

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns, rendered in a light gray color, frames the central text. The border is composed of repeating motifs of leaves and scrolls, creating a classic, elegant frame.

**A Layman's  
Commentary on  
Mark**

**T.O.D. Johnston**

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A Layman's Commentary on the Gospel of Mark

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A Layman's Commentary  
On the Gospel of Mark:  
Composed In 37 Lessons

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Dedicated for knowledge, understanding, and inspiration as we seek to follow Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ.

Preface

After reading many scholarly commentaries on different books of Scripture, it became my mental habit to sift through the minute discussions of individual words and/or phrases, and the quoting of various scholars of the past of many differing opinions, and center on the most logical and inspirational truths that remained. Thus I relied on the studied scholarship of those who had learned the original languages and had read all the previous scholars that had written to get the best possible understanding of Scripture that I, as a non-scholar, could. It seemed that most church members would not attempt to read scholarly works - but would benefit from their knowledge if presented in a plain and straightforward manner, the truths they had perceived. The following commentary is my attempt to do this. May God bless my efforts to the extent that they increase the understanding and faith of the reader.

T.O.D. Johnston  
2005

Lesson I:  
Introduction

What we know about Mark from New Testament references: Peter mentions him as "his son" in the Lord (I Peter 5:13), that he accepted Christ under his teaching.

He was the natural son of Mary, the sister of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10). This Mary was an early believer of Jerusalem, at whose home the apostles and early believers often gathered (Acts 12:12). His Hebrew name was John (Acts 12:12). He also at some point adopted the name Mark as a more familiar name among Gentiles. This was a common practice during that time.

He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journeys (Acts 12:25; 13:5; 15:37). For reasons not mentioned, he left them in Pamphylia, most likely returning to Jerusalem (Acts 15:38).

He is next mentioned as the companion of Peter to Babylon (I Peter 6:13). After that he traveled with Barnabas to Cyprus (Acts 15:39). At the special request of Paul, he went to Rome in the company of Timothy (2 Timothy 4:11). He stayed in Rome while Paul was a captive there, but the amount of time is not recorded (Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24).

From the early historians Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome we learn that Mark went from Rome to Alexandria, in Egypt, where he founded a church, and died in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of Nero's reign, around A.D. 65.

When the Gospel was written is not known. The common opinion is that it was composed between 56 and 63 A.D. at Rome. In Mark 16:20 it is mentioned that all the apostles had left Judea, and therefore during the later years of his own life.

Mark, for a considerable time, was the close companion of Peter, and under his tutelage learned all the important facts and teachings in the life of Jesus. According to the universal testimony of the early church fathers, Mark is considered the pupil of Peter, and that he wrote his Gospel under the guidance of Peter and with his approval. Its place among the inspired books of the New Testament has never been questioned.

The incident recorded in Acts 12:12-17 would have had a strong influence on Mark as a young man. Peter had been put in prison. He was miraculously released by an angel and went straight to the house of "Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying." This would surely have had a deep impression on all present. This also suggests that Mark would have been acquainted with many of the eyewitnesses of Jesus' ministry. Whether Mark had any personal acquaintance with Jesus is not known.

Mark's role was that of follower, helper, a great traveler and a man of action.

Where and to whom was this Gospel written?

Though no mention of where it was written is within the Gospel record, all the early church fathers confirm that it was written in Rome for the believers there. Evidence includes the translation into Greek of several Semitic terms and expressions, the explanation of Jewish customs, and the use of Latin in some cases. Only Mark mentions (in 15:21) that Simon of Cyrene was the father of Alexander and Rufus, evidently well-known in Rome (cf. Romans 16:13).

Mark pictures Christ as a victorious King, having power over forces of nature, demons, disease, and even death. He is also above all earthly kings, choosing the way of death in order to save His people. This the Romans could begin to understand from the experience as conquerors and rulers over many peoples.

When was it written?

The early church father, Eusebius, wrote that it was during the reign of Claudius (41-54 A.D.) that "the Providence of the universe guided to Rome...The great and mighty Peter,"

whose "follower Mark, at the request of the hearers of Peter" composed a record of Peter's teaching. This became known as the Gospel according to Mark. No evidence has yet come to light to more accurately set the date.

Unique characteristics. It is the shortest - only 661 verses compared to Luke's 1147, and Matthew's 1068. Mark records only 4 parables, Luke 27, and Matthew 19.

Of the 6 great discourses in Matthew, Mark includes only the one on The Last Things (chapter 13) in shorter form.

Mark records almost as many of Jesus' miracles as Matthew, adding in several cases more detailed description. Two are only recorded by Mark (7:31-37; 8:22-26). This is why this has been termed "the action Gospel".

Mark also follows a more detailed chronology including many time and place indications than Matthew or Luke. There are similar patterns of chronology, however, with both Luke and Matthew.

#### Outline - Christ's Mission

Verses 1-8: Ministry of John the Baptist

9-11: The Baptism of Jesus

12-13: The Temptation

#### Verses 1-6.

"1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 ¶ As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;"

#### Verse 1.

Mark immediately identifies Jesus as the Son of God, the coming King. The Gospel opens with the herald who was sent to prepare the way for the King, announcing His arrival and also emphasizing His importance.

Note: when Peter told the good news to Cornelius, he also began with John the Baptist (Acts 10:37). In other words, the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, began with the role of John the Baptist - which was prophesied by Isaiah as the one crying in the wilderness, making ready the way of the Lord.

Even as Mark never mentions himself by name throughout his book, so also John the Baptist continually directs everyone's attention away from himself and toward Jesus.

The title given Jesus Christ - Jesus the personal name - He will certainly save" plus the official name Christ - Messiah - the Anointed One, to the ordained role of Prophet, Priest, and King - the Savior of His people to the glory of God.

#### Verses 2,3.

Mark quotes from Isaiah 40:3. Matthew also quoted this verse. In John 1:23 the Baptist identifies himself with this prophecy, saying, "I am the voice." Jesus also agrees with this in Matthew 11:10. But not until verse 4 does Mark record John the Baptist's name.

Verse 4.

John was preaching in the wilderness and baptizing after conversion - to show a transformation of mind, heart, and life.

The rite of baptism was not new to the Jewish faith. But heretofore it was required only of those converted to the Jewish faith (called proselytes). This conversion was called for the forgiveness of sins. What was new here, was that John preached that all the people were considered sinners, and all needed to confess their sins and repent unto God - the baptism symbolized the cleansing unto newness of life, after the burying of the old sinful self.

To make a straight path through the wilderness, would require removing rock and other obstacles, so that the Lord that is to come will easily arrive at His destination. In this way, John's role was to prepare the way in people's hearts, by admonishing them to remove their sinful inclinations, and habits. This was done to clear a path toward God, so that they would be able to receive the Lamb of God, who through the shedding of His innocent blood would bring forgiveness and Salvation unto life eternal.

Note: the wilderness of Judea has been described as rolling badlands, barren soil covered with rocks of various sizes, and brushwood. It ran from the hills of Judea in the west, to the lower Jordan and Dead Sea in the east. Matthew indicates that John's activity also included the east bank of the Jordan.

Verse 5.

Unnumbered crowds of people went out to see and hear John. They came from the region of Judea, and great numbers also from the city of Jerusalem. Use of the word "all" is a hyperbole, or exaggeration, to emphasize the large number of seekers. Apparently he began near the Dead Sea, and later moved north along the Jordan. People from both sides went to hear him, and word spread, drawing more and more people.

Verse 6.

A description of John's manner of living. His clothing consisted of one garment - a long tunic made of camel's hair, held around the waist by a leather belt. This was considered a very coarse, rough cloth, durable and useful, especially in desert areas. It was also considered as appropriate to a prophet (Zechariah 13:4; also some reference to Elijah's mantle). Matthew 11:8 records Jesus pointing out that John did not wear fine clothes. Nor does it appear that John had any other clothes.

His diet was also sparing - what he could find in the wilderness. Wild honey was a food staple, found in nearby rocky crevices throughout the area. The stories about Samson and Jonathan also include the use of wild honey (Judges 14:8; and I Samuel 14:25 respectfully).

Locusts? It was acceptable to eat four varieties of these insects from Leviticus 11:22. The wings and legs would be removed, and the bodies were roasted or baked with a little salt. They are still eaten by some Arabs in our day. We eat some pretty strange creatures ourselves.

This does not mean that these were the only things he ever ate, but emphasized the simplicity and lack of fancy or sumptuous fare. This showed a way of life that was completely different from the selfish and self-indulgent lifestyles of everyone else - and the amount of time and careful attention they spent on them. John's ways were a protest against theirs - a way of pointing them to what was really the most important focus and activity in life.



## Lesson II

Mark 1:7-13. John's Preaching continued.

"7 and preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

9 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

11 and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

12 ¶ And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him."

Verses 7,8.

John emphasizes that His preaching was to prepare for One mightier than he is. The illustration used was that of the common practice of a servant. When the master of the servant returned home, the servant's job was to stoop down (mentioned only by Mark) and unlace his master's sandals to be cleaned and prepared for the next day's use.

John describes himself as not worthy to bend down to fulfill the servant's role of even touching the Master's sandals. This is a striking figure of how much greater Jesus was than any other person. This indicates his recognition of the true deity of Christ as the Son of God.

John goes on to contrast his outward rite of baptism (which has no inherent power to change a person) with the power of Christ to baptize with the Holy Spirit. This was obviously possible only by God the Father's direction and God the Son's authority. This brings the light of salvation to each believer, and newness of life. Jesus was born after John, and also began His ministry after John. However, when Jesus came to John, John forcefully declared the preeminence of Jesus.

Verse 9.

During the height of John's ministry of baptism, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John. A very brief account. The longest one is found in Matthew 3:13-17. Matthew had also previously recorded Jesus' home as Nazareth - where Joseph, Jesus' legal father, had been a carpenter, where Jesus had grown to manhood and was also known as a carpenter. Luke mentions that at 30 years of age Jesus made his first public appearance at the area of John's ministry at the Jordan River. Mark simply states that taking place. John's objection to baptizing Jesus is mentioned by Matthew.

The natural question arises - Why was it necessary for Jesus (the Sinless One) to submit to the baptism of repentance? Jesus considered it necessary for the fulfilling of all righteousness. Certainly it was a righteous symbolic act for sinners, but why did Jesus see it as also necessary for Him?

Jesus had come to take upon Himself the sins of all humanity. So here He was accepting the guilt of sin upon Himself - the same guilt which He would take to the death on the cross. John called Jesus the Lamb of God, the One to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). He was taking the part of those He came to die for.

This same rite has been the outward sign of everyone who accepts the Savior's sacrifice for forgiveness of their sins, who then rise forgiven and begin a new life as a member of the church of Jesus the Christ.

Verses 10,11.

Jesus rises up from baptism, and is walking out of the water, when something happens very suddenly. With a sound above, the heavens split open, and He looks up to see the Spirit of God in the form of a dove as if floating down upon His head. Then a voice from Heaven: "Thou art my Son, the Beloved, with Whom I am well pleased." The three persons of the Trinity are shown together.

Upon the submission of Jesus to the baptism of John, thus His accepting the burden of sinners at the beginning of His ministry. He shows the Father that the plan for man's salvation has begun. The Father most dramatically assures Jesus of His love and approval of this beginning. The appearance of the dove also is the assurance of the Holy Spirit's closeness and continuing power available to Him.

The use of the form of a dove (in the Psalms and the Song of Solomon) represented attributes of being pure, gentle, peaceful, and graceful. They were used to describe characteristics of the Holy Spirit. That the dove came to Jesus would also suggest that He also was pure, gentle, peaceful, and full of grace.

The highest love possible is expressed in the word "beloved" ("agapetos" - adjective form of "agape"). It is as deep, as wide, as great, as intelligent, as purposeful, as vast, as infinite, and as tender as the unimaginable omniscience of the mind of God the Father. What Jesus has just done only confirms this love which Jesus has had eternally.

This certainly shows us how necessary and important Christ's task as our Saviour was to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This message was to Jesus, but also in public. It was to be heard and seen by John and others present. That it is recorded brings to us also the absolute witness of God Himself from heaven of His love and approval of the ministry here begun by His beloved Son with the close empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

There was never to be any question as to God's Plan of Salvation. Men are given the facts as recorded by eyewitnesses, and Jesus Himself. They must choose to accept the truth, or reject it. To reject this truth is to choose to believe only lies.

Verses 12,13.

The Temptation. Having begun His ministry as the Suffering Servant, taking upon Himself humanity and the sins thereof in the submission to the baptism of John, Jesus goes on to the next step: facing temptation - not just any normal temptation, but the temptation directly from satan. The same one that tempted Adam in the Garden. Adam had failed and was put out of the garden, and the earth was cursed. Jesus - the second Adam, the last Adam (I Corinthians 15:45) - must also be tempted - in the wilderness, that if He fails not, paradise might be regained. He would undo all the results of Adam's sin.

That Jesus could experience temptation directly relates to His human nature. Apparently the Holy Spirit drew Him into the wilderness for the purpose of facing the devil's best lies. After 40 days of prayer and fasting the devil suggests that Jesus turn some stones into bread. Certainly Jesus' flesh was experiencing hunger (Matthew 4:2).

Hebrews 4:15 states - "He was tempted in all things (or in every respect) as we are, yet without sin." What Jesus did not have that we do is our own inborn evil desire (or lusts of the flesh, of the eyes, and the pride of self).

The sense of need - the urging by the Tempter to satisfy the need, and the will to resist, was a struggle even for Christ. For the most detailed account we must look to Matthew 4:1-11.

We will proceed to follow Mark's very brief account. From the Jordan valley, the Spirit impelled Jesus into a more remote and inhospitable area. Here He would be undisturbed in this part of the wilderness where even wild beasts roamed. Here He fasted prayed - uninterrupted communion with the Father, in preparation for what was to come. It was here that satan tempted Him. It is clear satan tried every trick and enticement to cause Jesus to give in (and sin). Luke calls him the devil - all point to him as slanderer, accuser, adversary, tempter, prince of evil, father of lies, etc.

Mark includes the detail that wild beasts were in the area. Hyenas, jackals, panthers, and even lions were once common in that area. A place of desolation and peril.

The closing description includes the ministering to Jesus by angels.

Matthew 4:11 informs us "Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and were rendering service to Him." The devil had lost and left. The angels were sent by the Father to provide for the Son's needs, all inclusive, and not leaving out nourishment for His body's needs.

Mark does not state Christ's triumph over satan, but the ministry of angels implies reward for resisting all that the devil could tempt Him to do.

It will be after this victory over satan that Jesus will begin to teach, preach, heal, and also cast out the followers of satan (demons). All this leads to the final triumph over death itself.

Next, Jesus' Public Ministry Begins in Galilee.

Lesson III

Mark 1:14-15. The Great Galilean Ministry.

"14 ¶ Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,  
15 and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Verses 14,15.

This begins a new phase. It appears that Jesus remained in the area of Jordan, teaching and preaching about the kingdom of God with His disciples, baptizing many. Just as John prophesied, Jesus' ministry increased as his decreased. Several months passed. Then John the Baptist was arrested and put in prison. Reports were given to the Pharisees in Jerusalem about Jesus' activities. To avoid a premature crisis with the Jewish religious leaders, Jesus left Judea and traveled to Galilee.

Jesus came preaching "the gospel of God". This was the good news that God has provided a free gift to all men - through Jesus. John puts it well in his Gospel in 3:16.

Verse 15.

God's promises of salvation are now to be fulfilled, the kingdom of God (or of heaven as in Matthew) has come to earth. Jesus was bringing a way of salvation, reconciliation, and acceptance of men into His kingdom. By their choice they would be forgiven, saved, and be part of the church.

This includes the central concepts:

1. The kingship of God's rule within the human heart.
2. Complete salvation - spiritual and material blessings when God is King in our hearts - recognized and obeyed.
3. The community that recognized God as king became the church.
4. The final inheritance of the new heaven and the new earth.

The work of salvation was supernatural in origin, character, and purpose. The sovereignty of God is embodied in the term "kingdom of heaven." All points to God's glory.

By Jesus saying the time has come and the kingdom is at hand, He is beginning His ministry, and His work would be finished yet in the future at His death.

Jesus is preaching the same message as John the Baptist (Matthew 3:2), "be converted, the kingdom of God is at hand."

The King James and other translations use the word "Repent," which indicates only the negative change called for. From the original Greek text, the word used includes the negative aspect of sorrow for sin, and earnest desire to change, but also includes looking forward - to undergo a radical change of heart and life for the better. "Be converted" and believe the gospel. First turn to the light (of truth) and accept in faith and confidence the good news of reconciliation with God through Jesus (the Living Truth, the True Light).

Accept the Light of Truth within your heart and follow it.

Verses 16-20. The Calling of Four Fishermen.

"16 ¶ Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zeb'edee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zeb'edee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him."

As Jesus calls His disciples to Him, He knew of the preparation and training they would go through to be proclaimers and writers of His Gospel as well as their work in the forming of His Church. Most notably Matthew, Peter, and John. This call at the sea of Galilee was not their first encounter with Jesus. About a year earlier, Andrew and one unnamed (most likely John) had followed Jesus to where He was staying and became His followers (John 1:35-41). Andrew had brought his brother, Simion, to Jesus. We assume that John had similarly done the same for his brother, James.

So here, Jesus calls upon them to become His constant companions, that they were to be part of the greatest of all work: to be fishers of men for God. The impetuous Simon must become Peter, the rock. A similar transformation must also happen to them all to become the Apostles.

The fact of their choosing to go with Jesus speaks not so much to their courage to leave their regular lives, but much more to the impelling power and force of Jesus, His divine influence over the hearts and minds of those who God had His hand upon. They had answered the call of the Spirit through John the Baptist. They had accepted Jesus. When He now calls them to greater service, they go without hesitation.

They were uneducated, working class, with many prejudices and superstitions. These Jesus chose to nurture and make into strong leaders and witnesses to the Truth, that would turn the world on its head.

Four are named: Peter, John who becomes leader of the 12 and is named first in every list of the Apostles - (Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13), Andrew (Peter's brother, who brings many to Jesus - John 1:40; Matthew 14:18; John 12:22), James (son of Zebedee, brother of John, the first apostle killed - Acts 12:1,2), John ("the disciple Jesus loved" - John 13:23; 19:26 - meaning a special bond of tenderness and understanding).

On the event itself.

As Jesus was walking by He came upon the two brothers throwing out a fish-net. It would strike the water in a circle, with pieces of lead attached around the circle, which would quickly sink, pulling the net over any fish thereby caught beneath it. This was their daily occupation. God chose those who were not wise or powerful, but those who were teachable, to in turn shame those who thought themselves wise or who thought they were truly powerful and righteous.

By calling them to "Come, follow me," Jesus asserts His authority over them - that He claims them for His service. Now is the time. Jesus calls them to a far greater task than catching fish to eat. They are to be fishers of men. They would be reaching others for the kingdom of God. Daniel 12:3 - "They that turn many to the righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever."

Verses 19,20.

Walking a little further, Jesus comes upon James and John, also doing fishermen's work. Jesus gives them the same call as Peter and Andrew. They immediately stopped what they were doing and also followed Him.

It has been noted that their mother, Salome, was a sister of Mary, Jesus' mother. They were therefore cousins. They most likely knew of His whole family and background, that His earthly father was Joseph, a carpenter, and of His brothers. In the Gospel accounts, these facts were used against Jesus on more than one occasion. But no mention is made here by these brothers. They recognized His greatness, all other considerations were therefore irrelevant. So also we need to focus on **Who He Is**, not on all the incidental details of genealogy, and facts of verifiable history as some choose to do.

Verses 21-28.

"21 ¶ And they went into Caper'na-um; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee."

Though Jesus had defeated satan, still his servants, the demons, are in control of many that confront Jesus. Jesus continues to cast them out - limiting the power of satan and at the same time opening many hearts to the power of God in Him, and in believing His Gospel.

The following incident is similarly recorded in Luke. (4:31-37).

Verse 21.

Jesus and the four disciples were near Capernaum, and it being the Sabbath, Jesus went to the synagogue - as was His habit - and also to teach (Luke 4:16). Jesus asked and was given permission to speak. Standing, He read from the prophets, then He sat down to explain the read portion to meet the needs of the hearers.

Verse 22.

He astonished those present. He taught with authority, as one who knew the truth of what He was saying - not as the scribes. They often dwelt on trivialities, often rambling, without touching the peoples' hearts, or meeting their needs in any way. They also often quoted other scribes and fallible sources.

Jesus spoke the truth in love and concern for the deepest needs of the people. He spoke from what He knew which was revealed in Scripture. The Living Word explaining the Spoken Word.

Verse 23.

Even in those early days, they knew the differences between normal illnesses and abnormalities, and the possession of a person by a distinct and evil being.

The demon cries out using the man's voice - "Why do you bother us, Jesus of Nazareth." One demon - speaking for all those he represents realizes what their final end is to be. He calls Jesus the Nazarene, and also the Holy One of God. It was as if asking if He had come from heaven to destroy the demons already, to hurl them into the abyss. The demon claims to know the Holy One and that He had authority over them and their own ultimate end.

Verse 25.

Jesus doesn't want to accept acknowledgment from such an evil creature - nor should it question Jesus or interrupt. Jesus rebuked him and told him to get out. The demon had no choice but to immediately obey - but with violence against the man - throwing him into convulsions, and with a loud shriek left him.

Verse 27.

The people were again dumbfounded - formerly at His teaching, now His command over the demon. They questioned each other – they were profoundly impressed, but did not know what to think about these things.

In very little time, word spread throughout the region. That God was at work among them, for only a prophet from God could have authority over demons.

Next, the Healing of Simon's Mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-34).

Lesson IV

Mark 1:29-34. Healings.

"29 ¶ And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 ¶ And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him."

Verse 29.

Upon leaving the synagogue after the events in the previous verses, they, with Jesus (Simon and Andrew) with James and John went straight to Peter's house. Evidently both Peter's mother-in-law and Andrew lived with him and his wife. James and John, who had also been present at the synagogue, went there also.

Verse 30.

When they arrived, the mother-in-law was lying down sick with a fever, Jesus is immediately informed.

Verses 31,32.

He goes to her, took her by the hand and lifts her up. Luke adds; "and rebuked the fever." (Luke 4:39.) By His divine authority, Jesus commanded the fever to leave. It has no choice but to obey. The same word is used later when He speaks to the wind and waves (Luke 8:24).

The fever left her and she got up and began waiting on them. The news of what had happened at the synagogue apparently spread quickly throughout the area. Now the victory over the mother-in-law's fever would also quickly be told. The new hope of relief from suffering for all their loved ones, caused a great many people to bring those afflicted to find help in Jesus.

It was after sunset of the same day - they waited until the Sabbath was over. Those brought either had it badly (were sick) or were demon-possessed. A clear distinction was recognized.

Verse 33. It appeared to anyone who was there that the whole town (Capernaum had come to Peter's house to see Jesus. Matthew (8:16) and Luke (4:40) also stressed the huge numbers.



Verse 34. Mark's account is very short. Jesus patiently and with loving sympathy healed them all, no matter what the illness. He also cast out many demons. Matt adds "with a word", a command (8:16).

Mark adds, "But he was not allowing the demons to speak, because they knew who He was." It has been suggested that Jesus silenced them to prevent a premature confrontation with the religious leaders.

#### 1:35-39. Christ's Ministry Continued.

"35 ¶ And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils."

#### Verse 35.

After a very active and tiring day and evening, Jesus must have been physically exhausted. He also felt the need for communion and strengthening from the Father.

Even before dawn, Jesus went to an isolated place to pray so he would not be interrupted. The importance of prayer in Jesus' life is continually seen, both before important events and afterwards also. They are mentioned in all four Gospels and obviously are only examples of the full prayer and communion He had with the Father throughout His ministry - on the cross, and after the resurrection He also taught the disciples how to pray and urged them to pray continually (example - the Lord's Prayer).

#### Verses 36,37.

We may naturally assume that if they spent the night at Simon's, it therefore follows that when Simon got up the next morning and Jesus wasn't there, he would go looking for Him. It also appears that many others had come to Simon's house seeking Jesus. Simon with others went looking for Him, indeed determined to find Him no matter how far they had to go or how much time it took.

When they finally found Him, they told Him that a great many people were seeking Him. They thought He would go back to the city and again meet the needs of more and more people. His purpose is not to heal all the people in a place and then move on. His ministry was not so limited - He will carry the message of God's love and forgiveness to as many places as time allows.

#### Verse 38.

His response is to say, "Let's go to the next town that I may preach there also..." He asks His disciples to go with Him. Thus begins the journey of Jesus and His disciples through the various towns and villages of Galilee. His emphasis is on the message rather than miracles. They confirmed His message of good tiding as truly from God Himself. His message stressed that men cannot be saved by obeying all the regulations of the Pharisees and rabbis. It all

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