

READING THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 2021 Week 6 (February 8-12)

("Let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly" ... so it may bear fruit in our lives) – Colossians 3:16.

Historical Context (The Gospel of Mark)

- 30 AD Jesus is executed, comes back to life, and pours out the Holy Spirit upon the early church on the day of Pentecost (the Jewish festival of first fruits), and thousands join the church.
- 44 AD Peter, rescued from prison by an angel, goes to John Mark's mother's house (Acts 12:6-13). Is this Mark of I Peter 5:13 (note: a few manuscripts read Rome instead of Babylon)?
- 45 AD John Mark travels with Paul, and Barnabas (who is from Cypress, Acts 4:36) from Jerusalem to Antioch. From there, start on an evangelistic tour (Acts 12:25 – 13:1-5). After Cypress, he leaves them and goes back to Jerusalem from Perga (7½ miles inland from the coast of Turkey),(Acts 13:13). Is this the Mark related to Barnabas (Colossian 4:10)?
- "50 AD" Date of the earliest fragment of Mark's gospel. It was found in a Qumran cave about 28 miles east of Jerusalem, near the Dead Sea. Unless this is part of the original document, it suggests that Mark was written prior to this date, and already in use by the early church.

Day Reading Clarification from the Greek (the original language)

- Mon. Mark 1 (:15) **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news.** = "The time is now completed, and the kingdom of God is now almost here; (therefore) turn around / think differently, and trust in (that it's true) the good + message (glad tidings)." Cf. Luke 2:10-11. This is the core of Jesus' preaching in Mark.
- The understood teaching, from the day of Pentecost forward, is that Jesus is God's designated King (Acts 2:36). This is the understanding in which the early church read the Gospel of Mark.
- Mark gives us a great picture of what the Kingdom looks like: healings, forgiveness, deliverance, inclusion, feedings, miracles, teachings, compassion, judgement, and people following the Son of God – who speaks, decides, and acts with power and authority: because he is king.
- Tues. 2 (:27) **The Son of Man** = "the son of the man. Who is this? Two thoughts.
- The closest reference to "the man" is the Sabbath being made for the man in the previous verse. This may refer back to Genesis 1:27 (it's the same phrase in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, that was used in Jesus' day, called the Septuagint). In Genesis, God makes "the man: male and female God makes them." Jesus appears to combine this with Deut. 5:12. The end result is that Jesus is referring to people in general.
- Jesus may also be referring to the vision of Daniel 7:13-14 ("like a son of man"). Daniel *doesn't* use "the" to designate a specific person, and the phrase, "son of man"; and the phrase, "son of man" is used about 100 times in other parts of the Septuagint to describe one or more human beings. Yet the phrase, "the son the man", that Jesus uses throughout Mark, is *identical* to the Greek phrase of Acts 7:56 in which Stephen has a vision of "the son of the man" that is very similar to Daniel's vision.
- Wed. 3 (:29) **Blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; but is guilty of an eternal sin** = "whoever [may-be-actively-slandering] (ripping

into) the Holy Spirit does not [actively-possess] [forgiveness/release] into the ages (eons), rather is [held-in (or by)/subject-to] an eternal sin.”

Thur.

- 4 (:24) **Consider carefully what you hear** = “[See/look-at-now] what [you-now-hear].”
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A note on Jesus is teaching in parables. In Mark 4:12. Jesus is condensing Isaiah 6:9-10.

Isaiah was sent to tell the people this message:

“Yes, you hear, but you don’t understand.
You certainly see, but you don’t get the point.” (Isaiah 6:9)

And then Isaiah is to tell them, with the sarcasm of a disgusted God ...

“[Yes, go on.] Make the heart of this people [sluggish] with fat,
stop up their ears and shut their eyes ...
[lest] they repent and be healed.” (6:10)
(The Complete Jewish Study Bible)

The book of Isaiah begins with God’s dismay at how Israel resists any sort of correction, follows quickly with a call to repentance (1:18-20), and then gets right to the heart of the matter ...

“... My people! Your guides lead you astray and obliterate
the path you should follow ...” (3:8-15) ... and those who
are benefiting, are going gladly along.

In Mark, Jesus is very straight forward in his preaching:

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near;
repent and believe in the good news.” (Mark 1:15)

Some people responded. They said “yes” to the good news, and began following the king. These people are called disciples.

While the preaching is for everyone, the teachings of the multi-faceted secret of the kingdom are only for the disciples – those who have chosen to say “yes” to the kingdom of God. This “yes” is the prerequisite for being let in on the multi-faceted secret of the kingdom (4:10) at this time (4:22). These folks are already inside the kingdom (Mark 4:11).

- Fri. 5 (:43) **Know** = “see and understand / comprehend / grasp the full reality.”

For reflection:

Why is Jesus forbidding telling what happened, is happening?

Cf. Mark 1:24-25 and 34 (demons); 1:43-45 (leprosy);
3:11-12 (demons); and 5:38-43 (death).

How was Jesus’ ministry changed by those who told anyway?

Cf. Mark 1:27-38, 45; 3:7-10, 20; 4:1.

Sources: bibleatlas.org/perga; alldistancesbetween.com; uccronline.it; www.datingthenewtestament.com; www.thebiblejourney.org; [Chronological Study Bible](#); [Word Pictures of the New Testament](#); [IVP Bible Background Commentary: N.T.](#); [Paul Apostle of the Heart Set Free](#); [Dictionary of New Testament Theology](#), Vol. 1-3; [Analytical Greek Lexicon, Revised](#); [The Basics of New Testament Syntax](#); [The Englishman’s Greek Concordance of the New Testament](#); [A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament](#); [The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament](#); and the [Analytical Greek New Testament](#).

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