mark 8:11-12; 13:22). A positive view appears in John (see John 2:23; 4:48; 6:30).

[[16:17]] *throw out demons in my name*: See Mark 3:15; 6:7; 9:38-39. *speak in new languages*: See Acts 2:4-11; 1 Corinthians 14:2-33.

[[16:18]] *pick up snakes*: Luke 10:19 implies protection

from snake poison. Handling snakes isn't mentioned elsewhere in the NT, though Acts 28:3-6 reports Paul's accidental, and harmless, encounter with a snake. *drink anything poisonous*: not found elsewhere in the NT. *place their hands . . . get well*: See Mark 6:13; Acts 3:1-10; 5:12-16; James 5:14-15.

[[16:19]] *lifted up*: See Luke 24:51; Acts 1:2, 11, 22. *sat down on the right side of God*: See Mark 10:37; 14:62; Acts 2:33-34; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20.

[[16:20]] *went out and proclaimed the message*: consistent with Mark's interest in spreading the word (see Mark 1:14; 3:14; 4:3; 6:12; 13:10; 16:15). *with them*: Jesus remains present, even after his death (see Mark 3:14). *confirming the word by the signs*: See Acts 4:30; Romans 15:19; Hebrews 2:3-4. See note on Mark 16:17-18.

EXODUS

UNCORRECTED PROOF

The title of the book, Exodus, comes from the name of the ancient Greek translation of the original Hebrew text, *Exodus Aigyptou* (“Exit out of Egypt”). Exodus is the story of God’s rescue of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt (Exod 1–15), Israel’s travels in the wilderness (Exod 16–18), and God’s making and restoring a covenant relationship with the Israelites at Mount Sinai as they begin their journey toward the land of Canaan (Exod 19–40).

Exodus is part of the larger collection of the first five books of the OT called the Pentateuch or the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy). The traditions of Genesis provide important background leading up to the events of Exodus. For example, Genesis recounts three key promises from God to the people of Israel: many descendants, the land of Canaan, and a special covenant relationship with the Lord (Gen 12:1-9; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-22; 22:15-18; 28:10-15). These three promises from Genesis begin a process of fulfillment in Exodus. Israel experiences amazing

population growth in Egypt (Exod 1:1-3; 12:37). The Lord rescues the Israelites from slavery in Egypt so they can travel back to the promised land of Canaan (Exod 3:7-10; 12:29-51; 13:3-5; 23:23-33; 33: 34:11). The Lord makes a formal covenant relationship with Israel with instructions and promises (Exod 19–24), including the promise to be close and at home with the Israelites (Exod 25–31; see Exod 29:46).

In addition, two key themes that run throughout Exodus have their roots in Genesis: the Sabbath and God’s names. The Sabbath first appears at the end of the creation story in Genesis 2:1-3 and then reappears as an important theme throughout Exodus: the manna story (Exod 16:23-29), the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:8-11), the instructions of the covenant document (Exod 23:12), at the end of the instructions for building the Lord’s tent dwelling (Exod 31:14-16), the instructions of the restored covenant (Exod 34:21), and at the beginning of the actual building of the Lord’s tent dwelling (Exod 35:2). The Sabbath is built into the fabric



The Sinai Mountains
Todd Bolen/BiblePlaces.com

and they turned into cobras. But then Aaron's rod swallowed up each of their rods. ¹³However, Pharaoh remained stubborn. He wouldn't listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

Water into blood

¹⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh is stubborn. He still refuses to let the people go. ¹⁵Go to Pharaoh in the morning. As he is going out to the water, make sure you stand at the bank of the Nile River so you will run into him. Bring along the shepherd's rod that turned into a snake. ¹⁶Say to him, The LORD, the Hebrews' God, has sent me to you with this message: Let my people go so that they can worship me in the desert. Up to now you still haven't listened. ¹⁷This is what the LORD says: By this you will know that I am the LORD. I'm now going to hit the water of the Nile River with this rod in my hand, and it will turn into blood. ¹⁸The fish in the Nile are going to die, the Nile will stink, and the Egyptians won't be able to drink water from the Nile." ¹⁹The LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your shepherd's rod and stretch out your hand over Egypt's waters—over their rivers, their canals, their marshes, and all their bodies of water—so that they turn into blood. There will be blood all over the land of Egypt, even in wooden and stone containers.'"

7:13 Ex 4:21, Ex 7:3, Ex 8:15, Ex 10:20, Ex 10:27

7:14 Ex 8:15, Ex 10:1, Ex 10:20, Ex 10:27

7:16 Ex 3:18, Ex 5:1, Ex 5:3, Ex 9:1, Ex 9:13

7:17 Ex 4:9, Ex 7:5

7:19 Ex 8:5-6, Ex 8:16, Ex 10:12, Ex 14:21



Great Temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel
Todd Bolen/BiblePlaces.com

God (Exod 4:1-5, 30). This time Aaron uses a similar miracle or sign to try to convince Pharaoh of the power of Israel's God. The ancient Egyptians were famous for their magicians. They do what Aaron did, turning their rods into serpents. However, Aaron's rod or snake *swallowed up* the Egyptians' rods or snakes. This demonstrated the superior power of Israel's God, but still *Pharaoh remained stubborn*. The Hebrew word for *cobra* or *serpent* (*tannin*) often refers to a sea creature (Gen 1:21) or a "dragon" (Isa 27:1). Such sea monsters were often seen by ancient people as opponents of God and sources of chaos and evil in the world. The text of Ezekiel 29:3 identifies Egypt's Pharaoh as a "crocodile" (Hebrew *tannin*), which the Lord will fight and destroy. In a similar way, Aaron's

serpent swallowing the Egyptian serpents is a symbol of God's future victory over Pharaoh at the Reed Sea (Exod 15:3-10).

7:14-25 The first disaster in Egypt. Turning the water of the Nile River into blood is the first of a series of ten disasters that God will bring upon Pharaoh and the whole people of Egypt in Exodus 7:14-14:29. After each disaster, Pharaoh will in the end stubbornly refuse to let the Israelite slaves go.

7:15 Years earlier, Moses' mother had placed the baby Moses in a basket "at the riverbank." Shortly thereafter, Pharaoh's daughter had met Moses (Exod 2:3-6). This time, Moses meets Pharaoh *at the bank of the Nile*.

7:17 *turn into blood*: The Nile River is the main source of

26:26 Ex 36:31

26:31 Ex 26:1,
Ex 36:35;
2Ch 3:14;
Mt 27:51;
Heb 9:3

26:33 Ex 40:21;
Heb 9:2-3

26:35 Ex 25:31,
Ex 40:22,
Ex 40:24;
Heb 9:2

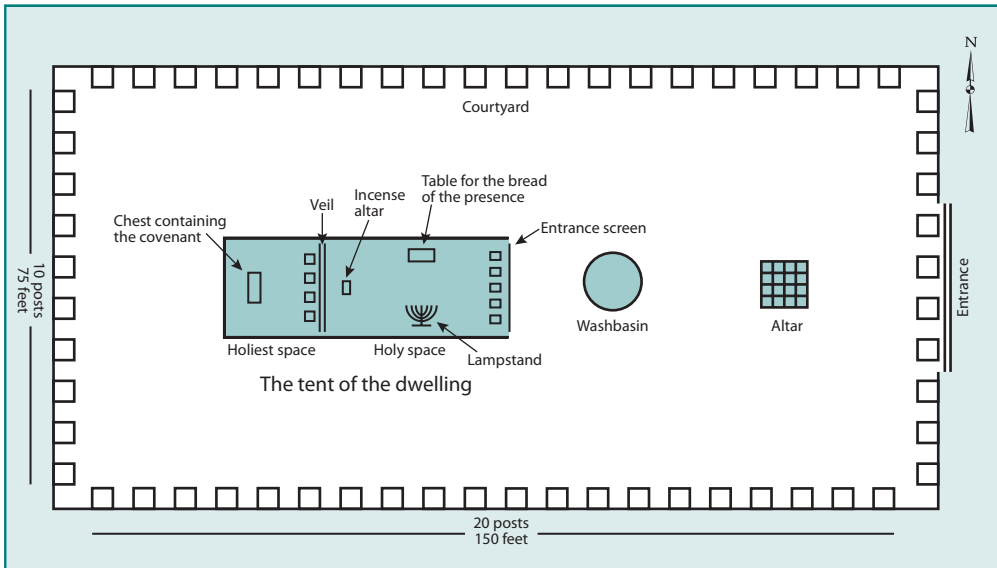
26:37 Ex 36:38

boards for the dwelling's rear corners. ²⁴They should be spread out at the bottom but joined together at the top with one ring. In this way, these two boards will form the two corners. ²⁵And so there will be eight boards with their sixteen silver bases, two bases under the first board, two bases under the next board, and so on.

²⁶You should also make acacia-wood bars: five for the boards on one side of the dwelling, ²⁷five bars for the boards on the other side of the dwelling, and five bars for the boards on the back wall of the dwelling on the west. ²⁸The middle bar, halfway up the boards, should run from one end to the other. ²⁹Cover the boards with gold. Make gold rings to house the bars. Cover the bars with gold. ³⁰Then set up the dwelling according to the plan for it that you were shown on the mountain.

³¹Make a veil of blue, purple, and deep red yarns and of fine twisted linen. Work figures of winged heavenly creatures into its design. ³²Hang it on four acacia-wood posts covered in gold. They should have gold hooks and stand on four silver bases. ³³Hang the veil under the clasps, and put the chest containing the covenant there behind the veil. The veil will separate for you the holy from the holiest space. ³⁴Place the gold cover on the chest containing the covenant in the holiest space. ³⁵Place the table outside the veil, and set the lampstand opposite the table by the south wall of the dwelling. Place the table by the north wall.

³⁶Make a screen for the tent's entrance of blue, purple, and deep red yarns and of fine twisted linen, decorated with needlework. ³⁷Make five acacia-wood posts for the screen. Cover the posts with gold. Their hooks should be gold. Cast five copper bases for the posts.



Layout of the meeting tent and the courtyard

26:31-37 The *veil* covers the entrance to the inner room of the dwelling. This inner room is the *holiest space* (26:34-35). God's presence will be enthroned there above the *chest* that contains "the covenant document" (Exod 25:10-22; see note on Exod 25:10). Even the high priest Aaron will die if he enters this *holiest space* at any time, except on the annual Day of Reconciliation (Lev 16:2).

A second *screen* (26:36-37) covers the *tent's entrance* to the outside courtyard. This marks off a secondary holy space in the tent, although it is not as holy as the *holiest space* of the inner room.

26:31 *blue, purple and deep red... fine twisted linen*: See note on Exodus 25:4. *Winged heavenly creatures*: See notes on Exodus 25:10, 16.

LEVITICUS

UNCORRECTED PROOF

Leviticus contains mostly instructions. The Lord speaks to Moses, telling him to repeat these instructions to the Israelites (Lev 1:2) or to the priests (Lev 6:9). Leviticus focuses first on rules for making offerings, then on purification procedures. The last third of the book contains rules for a wide variety of activities, including criminal acts, sexual conduct, social justice, priestly marriage, and annual festivals. It also continues to focus on proper worship of God.

Leviticus assumes that readers know the contents of Exodus and Numbers, that Israel came out of Egypt and camped at Mount Sinai. There God appeared to Moses on the mountain and told him to build the meeting tent (also called the “tabernacle”). Now God appears in the meeting tent to give Moses these instructions (Lev 1:1; cf. Lev 7:38). Afterward, Israel will break camp and travel toward the promised land, taking the meeting tent and its rituals with them (as instructed in Num 1–10).

That story explains why Israel should obey these rules in the book of Leviticus. The Lord rescued them from Egypt and promised to protect them in the new land. In return, Israel promised to obey the Lord as they would obey a king (Exod 24:7). These instructions explain what that obedience involves. They must bring offerings to God, as they would pay taxes to a king. They must treat each other fairly and generously. Along with similar instructions in Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, these rules give the details of the covenant between God and Israel. They are the heart of the *Torah*, the “Instruction” or “Law,” that became Israel’s first scripture.

Because Leviticus consists mostly of instructions, many people find it hard to read. What makes it even harder to read is that the instructions involve things that most people don’t do anymore. Neither Jews nor Christians make offerings like those in Leviticus 1–7 (see sidebar, “Animal Offerings” at Lev 1). Many Jews



Altar with Four Horns at Beer-sheba (Lev 4:7)
Todd Bolen/BiblePlaces.com

follow the food rules of Leviticus 11 (see sidebar, “Meat” at Lev 11), and some also follow the purity rules of Leviticus 12 and 15 (see sidebar, “Clean/Unclean” at Lev 13). However, very few Christians do. Modern readers from both traditions find the rest of the book a confusing mix of inspiring moral teachings (such as the love commandments in Lev 19:18, 34), obscure regulations (such as the rule against mixtures in Lev 19:19), and laws whose application could lead to social upheaval (such as returning all real property every fifty years, Lev 25:10, 14-18; see sidebar, “Jubilee” at Lev 25).

Leviticus remains at the heart of Jewish and Christian scriptures because it preserves one of the original reasons for needing written scriptures. In the ancient Near East, the idea of needing to follow written instructions first developed around ritual instructions. Kings and priests would justify their religious practices by showing and reading old texts (e.g., 2 Kgs 22-23; Neh 8). Many believe that the Torah (Pentateuch) began to function as scripture for Jews after the Babylonian exile in the 6th or 5th centuries BCE when priests used it to justify how they were running the temple. Today, ritual rules in Leviticus still remind readers of scripture’s purpose: to teach obedience to God’s instructions.

The book’s Hebrew title, *wayyiqra* “and he

called,” comes from its first word. The ancient Greek Septuagint translation called it *leitikon* “the Levitical book” which led to the English title, Leviticus. Despite this title, Leviticus focuses on the priests, Aaron and his sons, not the larger tribe of Levites of which they were part. All but three of the book’s chapters consist of God speaking to Moses (sometimes with Aaron as well; e.g., Lev 11:1). Moses must repeat these instructions to the people and the priests. But God’s speeches do not focus on Moses. Instead, they call attention to how priests should help the people worship God. They also point out the priests’ roles in gaining forgiveness and purification for the people (Lev 4-5; 12-16), and in teaching them all the rules of Torah (Lev 11:10-11).

Though the book’s setting is in the time of the exodus from Egypt, its Hebrew language and style matches that of other OT books, especially Ezekiel and 1 and 2 Chronicles. Therefore, most biblical scholars think it was written in the middle of the first millennium BCE, though it likely includes older traditions. That was when priests began to take over leadership in Judea and Samaria after kings disappeared along with their kingdoms. The priests’ support for placing Leviticus in the middle of the Pentateuch probably promoted Jewish commitment to monotheism, the Jerusalem temple, and the Torah.

I. Instructions for Offerings (1:1-7:38)

- A. Entirely burned offerings (1:1-17)
- B. Grain offerings (2:1-16)
- C. Well-being sacrifices (3:1-17)
- D. Purification and compensation offerings (4:1-6:7)
- E. Priestly incomes from offerings (6:8-7:38)

II. Inauguration of Worship (8:1-10:20)

- A. Inauguration of priests and meeting tent (8:1-36)
- B. Inauguration of regular offerings (9:1-24)
- C. Ritual failure and restoration (10:1-20)

III. Instructions for Purifications (11:1-15:33)

- A. Rules for meat and dead animals (11:1-47)
- B. Rules for purification after giving birth (12:1-8)
- C. Rules for purification of skin, houses and cloth (13:1-14:57)
- D. Rules for purification of genital emissions (15:1-33)

IV. Instructions for the Day of Reconciliation (16:1-34)

V. Instructions for Food and Worship (17:1-15)

VI. Instructions for Holy Relationships (18:1-20:27)

- A. Sexual relationships (18:1-30)
- B. Holy living (19:1-37)
- C. Penalties for religious and sexual sins (20:1-37)

VII. Instructions for Priestly Purity (21:1-22:33)

VIII. Instructions for Holy Events (23:1-25:55)

- A. Annual calendar (23:1-44)
- B. Rules about holy provisions and blasphemy (24:1-23)
- C. Sabbatical years and jubilee (25:1-55)

IX. Covenant Blessings and Curses (26:1-46)

X. Appendix on Vows and Tithes (27:1-34)

CHART OF MAJOR OFFERINGS (LEVITICUS 1-9)

Offering name	Materials	Distribution	Blood ritual	Result
entirely burned	cattle, sheep, goats, pigeons (1:1-17)	entirely burned (1:9), priest gets hide (7:8)	blood on sides of altar (1:5,11,15)	soothing smell (1:9,13,17), reconciliation (1:4)
grain	flour, unleavened bread, crushed grain (2:1-16)	token burned, priest gets the rest (2:2-3, 9-10,16, 6:15-18, 7:9-10)	none	soothing smell (2:2,9)
well-being sacrifice	cattle, sheep, goats (3:1-17)	fat & organs burned, priest gets breast & right thigh, worshipers get the rest (7:15-34)	blood on sides of altar (3:2,8,13)	soothing smell (3:5,16)
purification	cattle, sheep, goats, pigeons, grain (4:1-5:13)	fat & organs burned, priest gets the rest (6:24-26)	blood sprinkled inside meeting tent (4:5-7,16-18) or outside on altar horns (4:25,30,34), the rest at altar base	reconciliation (4:20,26,31,35, 5:10,13)
compensation	ram (5:13-19)	fat & organs burned, priest gets the rest (7:3-7)	blood on sides of altar (7:1-6)	reconciliation (5:16,18)
anointment	unleavened bread (6:20-21)	entirely burned (6:19-23)	none	
grain well-being	unleavened & leavened bread (7:12-13)	priest gets one of each kind, worshippers get the rest (7:11-14)	none	

share from my food gifts. It is most holy like the purification offering and the compensation offering. ¹⁸Only the males from Aaron's descendants can eat it as a permanent portion from the LORD's food gifts throughout your future generations. Anything that touches these food gifts will become holy.

¹⁹The LORD said to Moses, ²⁰This is the offering that Aaron and his sons must present to the LORD on the day of his anointment: one-tenth of an ephah^m of choice flour as a regular grain offering, half in the morning and half in the evening. ²¹It must be prepared on a griddle with oil. You must bring it thoroughly mixed up and must present it as a grain offering of crumbled piecesⁿ as a soothing smell to the LORD. ²²The priest who is anointed from among Aaron's sons to succeed him will prepare the offering as a permanent portion for the LORD. It will be completely burned as a complete offering. ²³Every priestly grain offering must be a complete offering; it must not be eaten.

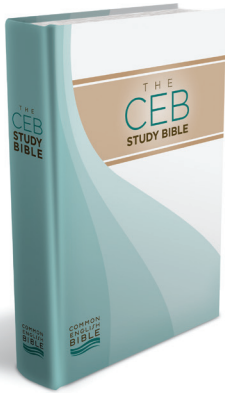
^mTwo quarts; an ephah is approximately twenty quarts dry. ⁿHeb uncertain

6:18 *only the males*: unlike the priests' portion of well-being sacrifices that they can share with everyone in their households (Lev 22:10-13), *will become holy*: or "must [already] be holy." Interpreters disagree over whether the writers of Leviticus thought that holiness is contagious or not. Compare with Ezekiel 44:19; 46:20; Haggai 2:11-13. *permanent portion* or "permanent rule" (Lev 3:17) emphasizes priestly incomes four times in chapters 6-7 (Lev 6:18, 22; 7:34, 36),

6:19-23 The *regular grain offering* of the priests has not been described before, so its ritual instructions appear here (cf. Lev 2). Unlike other grain offerings, priests cannot eat any of it because they should not get income from their own offerings. So it must be *completely burned* on the altar.

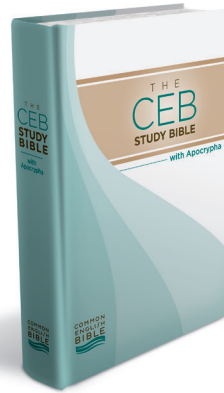
6:21 *crumbled pieces*: The Hebrew word's meaning is uncertain (see translation note n), because it appears only here in the OT.

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