




# **The Gospel of Mark for Preachers**

## **Westgate**

## **Commentaries**



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## The Legend of Mark

The numerous instances of “Immediately” (Greek εὐθὺς) suggests a man in a hurry. The exact opposite is the case. Jesus has all the time in the world for people but the “immediacy” with which He attends need is the special witness Peter delivers to the reader.

Peter saw the immediate action of the Lord in respect of His mother, in respect of the widow of Nain’s son during the funeral. He watched the Lord stop His retinue to listen to the need of a beggar or interrupt his discourse to heal a man in great pain. Jesus is never too tired or too preoccupied to stop and act in response to need..... Peter saw the blind, the lame, the deaf, the sick, the demonised and the dead and nature itself instantly responsive to the "man" who is the Christ.

What we are being treated to in this gospel is a quiet revolution-we are shown over and over again how quickly Jesus made changes wherever He went. When he touched lives immediately they were different. It was just like ***a new kingdom*** had come among men. He will change everything immediately. Lions will not take 10 years to lie with lambs or men 100 years to beat swords to ploughshares. The world will change and be reconstituted. In a microcosmic sense the ministry of Jesus changed Galilee.

It is this element of instantaneous change that is conveyed by Peter's writing. This is his intent. By this means Peter annotates the actions of the Christ whose word spoke life and new creation as really as during the 6 days when the world and the universe that surrounds it were created by the edicts of His mouth.

We have within this gospel at least 40 instances catalogued of such "changes". The Greek words used for things "occurring quickly" are εὐθὺς εὐθεὺς (which express our "straight away") Greek εὐξαίφνης □

("without warning" Mark 13.36) (Greek εξαιτης ) (Mark 6.25 "asap") (Greek παραχρημα) □□("soon" □not in Mark□)

It is beyond doubt that Peter is speaking of a busy ministry but without His divine touch Jesus could never have accomplished so much in 3 short years. So the accomplishments of Jesus by word alone in this time shout in that era and to its people, "This is very Christ"

In my "Stories from Mark for Children" I present the 40 events that are recorded by Mark from the lips of Peter which show the revolutionary effect of the loving and sympathetic ministry of the LORD in Israel.

### *Dedication*

*As a student I preached within the YWCA in Londonderry in the 1960's. I was an unpractised orator and had but scanty material and if nobody else every remembered or found help from that short address at least I myself remember it. The text was Mark 8.34, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.!" The whole world needs this text and the will to put it into action. Peter like all of us was a slow learner but his concluding testimony is luminous. Till the end he endured even considering himself unworthy to die upright. He played the man like our own English martyrs.*

*It is by imbibing the principles taught in the gospel that hearts of oak are fashioned and contrariwise it is by attending to the prayerful instructions of this gospel that hearts of deepO compassion are formed. John Mark who penned the reflections of Peter came to immense usefulness in the fullness of time. Preachers who set before the people the contents of this gospel will succeed to "feed the lambs" and for that specific purpose I commend this plain little work to the public*

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## CHAPTER ONE

The prophesied Righteousness is come, the time fulfilled, *the kingdom* is at hand(Exodus 23.20, Malachi 3.1, Isaiah 40.3 2, Kings 1.8 & Zechariah 13.4) Deeper

scrutiny, greater service, stronger crying and tears, and the glorious substitute of God. A dozen times the Greek word for "immediately" bestrewn this first chapter-spelling out the effectiveness of Christ's ministry in every place based on a "scrutiny" of human need uniquely divine and offering an absolute "change" of life to person after person. At the heart of this chapter is the voice from heaven fulfilling prophecies in Genesis 22.2, Psalm 2.7 & Isaiah 42.1.

## **A "HIGHWAY" IN THE DESERT**

The ministry of Christ is set against a desert background. We are very unfamiliar with desert and it is not surprising if we should be unfamiliar with the four principles taught here. The streams that refresh the desert speak of righteousness, the scorpions and savage beasts & the angels speak of two kingdoms. The silence and separation of the desert speaks of prayer & the scapegoat of the desert speaks of transferring our burdens and guilt -of the Christ of Calvary (vv.4, 12,35,45) Christ-Our Righteousness-Lord- Intercessor-our Redeemer. Such is the ministry of which we shall read in the pages of this gospel.

## **THE DESERT ALLIES HIM WITH JOHN & THE MESSAGE OF REPENTANCE 1-8**

The gospel begins in the era of the shaggy prophet-living on **honey and locusts**. John's life was set within a day's journey from Qumran where such natural fare was routine. The **camel hair and the leather** that clothed John together with the foodstuffs speak of a life of faith.

Now consider God's scrutiny in this chapter: There is no area from which Righteousness can be excluded. He sees the nation in its sin v3; He sees the power of Satan as needing curbed v.12; he scrutinizes our work & wants to give new vision; our relationships (vv.18&20) and desires new priorities; our religion and wants new power within it; our problems and time at home and wants to improve our home life (29-31); our physical and spiritual separation from Himself and has the only solution -the cross (vv.42&45). Think of the delight of God in Christ verse 11 proclaimed 600 years before in Isa.40.3-11 -an eternally happy relationship which is at the base of God's provision for us. "He shall feed His flock like a Shepherd"

## **THE DESERT SHOWS HIM TO BE A COMPANION OF HIS CREATION; PEERLESS UNDER PRESSURE 12 ff**

The second great theme is "service". It is when we look at the short passage on the temptation in Mark we realise the massive task of the **Kingdom of God**. There in the desert were the scorpions and the snakes and the wild beasts. Jesus was there for 40 days and as Matthew tells us 40 nights. The strength of this kingdom shows the grandeur of Christ beneath whose feet and under whose command the animal creation submits axiomatically. The angels who appear in this short section show the heavenly

nature of the ministry upon which the LORD is embarking. They are "fellowshipping" in this instance even as later in the Garden they are come to strengthen and then joyfully they appear at the Tomb "announcing" victory. Think of the delight of these angels to serve- "standing on tiptoe to volunteer" This power is seen in Jesus "marching (Greek πορεύομαι) into Capernaum" in the style of a spiritual victor coming to His possession. **Immediately** we see the submission of the evil spirit-whose prescience does the gospel no service. Service and rebellion do not mix, then in v 18 we have non-committal service of faceless ones who just pass on famous news, and service of the disobedient in v45 where the leper who was **instantly** cleansed is scaremongering not obeying. The spontaneous obedience of the disciples & the mother- in-law of Peter contrasts effectively with these. Christ is seen in the midst of illness of every hue healing all and healing immediately -His power had become known and felt vv32-34

## **THE DESERT REVEALS AN INTERCESSOR VOWING TO FULFIL HIS PLAN IN AND FOR US 35-39**

*The kingdom* seemed to be on its way. But there was more. There was the total commitment of ones soul-the all on the altar part. That is why we move to w35-39 to the desert and solitary place where Christ can cry aloud in testimony to the larger purpose-dedicate himself in daily vows to that purpose Father and Son equally subscribe and draw his followers onward. Catch the enthusiasm of Christ making his vows to the Father for the day and re-fertilise your prayer life. The disciples follow his footsteps to where he prays; they are magnetised by His zeal; they learned to go there to see him praying-to see Rome wasn't built in a day. There were the villages and more preaching and more teaching and more healing... In one of these the Leper came and Jesus touched him. Suddenly the question of unpopularity surfaced. Sin showed up in a life quite careless to obey.

## **THE DESERT HINTS JESUS' SUBSTITUTIONARY MINISTRY UNDER THE PICTURE OF THE SCAPE-GOAT 40-45**

What was the answer now? Again the desert! Christ took the position the leper left. The former went to town and Jesus went to commune with the Father. Early in the ministry of Christ rejection and opposition were casting their shadow ahead. The one now outside the village- would suffer outside the gate as His people's scapegoat on the Cross of Calvary. Sinners in all their need compel His deeper compassion and so He retires to pray. Even now our LORD knows there is no crown without a cross The problem of the heart of man is harder to solve than preparing heaven to reward the good and hell to contain the rebellious -it demanded a cross to guide mankind to God's love and redeem from sin. Subsequently we will see that nothing drew men like the sympathising Jesus -the one who bore the cross v45. He called for us; He came to us; He cried with tears for us and He suffered for us-should not we love Him more? This is the Highway to the *everlasting kingdom*

## CHAPTER TWO

Here we have four incidents-which focus our relationship to Christ as our High Priest. The incidents link through the proclamation of "forgiveness-the Levite's call-the bridegroom or High Priest of the Church and the Abiathar incident.

### PRIESTLY FORGIVENESS 1-12

The incident of the man who was paralyzed on one side is remarkable for the commendation of the faith of four who deliver him to the Master's feet. Here is a picture of the evangelist believing in the power of Christ. The Old Testament passages Psalm 103.3 & Isaiah 43.25 speak of God alone as possessed of the prerogative of forgiveness. GOD alone it is "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" He says "I even I am he that blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake and will not remember thy sins"

The remark "**Which is easier**" draws attention both to the equal healing and redeeming power of Christ-but in the latter there is the death of the cross-the need for sacrifice. We bless the Lord with David for such Grace

### PRIESTLY RESTORATION 13-17

The Levite Son of Alphaeus historically is seen as a ship cargo tax officer. His life had been gripped with the mammon desire of the world around him-although from a religious family. He brought to his house many of his colleagues to hear Jesus. The incident was watched by scribes & Pharisees who pronounced Jesus guilty by association. Christ replied to the charge of breach of law by showing that he **was not now come to call the righteous ones to heaven but come to call the unrighteous ones to forgiveness**. Christ is come as a soul-physician not as the King to reign. He speaks of implementing the gospel era.

### THE BRIDEGROOMS PRESENCE 18-22

A Rabbi would leave off teaching were there **a wedding** in the offing. The Scribes would have believed in the wedding feast of Messiah-but for the moment they would make no connection between this wedding and Messiah nor the joy and provision as a prelude to the ministry of the Christ of the prophets or the choice of a people from the Jews. While Christ's ministry did involve fasting yet He did not call for regular public fasts.

The old priestly order is likened to an **old garment & old wineskins**. There was new righteousness and new joy on offer in the ministry of Christ. His attendants-the

apostles were not being required to follow the precepts of a fading tradition. Indeed the call that **the Bridegroom is coming** was soon to be borne to the ends of the earth. Meantime our High priest intercedes for us and we exercise that priestly ministry which He provided as a means of enabling his servants.

### **PLUCKING GRAIN 23-28**

The law provided Deut23.25 food of a neighbour from the field. It also provided for showbread from which the priests ate and technically as in ISam21 1-6 the people could fellowship with God at table of the tabernacle.

At this time Zadok was a priest (2Samuel 15.35) and whilst Doeg had slaughtered many priests Zadok (Seer & man of valour-2Samuel 15.27, 1 Chronicles 12.28) escaped along with Abiathar who fled. Now Ahimelech was Abiathar's father and Abimelech & Jonathan his sons. Our Lord Jesus had studied the house of Ahitub (Brother of goodness) thoroughly and his word on it is that not without Abiathar was the bread given. He may have had charge of the table. We bow to the authority of scripture

The younger priest was named "Father of Plenty"(Gesenius) and shared in the responsibility of priesthood with his Father Ahimelech (slain shortly afterward) - is not given the title "High priest" by our LORD

We have a superior High priest who is the son of David-and a Melchisadekian priest in control of creation and able to distribute the fruits of His creation at His pleasure. Again we must bow to the authority of Christ. He is Lord not just of a table or of scripture but LORD of all. Of the days he gives us to enjoy Him here below. We also see how the action of Christ in coming to the temple brought like demand on the priests to take their stand for him or against him. So it is still. We must recognise the demand of grace to cleave to Jesus as Abiathar did to David. He is Lord

## **CHAPTER THREE**

A chapter of crowds-battalions and camp-followers-yet the focus of Peter is on the LORD who is evidently in command of on moving events. Jesus is quietly arresting other forces who would deflect or curtail the advance of *His kingdom's* way. *We become keenly aware of the LORD'S sovereignty-the driving force of history-the emergence of a four point plan of our sovereign Lord*

### **THE COMMANDING POWER OF THE EYE OF MAN-DISCERNED BY JESUS 1-6**

There can be no doubt that Peter understood the gaze of Jesus more than most-"**Jesus turned & looked on Peter**". In the synagogue was a man with what Luke describes as an ineffective right arm. We would suspect a stroke or a paralysis reaching deep into the brain. The Pharisees watched for the healing that would cut clean through their idea of Sabbath law. The Lord

scanned the congregation and said "**Lawful to do well or kill today?**" His flashing eyes were looking deep into hearts hard as iron. He was angry and grieved with their callused hearts.

## **THE COMMANDING POWER OF CHRIST 10-19**

Devils fall silent at His command and the **12 men of His desire or inclination** (Greek εθελω) (His disciples) from whom he would commission in their world wide role as apostles at His resurrection-jumped to his calling. and were empowered for their mission in the nation. These twelve He wanted to be "with Him" where He went. We do not ever read that any failed on that duty although at times a smaller number accompanied him when duties to family detained the others

## **THE COMMANDING POWER OF LEGAL CHARGE AND RIDICULE 20-29**

The friends sought to extract Jesus from an impossible workload-he could not have a meal. The scribes from Jerusalem said he had a pact with the devil and this accounted for his power over demons.

Christ set the truth out plainly.

*What happens when a kingdom divides? It falls*

*What happens when a house cracks? It falls!*

*What happens when Satan acts against his own?-He has an end!*

Then the Lord explained that He was entering the strong places of Satan to spoil his agencies.

His caution was "**Don't blaspheme the Holy Ghost**"-i.e. when I am crucified and the Spirit convinces of the truth if you persist you are doomed.

## **THE COMMANDING ACTION OF FAMILY AMBASSADORS 31**

Six battalions from Galilee Judea Jerusalem Idumea beyond Jordan Tyre & Sidon were there to see Him meet him and be healed. The Lord commissioned a boat to be rowed along the shore & obviously withdrew after the proclamation of the demons of His "Son ship" determined to call men to proclaim that message from hearts moved by obedience & love-hence the apostles

## **THE COMMANDING POWER OF CHRIST AMONG HIS DISCIPLES 34-35**

The call by the Lord's family to deflect Him from ministry was answered by a look of recognition and approval to his disciples "**Whoever does the will of my Father is brother sister mother to me**" This illuminating the



statement of Mary from those earlier days when her faith rose to say,  
"Whatever he saith to you do it"

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE PARABLE OF THE "LOGOS" the word of God

(Isaiah 6 .9-10). - You hear but don't understand; you see & don't perceive; if you understood in heart you would convert and be healed-Jesus says "be forgiven".

### THE OPEN SECRET OF THE "LOGOS" of the CROSS 11-12

Here there are 4 soils.-the cross is in view, her is the life of Jesus Sown in death.

**The wayside** --note *immediately* Satan rakes seed away

**The stony ground**--note *immediately* springing & death--no depth of understanding couldn't cope with pressure & affliction

**The thorns-while listening**.-cares riches and lusts

**The good ground**-fruit of forgiveness

**Response** -obeying is to look & listen. to grasp the content (Thirty Sixty and One hundred fold measure)

### THE PARABLE OF THE "LUCHNOS" -the lamp of testimony

"The" lamp does not come to be put under a measuring basket or a reclining chair. It is not to be hidden or to give occasion for sleep and lack of industry. Then taking up the idea of the "measuring vessel" the LORD states that His harvest is proportioned to our sowing.

### THE PARABLE OF THE "SPOROS", the seed ""rim mighty power within 26-29

An OT reference to Joel 3.13 is found in v29. At the first Pentecost (2.28) multitudes appear in the valley of decision as again in the latter days of judgement. **The Sower aims** {Greek βαλλω} **the seed at the whole earth,**

**He sleeps- rising day and night**- There is here no contradiction as "sleeping" refers to the death of Christ and the "rising" refers to the Risen LORD *keeping watch through Christian history*. **Growth is automatic** as the seed is quickened by the Holy Spirit in the heart! He puts in the sickle for the fruit "given over generations" (Literal transliteration)

### THE PARABLE OF THE "KOKKOS" --mini kernel-small but potentially great 30-34

OT reference-vv30-34 and v32 Ezekiel 17.23 & Dan4.12

Every nation comes under its shadow-Gods kingdom is like a Cedar.

The mustard seed is a type of the faith worldwide. cf faith & mustard seed  
Matthew 17:20

There is the garden.-the place where it began, Israel, Calvary, the Garden tomb  
There are the branches-all over the world great churches arise. There are the birds of the air-  
Acts 10 from all nations of men come to faith

## THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

The voyage signals Jesus power to keep us who cross over to eternity.

The great storm raged while Jesus slept-signals the cross-his atoning death

The great calm-signals the peace that was beyond a serene Galilee -peace in God's  
kingdom

The great fear-signals the awe of God that mirrors judgement-but faith in Jesus death  
deals with guilty fear.

Only one question matters-"Why have you no faith?"

## CHAPTER 5

Introduction. Each healing is instantaneous-each is effected by the command of  
Jesus and each is a classic. The first is dismissive in attitude, the second  
secretive and the third plaintive.

### THE MAN POSSESSED OF DEMONS: FAITH MUST GO STEP BY STEP (HUPAGO)

**"What is your name?"** By this the Lord discerns the Devil's presence and  
power. The devils said **"Send us to our home in the swine"**

Christ entrusted them to the swine. The swine could not live with this evil-and  
there were 2000 of them (NB a Legion is 6000) that Satan can concentrate such  
evil in one person is awesome-but look then what Christ did with the same man.  
He had clothed himself and seated himself (with the permanence of a Cathedral)  
with Christ. He was learning self-control and discretion at Jesus feet. Then there  
comes the plea-top go with Jesus-Jesus would not let him be free of his home  
responsibility-maybe even marriage. But the Lord said-"go up in union-home .cf  
10 Greek cities-Jesus legion in Decapolis

### THE WOMAN WITH THE SCOURGE

She said to herself **"If I also touch the hem of His garment I will be saved"**!  
cf 4.1 where the crowds by the sea touched Him-she missed the evening healing  
in 1.32 at the home of Peter. She had faith. Christ knew someone touched his  
robe of peace-thrown over the right shoulder or his outer garment. She was  
spotted by the all knowing redeemer and told of the 12 years-cf divine  
government and of the doctors and worsening condition. **"Go"**, said the Lord  
**"into**

**the union of peace" and be whole.** She was united with Him to serve

## **THE RABBI'S DAUGHTER 21-4 & 35-43**

The man wanted his daughter to be saved from death and to live her young spring-like life .After the delay the party came from home and said to Jairus-give up! "Don't flay the master"

The Lord introduced the truth of "Sleeping" Now this girl may well have been a great friend of Jesus-cf "Daughter". He walked in where the girl was laid and said "Little maid /girl" arise. And Jesus commanded many times that they the parents should not make it known the message of the resurrection was not to be preached by the Rabbi but was to be preached by the apostles. Peter after the resurrection made this known. The way to Christ is not religion-but as in verse 36 it is faith-command "give her to eat"-PHAGO=aorist of ESTHIO-i.e. so she tastes of Jesus and his doctrine only satisfies.

## **CHAPTER 6**

The comments in this chapter integrate sermon material from New Year 2000 and were completed 2005-02-25 on a snowy Friday in February of that year. Comments represent a stage in my ongoing appreciation of the significance of the Greek term ευθεως which was yet to develop over three further years. Here I have come to realise that it is not the **simple "haste" or speed of Jesus work** that moves Peter but **the wonderful immediacy of God in Christ Jesus acting upon human need** . I was yet to refine that as the Spirit of God led my studies so that the full-orbed **"change" or conversion of human life** to the template of the divine design is recognised as the true inspiration behind the usage.

## **THE PROPHET WITHOUT HONOUR 1-6**

In the previous chapter in the 24th instant response to human need if we link the Greek usage ευθυς to such need we read "Jesus immediately listened"-that is good news for praying people; and we further read, "The girl was immediately restored"-that is more than healing-it is the power of the resurrection at work in Jesus' word. All of Peter's stories in Mark aim at "feeding the lambs" in the young church. This one gives good encouragement to young believers.

When Peter says Jesus "went out" (Greek=εξερχομαι meaning that it **"exceeded all bounds"** that is, went on apace. This tremendous development was first noted at Nazareth. His disciples were "learners". The Greek term is μαθηται which means "counters" or spiritual "mathematicians". Counting begins with an abacus and eventually reaches the stars in astronomy-its supreme application) the disciples were among the first who counted the cost of following Jesus. They were also "followers" (The Greek is ακολουθουσιν meaning literally "without track"-so without Him they have no way-the root Greek is κελλω-"to call out the time to the rowers"-so the disciples were being led and urged by Jesus to be in concert and in step with Him as we also should be). The translation continues **"He began to teach"**-better read, (a)

**“He premiered His "teaching" in Nazareth.** He was the Prima Donna of all teachers. His words showed “how to begin to believe; to battle; to aim with firm purpose; to outride and discipline wild nature; to face the phases of life’s drama and how to praise God”-these being the main applications of the Greek term "to teach" (διδάσκω) **Many who listened** in the Nazareth synagogue seemed **“smitten as by lightning”** or **“deep emotion”** ( Greek ἐξεπλησσοντο). The earthy origins but poorly explained His wisdom. The Greek word σοφία was more than "joiner’s skill"-it is correctly called here a gift-**the gift o f God**. The hands that made the ploughs and tables had another power- the Cana miracle and the news of the healing of the Gergesene would be in mind.

The reference to Jesus as a τεκτων=Greek for “worker in wood & stone” and to Mary along with James Joseph Jude and Simon and his sisters signifies His large responsibility and earlier care. This was humanly understood His fatherland, these His family and this house one He could call his own-possibly built by his hands. His lovely parting act was healings which afforded a full working life with strength to boot for those who would otherwise have continued disabled. **That other gift –rejection**, of faith in Him, astonished our LORD

## **JESUS SENDS OUT THE TWELVE 7-12**

Jesus himself began his village teaching and sent out the apostles two-by-two. For such reason Paul called his partner Barnabas an apostle. (b) **This is another “Premier”**. This is the largest commission of all history-continuing even today as couples reach out for God abroad. They were committed to battle-so Jesus gave ἐξουσία, ὅπλα, κελυσις=Greek for “resources or arms against evil spirits and a watchword, “No grasping at staffs of office; at money purses; just an extra undergarment or change of clothing. Stay in a welcoming house (Jews had a 3-day hospitality rule) and if rejected ‘march off’ or ‘cross the water’ shaking off the dust of your feet. The meaning is “rest and tidy up yourselves as a testimony against those that refused to wash your feet” Judgement day will be harder for them than for Sodom. Their task was holistic-the whole man was lifted. They preached “renewal of mind (soul); they cast out demons (spirit); and anointed the disabled for healing and work (body).

## **JOHN IS BEHEADED 14-29**

Herod heard of the now famous Jesus and feared he was possessed or energised by the spirit of John which had come up from the dead. Others thought he was the end-times prophet Elijah or one of these. Herod, **having listened** said, “This is the very same John whom I beheaded, it’s he himself-raised from the dead”. This act of Herod Peter reminds us stemmed from his illicit marriage to his brother Philip’s wife-challenged by John. Herod’s inner wrath would have enabled the deed but he feared John’s just & holy life. He watched him closely, listened to him, made many offerings/was inspired to action, and was well disposed & pleased to hear him. But at his annual dinner for

the great ones, tribunes and Galilean leaders Herodias' daughter danced. In a weak moment he offered anything to half the kingdom and was bound by oath to behead John. Peter shows us the express but terrible ministry of the girl dancer in his 26<sup>th</sup> εὐθεὺς (v25) and his rueful ministry 27th εὐθεὺς (v27) to the banqueting crowd and sent a Roman HQ executioner to do the fell deed. [The significance of the Greek term εὐθεὺς is not just "expedition" but an act that changes or revolutionises everything. So these two actions brought terrible change to Israel at this time counter to the quiet but telling change that Jesus was effecting.]The head was publicly presented and became the terrible trophy of Herodias. Meantime John's disciples took & entombed his fallen corpse. He "deeply grieved" v26 but did not repent-indeed he went on to betray the Christ.

## JESUS FEEDS THE FIVE THOUSAND 30-44

The apostles return and report things done and taught. Jesus responded, "Come apart to a desert place and rest a little while". As in Nazareth, as in the commission, so here he considers our frame in great love! Many people were coming to talk with them and leading them by degrees under their burdens so they had no opportunity to eat. They left by boat and watched the crowds following. Many recognised where they headed and ran on foot from the cities and got there first. Jesus landed and looked compassionately on the shepherd-less crowd. (c)"**He premiered" his mixed multitude teaching that day.** He taught all day till late. The disciples reminded him of the time and asked that the people go to the villages for food. Jesus said, "You feed them" They said, "two hundred day's wages would not do it". Jesus said, "How many loaves have you got?" They knew (being hungry) and said, "Five and two fish". He commanded that they sit group by group (Greek-συμποσιον-convivial parties often marked by song) on the green grass-a sign of spring.

This became one vast happy grass area of friendly groups of 100s and 50s-lets say 50 groups. After the blessing

"Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who createst ...."The Lord broke the loaves and the apostles distributed whilst he carried the fish and broke them -visiting and chatting with each of the 50+groups. At 2 minutes per group that would take one and three quarter hours. Clearly the disciples would converse a lot -and enjoy it a lot too.

They had 12 fish baskets full of broken pieces and also fish left over. About 5000 were fed. And there was more in Jesus for the whole nation-hence the 12 baskets over.

## JESUS WALKS ON THE WATER

Thereupon Jesus compelled the disciples by argument εὐθεὺς No 26 to head for home-not His home-theirs-always putting others first and kindly but firmly dismissed the crowd. The disciples were to head for Bethsaida. Jesus went up a mountain to pray. The boat was mid-lake. He watched (aorist participle) as the disciples had been straining to row against the wind-so he was "watching" and "praying". In the fourth watch-3am Jesus intervened. Nine hours -he could see them in the moonlight. The task was becoming too much even for brawny men-and wives were anxious. He came

walking on the water. They were terrified at his approach and probably shouting and rowing in the opposite direction. He immediately ministered to their fear εὐθεὺς No.27, “Be of good cheer I AM (that is a statement calling for courage and a classic if unrecognised statement of His deity). He came up to them in the boat and the wind died as if killed or chopped off., they were tremendously ecstatic and wondered. They came to Gennesaret-not Bethsaida-and anchored. It was early but once recognised the people from the surrounding countryside ran carrying their sick on litters to where they knew he was. And in village city or field even into the markets where they laid sick that they might touch the hem of his garment-and as many as touched were healed. The poor diseased and feeble lived again. The area near Chorazin was “exalted to heaven.” This area of Gennesaret I stammer to name aright. Could it be “garden of sawing”-where wood was available?

## CHAPTER 7

### TOUCHING MEN AND TOUCHING GOD

From the sublime to the ridiculous- in two events we watch the saving touch of the master and its sequel the touch of the leper which ritually disqualified Jesus from society. Jesus treats ritual washing as hypocrisy, adds a critique of the CORBAN law and teaches about the true root of sin/stain. Two healings follow-one where the Syro-Phoenician touches & the other where He touches the deaf mute man

### CORRUPTION IS FROM WITHIN

Pharisees gathered **συναγονται** to Jesus-maybe as many as a dozen to make a religious quorum. Scribes with precise bible knowledge were there too. They had travelled over 150 kilometres. They found the disciples in breach of a Jewish tradition on hand washing before eating. They imputed blame **μεμφομαι**-censure-even branded Jesus.

Peter explains three practices: no eating without arm washing; eating after shopping requires a full wash **Βαπτίζω**; and the washing of pottery ironware for boiling copperware for cooking and of couches where they sit to eat. In v2 the hands are termed **κοινος** -a word used for “consulting another god”/“making common purpose with others”/ “having sexual relationships” Origen following ΚΛΞΘΠ manuscripts has **πυγμη** “washing from elbow to knuckle”21.5 inches  
The Lord quotes Isaiah 29.13 commenting “Isaiah prophesied beautifully concerning you play actors, as it is written, “ This people honour me with the rims of their jars/lips **χείλοι**, but their heart has gone far from me, they reverence me in vain, teaching human commands as rehearsed instruction (oral doctrine). For leaving the command you hold as sovereign the traditions of men –the baptism of boiling pots and clay cups”(which may relate to zealous believers and vessels for Christ to use) The phrase underlined is in KXΠ manuscripts

“And”, said the lord, “you continue to set aside the command of God beautifully to establish your tradition-for Moses said, ‘Honour your father & mother ‘ and ‘he who speaks against them let him die the death’ but you say, ‘If a man say to his father ‘it is

a case of me being dedicated to the temple' that is to say, 'a gift to God' i.e. "whatever (otherwise) might have been your benefit from me' After that you allow him to do nothing for his father or mother

Dissolving the sovereignty **ακυρουντες** of God's word by the tradition you are developing **παραδιδωμι**-many things nearly equal to this you are currently creating. Jesus called the entire crowd to him and said, "Hear me all of you and understand there is nothing outside of a man which marches into him that can make him unclean but those things which march out of him those continually make him unclean. If anyone has hearing ears let him hear"

When he entered the house his disciples enquired of the parable. He said, "So you also are unwise" (Peter was to prove so later at Antioch after the time of the first council) Do you not understand that anything outside marching in cannot soil since it does not march into the heart-but the stomach-and marches out again in the draught and evacuation cleanses the whole body.

### THIRTEEN BATTALIONS OF SIN 20-23

Evil reasoning/balancing of accounts(re communication and finance; adulteries/dalliances; prostitution/promiscuous relations-in earlier times elated to "bought" slaves to; murders bloodshed; fraud (as Judas practiced); overbearing temper/grasping for self;

Evil that hurts/cowardice; treachery/deception of righteous ones; rudeness/insolence (as often used of women); a wicked eye;

Speaking against God/ruining a good name/invoking evil; arrogance/contempt; thoughtlessness re the soul/lack of practical help

### THE SYRO-PHEONICIAN WOMAN .THE FIRST TRADING PEOPLE SLAVERS KIDNAPPERS 24-30

Jesus arose and went to the frontiers of Tyre & Sidon. ("cheese-market" and "pomegranates"-Numb13.23&27)

The Lord had gone to a point right between these cities-where their borders met. He entered the house **οικια** "rented" or "originating in a family". He wanted no-one to know-and it was not able to be kept secret/slip attention/be unnoticed. For a woman whose daughter had an unclean spirit came and fell at His feet in worship. The woman was a Greek, born in Syro-Pheonician. She asked Jesus to cast out the demon from her daughter. Jesus said, **"The children must first be fed** (Greek **χορταζω** applicable to filling with the Spirit) **It is not nice to take the children's' bread and throw it to the pets** (Greek **κυναριοις** )-speaking of those who like the woman at His feet were in God's affections.

She replied, "Yes Lord -for the **pets** also eat under the **table τραπεζα** meal table (hinting "privately") from the morsels of the children. He spoke classically to her, "Through this word go up in union"-i.e. you are one with us. The devil left her daughter and she went away to her home, found the devil had gone and her daughter

had thrown herself on the couch-a richly embroidered recliner often with ivory legs. It is hard to resist that Christ's omniscience encompassed her pets & furniture too

## **THE HEALING OF THE DEAF AND MUTE MAN 31-37**

And He left once more the borders of Tyre & Sidon, going to the Sea of Galilee on the high road that runs between the borders of Decapolis. They are carrying to Him a man who was inarticulate (its 2<sup>nd</sup> meaning is "deaf" or "blind") He had "toil" or "pain" in making even a whispered sound **μογεω-λαλια**. Jesus was called to where the man was (this happens often-1.40;5.10;5.12;5.23;6.56;7.32;8.22-that He might touch him. Taking him away from the crowd privately he put his fingers into his ears, spat and touched his tongue and looked to heaven and groaned

**στεναζω** "sighing deeply or frequently" and said to him "Ephphatha"-*"be thoroughly opened"* Here we have the 24<sup>th</sup> **"IMMEDIATELY"** of the gospel-immediately his ears were opened and the string of his tongue loosed and he spoke in the regular manner. He commanded them to make no heroics of it to anyone. However strenuously He commanded them they did herald it the more. They were exceedingly overtaken by desire -saying, "He has done everything beautifully". He has made the deaf hear and the dumb to speak or "to sing" (**Greek λαλεω**)

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

The underlying theme is the cross. Christ shows compassion for those from afar-His comprehension of the antipathy of Sadducee & Pharisee is evident. His far-reaching plan for a "confessing" community of faith that would spread over the world is unveiled.

### **THE NEED FOR COMPASSION (cf. Multitudes) 1-11**

We read here "Jesus had compassion on the multitude". The word used speaks of "parts of the sacrifice especially sacred". The Lord's wish was deeper than just to feed a hungry crowd. He wanted fishermen to seek the lost of the world and in His great love He was willing that His body is broken that they might be His forever who would follow "from afar"v3

The fact of remainders in these miracles is significant. The DEATH of Christ is followed by His resurrection and that message must be later carried round the world in the "wicker baskets" (Greek σπυριδας) v8-which besides describing a bread basket describes the travelling man's *vide-mecum* or "hold-all."

### **THE NEED FOR COMMUNION (GROANING) 12-21**

There is in Sophocles a similar use of the Greek word **αναστεναζω**-*"to complain to a Father"* or *"to express longings upwards"*. This is most instructive. This David did 2 "Why do the heathen rage?" 3 Lord how are troublers increased! 6 My soul is vexed-how long until I am delivered?" 7 Save me lest he tear my soul! 10 Why stand afar off, O Lord in my troubles? 13 "How long will you forget me O Lord?"  
PRINCIPLE=Ps 5.3 "I will direct my prayer to thee & look up ". *This Dalmanutha*



*incident shows spiritual adultery of the religious parties* The Lord directs attention to the "remainder" in the previous miracle. It is hardness that does not understand that Calvary and the resurrection is the only answer. The Jews sought a Sign-Talmud Sabbat "when King Messiah comes the Great War between Gog & Magog begins signs from heaven appear we are not to expect Him till a rainbow has spanned the world & filled it with light" *Sohar Genesis*. They thought of the "daughter or echo" of "the voice of God".cf 9.8 The true QOL ELOHENU (Hebrew)

## **THE NEED FOR CONVERSION** The blind man **22-26**

The two stage healing shows that Christ in spitting into the eyes of the man shows a spurned relationship-or lacking faith-and this results in a healing that shows men arguing-as "trees in dispute "-cf. Jotham's parable.(cfv17) and the dispute among the disciples with antagonistic and dogmatic argument. Christ's hands and his work on Calvary alone can cause the private relationship to God that brings revelation clear as the Sun from heaven-only grace can restore man to his true shape and obedient relationship to the Father through the Son.

## **THE NEED FOR CONFESSION** Caesarea- Philippi **27-38**

"Thou art the Christ". Then the powerful statement "The Son of man must be killed and rise on the third day". Peter - Jesus spoke with such free flow as was echoed in the Jordan running nearby. The rebuke (Greek επιτιμω) raises the value of the matter-"there is higher!" He (Peter) opposed. Jesus called the crowds because discipleship was to be opened to faith world-wide on these heads:-

1. A man must utterly deny Himself -say "No" to sin
2. And freely lift his cross -take the way of costly service
3. Follow me- walk with God in Christ like demeanour

*This is the fundamental principle of the gospel.* What will a man exchange for his soul-this is *the ultimate goal*. Who is ashamed of *me-this is sin & guilt*. When the Son comes *this is judgement* Many stand here-this is Pentecost & *the spreading flame*

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **THE TRANSFIGURATION 1-10**

It happened after 6 days.(cf8.31). There was an appearance of Moses & Elijah-as representatives of the law & prophets -there was the Shekinah-and the voice of God and the true deity of Christ shining in His lovely humanity. This was not just "beauty"(καλος)it was that indeed-and it brought very deep reverence with it-and it declared the Exodus that bespoke the lamb of God-Luke9.31. Above all there was the mighty word-"This is my beloved Son-hear him". The divinely planned atonement was the issue-and it was taking the very highest profile. Here the rebuttal of Peter and v7 shows the tremendous fear that took hold.

## **THE QUESTION SCRIBES HAD SETTLED 11-13**

The scribes said that Elijah would come before Messiah. Jesus spoke agreeably-Elijah's return would mark the restoration as in Malachi-when men would give thought to their children & children to the fathers. But Jesus spoke again of His destiny-and to the second of -1 impressions of the c1"Oss.1 9. 12)-cf 9.31&10.33.John in the prophetic guise of the desert Elijah was the herald of His death.

They descended hastily from the mount-a man "answered" -it's about my son-he is being cast into fire & waters it is serious. Have compassion. This means offer your bowels of affection-it speaks of the organs of the offering which represent compassion. Christ asks faith.

## **MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL & A NEW TYPE OF PRAYING 14-29**

The dumb boy presented a task too great for the disciples at this stage. Fasting, absolute faith and pleading with God were vital.

The first requirement is the sort of praying that gives everything. Entreaty strong crying and tears, which has a desert relationship with the Father which was special to Jesus.

The six days before the transfiguration were so used no doubt by our Lord in preparation for something very great. Prayer changes and transforms -that is the message His was a ministry of humiliation and he was ever ready. So must we be-compassion & humility. The size of the challenge we face is daunting and requires a walk with God.

## **MINISTRY OF THE CROSS & THE SECRET JOURNEY 30-32**

Why did Jesus take such a trip, because he wanted the second time since the mount to highlight the Cross as the centre of ministry? Let's have nobody at all with us. Every one of you He was saying must get this right. It is the cross and nothing else I am about. I have come to die for sinners. This is the message-the transforming message

## **MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL & CHILD IN THE MIDST 33-37**

The disciples had been arguing about poll position as if among the disciples there was a hierarchy. The lord took a child and placed it among them. The child ran to Him and he lifted it up in His arms. They were not gathering the young-they had no magnetism-what was wrong? They were arguing as to who was the greatest. The transfigured life must be magnetic and must be natural and open and lowly enough to reach to a child-not exclusive and self-regarding

## **MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL & A NEW ATTITUDE 28-29**

The gospel makes vast demands. The priority is prayer -the priority is heralding the kingdom- the priority the glory of His name. Here is a strange phenomenon-they could

not perform a miracle-now a man turns up using Jesus name and is blessed. We must live for others-to include true believers-and cup of water people who seem so simple in kindness but whose hearts are right with God

## **MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL& A NEW FLAVOUR 49-50**

Salt was used with all ancient covenants. The one who in Lord's supper painting who knocked over the salt was Judas. There is a need for salt. The world knows salt where it sees it. It is holiness-the flavour of all Gods covenants is holiness. That holiness that yields all our members to God-and they are cut off from any hindering service. There is the fact that all will eventually face the judgement of fire. There is nothing that transforms like a holy life.

*NB If we have such an exercise of heart as to be praying and preaching and being careful in fellowship, also to be aware that others are effective-maybe far more so praise God than I am! And that God wants a Holy people-we shall be the transformed people God seeks*

## **CHAPTER TEN**

Here we have the living centre of Ministry-"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to Minister and give His life a ransom for many. There are 5 sorts of Humiliation in the chapter. Each is instructive and casts essential light on Christ's servant-hood.

### **THE HUMILIATION OF DIVORCE**

Here we join the Lord on Gentile territory beyond Jordan. The Pharisees who "compass sea and land" are there with a question. "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" Now Herod had taken his Brother Philip's wife-and this divorce had drawn attention to the topic. Now divorce is a very humbling and sad experience. It undermines self-worth and happiness and financial stability and children's' security. Jesus said God never intended it. (vv8-9).He did show that Moses in Deut. 24:1-3) afforded a bill because of "hardness of heart" and this allowed a woman a new future. Jesus came to secure the future of mankind-to remedy matters of hardness. To buy & keep His bride!!!

### **THE HUMILIATION OF CHILDREN**

They brought children to Jesus. Why? Well back in Ch9 we read one child was held by Jesus and this massively popular Rabbi really excited youth. They all wanted to be With Him. But the disciples censured -the idea is to say -His time is too valuable to be bothered.

The Lord rebuked the apostles and then he spoke warmly of "teachable children"

and allowed them in and as in 9.36 took them up in His arms and then gave each His words of blessing. The simplicity and obedience of faith that a child represents is of first importance in entering the kingdom

## THE HUMILIATION OF THE RICH

An enthusiast came running. He was wealthy-and he addressed Jesus **"Good master" said he "What good thing shall I do to get into the Kingdom?"** Jesus set forth the man-ward section of Moses' law. "OK I'm in" he said. Jesus responded-one other thing-there's the God-ward side- **"Leave all-take up the cross -follow me"**.

The reference to the cross here shows the equivalent position of Christ-"He who was rich yet for our sakes became poor". The story of the camel and the needle eye gate was given and then Peter wanted to know what reward he and others could expect from leaving fishing. Jesus said "Fellowship-my world-wide family and persecutions and afterward Eternal Life". Christ also testified **"Many that are first will be last"**

## THE HUMILIATION OF JAMES & JOHN

Once more Jesus explains to the fearful disciples the cross and the resurrection and its imminence. Convinced that the kingdom would appear almost instantaneously after Jesus' resurrection, James and John request **that they should be one on the right and one on the left in His kingdom**. Jesus redirects to His baptism and His cup and they say they are ready. The 10 were displeased with this currying of favour and the Lord settled that dispute with His words **"Whoever will be greatest should be servant of all"** -referring for a third time to His death under the phrase **"Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to give His life a ransom for many"**.

## THE HUMILIATION OF BARTIMAEUS.

Cries of **"Jesus thou son of David have mercy on me"** rang out at Jericho. Here the disciples do well-**"Be of good comfort He calls for you"**. This man had nothing to lose but an old garment that he used for gifts given-and that he threw away **"What wilt thou?"** Here was a sore rebuke to the disciples. **"Lord that I might receive my sight"** "Go thy way" said Jesus. He rather chose to "Follow Jesus in the way" This man had a patronymic- Timaeus was his father-the honourable one. He is a picture of mankind-in the place of "the curse"-Jericho-fallen from our original estate-begging-needing Jesus. Had the Ministry of Christ not been on offer there were no hope for Marriage-for Children-of Economy and Church, for mankind through the Family of God-no Kingdom to come-no mighty health effects & most important of all

no glorious Salvation from Sin. 'He who will not bear a cross can't wear a crown'

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

What we call the triumphal entry often begins & ends with Palm Sunday enthusiasm. However we are looking at the nature of holiness. Each day the Lord penetrates to the temple area. Each day he adds one more lesson

### DAY ONE -THE CROSS-THE LORD'S DESIRE FOR MERCY

The doctrine we are to learn on this first great day is found in Psalm 118. The best known refrain from it is "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

1. The obedient colt was ready-its tell tale position "where two ways meet
2. The people greeted a hero

The forerunners and crowds seemed ready for "**Salvation**".

There's something uncanny about it What is it? Are they ready? Let's look closer.

Jesus comes along through the eastern gate and into the city. What does He do?

v11 **He looks around upon everything.** The gaze of Christ was more than curiosity it was desire (Greek περιβλεπω). What did he desire?

Let's take ourselves back to Psalm 118.

There are the gates-speaking of one beautiful way of righteousness-there is the capstone speaking of the one the nation didn't recognise-and there Christ goes on to the horns "Up to the horns of the altar" 1Kings 2.28 There old Joab who killed two good men sought mercy. At its equivalent the cross those whose sins put to death a good man-nay the good Son of God-find mercy (cf. Amasa & Abner)

### DAY TWO -THE CHURCH-CHRIST'S APPETITE FOR SOULS

Our whole gaze is taken by the Lord's early morning act -**being hungry-pining or craving for early fruit from Israel-he finds none** cf. Fig tree Song 2.14 speaking of the Church. Again in the temple a veritable agora- the money men and the pigeon salespersons. He began to teach and his passages were Isa56 (7) and Jeremiah 7(11).

The teachers of the law were there but his prophetic message captivated the hearer. Hearers had a passion for what He was saying

The old prophet spoke about God rising early-and how the voice of mirth and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride would be cut off from Jerusalem.

Christ would be crucified-Israel would not seal her union and the nation & place would be destroyed but Isaiah 56.7 prophesied:-

- a. The eunuch will take hold of the covenant-cf. Ethiopian
- b. The sons of the stranger will join themselves to the Lord & take hold of the

covenant

c. **Mine house will be a house of prayer for all nations-I will gather daily (till 70 AD)**

The evening of that gospel day would herald a great rapture-march out of the city  
v19

## **DAY THREE-THE MOUNTAIN IN THE SEA-THE WRATH OF THE LAMB**

Here the commentators struggle. Another rabbinic symbolic mountain says **Cole** The mountain of the Lords kingdom will be world-wide in the time of Messiah's return .Mean -time as **Matthew .Henry** has it the mountain of our guilt shall be cast into the depths.

To believe that this gospel and kingdom will rule the world one day is not vain talk. The need is to pray-to vow your life to God-and to live by the truth of forgiveness-forgiving others Halcyon days are ahead-but beyond the Anti-Christ is the Christ whose rule will be for a millennium

And so we come to the heart of this truth-as the High priests and teachers and elders confront Jesus. He asks **from whence Johns baptism?**

**"We don't know"**. Why upset the old economy? On what Authority? Jesus had one reply-**Johns baptism & message about the Lamb. They knew he was asking why they did not believe.** One day the world which now defers an answer must decide man by man or each will face what these priests and teachers would face- the  
"wrath of the lamb"

## **CHAPTER TWELVE THE VINEYARD PARABLE 1-11**

Christ here states his right of inheritance –with the effective text from Psalm118.10-11 “this is the stone which the builders rejected”. This vineyard has a fence-the law and a tower-prophecy a winepress-a place for Gods wrath. That latter detail relates specifically to the ultimate act –sequel to the beating and wounding of servants-namely the death of the Son. So are the High priests and elders advised directly of their impending shame. The glory of the cross is at the heart of the vineyard. Its sacrificial blood is Christ's and the Father is the one who cuts off the unfruitful branches

## **THE LEGEND OF THE COIN 12-17**

This time Pharisees (purists)-and Herodians (politicians) who backed Herod-*the man whose 46 year scheme to build the house of God was materially unfinished and spiritually disastrous -as it was cropped with business fraud and licence.* A lawyer sought to harvest Christ like a fish of the sea. Some fish! This was the maker of sea

and sky. **“You are truth itself”** snapped the purists- **“you teach “up to the height” of the way of truth-**ie the highest teaching. The challenge of Christ this time came by a reference to Deuteronomy 6.16-when the people said “Is the lord among us or not”? Christ followed this with a second challenge-to give glory worship and obedience to God-they only yielded **“wonder”** v17

## **THE WOMAN WITH SEVEN HUSBANDS IN ETERNITY 18-27**

Christ set at rest all philosophy as to the eternal state when He said “we shall be like the angels” He spoke of the definitive nature of “resurrection” referring to Exodus 3 vv 2, 6, 15-16. The statement “I am the God of Abraham Isaac & Jacob” has the significance simply that God is the God of those who are in a “new springtime” of life- and indeed if the text be pursued to its ground as one of the earliest doctrines Moses learned from the Lord’s lips it means “God is the God of “ardens sed virens” -life despite death”; God is God of eternal being-and the one whom to see in His glory means death. People must live the “spring-like life-the newborn life”-not just be biological items. Christ was emphatic about mans relationship to God as prior and above the human and sexual. The “power “of God is revealed in new birth not in human relationships and birth in its greatness. “Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit”-and “which were born not of the flesh, or of the will of man but of God” are the texts that show the quest for continuance of life is answered by faith in Christ –our kinsman and not in Levirate marriage

## **THE QUERY ON THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT-WHOLENESS AND LOVE-28-34 Dt6 4-5 & Lev19.18**

The word “whole” in the Greek is derived from the Ionic OULOS “unhurt, actual, and continuous”. In the Hebrew it is CALIL-used of the offering of a “broken spirit”- which the Lord will not despise. The “burnt-offering” Exodus 29.42 was to be “continual” –as in Ezra 3.4. The Lord emphasised that love should be daily fresh towards God and one’s neighbour. The query of the single scribe was carefully and kindly dealt with. He had come close to understanding the commitment of Psalm 51- by comparing the offerings with the heart-both the Lord and He were alluding to David’s analysis. The commendatory word NOUVECHOS means “direction of mind and intention”. So this man came with intent to be rid of the tyranny of sin and this left little option but submission to the Kingdom or rule of God in Christ-and so Jesus goes directly to David whose writings are in mind and puts His unerring case here equally beautifully (cfv28) as that on RESURRECTION. The word used at the end of this explanation is “sweet”-it was “doctrine taught with absolute relish-nothing could be added to make it more palatable.

## **THE LORD’S QUERY -WHO WAS IN CONTROL OF DAVID’S LIFE? 35-37**

This great question out of Psalm 110 brings home the truth of commitment to Jesus as King. The Lord drives the scribe to the virgin birth. How is the “Lord almighty” the “son” of David besides being called “His Lord”? The inescapable answer is that THE LORD must come to earth as man in the line of David and have a true claim to be King of kings beside and deserve the worship of David. This is the reply to the query in v29 and it extends because the scribe had come to see the deep need to “stand committed daily” to the Lord. He could not of course foresee as yet the “humiliation of the cross and the ascension to the right hand” that were here in the mind of Christ-but as Christ indicated the Holy Spirit revealed who Christ was to David and here and now this scribe was under the very same conviction-v35. This tremendous debate which Mark registers has probably never been rummaged sufficiently. It so impressed the early followers of Christ that 25 references to this great Psalm are made in the NT and of these a dozen are used by the writer to the Hebrews-so convincing is this area of scripture and its exposition

## **THE TEST OF TRUE RELIGION 38-44**

Here we have the lord standing over against the treasury. This was a set of 13 trumpets of metal construction. Moneys gifted in the court of the women where they stood would resonate. Jesus “sat” over against or in front of these receptacles. The aorist usage here suggests he has never ceased to sit not to criticise-but to advise and to commend giving. The deeper problem the Lord had studied during his whole ministry was “building the house of God”. In 2Kings 12.9 under Jehoash, Jehoiada the priest had to make a treasury because the priests were siphoning off the gifts of the people for themselves. In those days 23 years elapsed and the house was not refurbished under Jehoash. Now as reported by John it had been 46 years in process of completion-but still –owing to the same process of self-aggrandisement on the priestly part it ran way beyond any normal building schedule. This is a very special sign of malaise and a reason for the second “clearing of traders” and the anger of the Lord. However-one beautiful shaft of light shines from this incident. A little lady gave 1/60<sup>th</sup> of a day's wages-an infinitesimal amount-built on the idea of a DENARIUS wage. But let us assume that this is a widow's pension-about £70 and that it is one sixtieth of £10 –just over 16 p in our currency. It would be less than the cost of a cheap paper or postage stamp-but it was all the lady had. Here is the commitment the Lord respects. Here is the heroine of the “building scheme”-who can be an example to all. Here is the most touching case ever put for Christian liberality. Away with walking in stoles while gifting is negligible-away with the markets and profiting from stalls (which the priests did)-away with sitting in the place of teachers when they have not learned-away with dinners in their honour that live in shame-away with long vows of commitment to God. In this little lady's life was the music of true loyalty to God-she had the care of Christ

## **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

The return of Christ excites interest & the very idea draws criticism. When the 4 fishermen were leaving the temple they stressed the permanent look. “See these great



stones!" they said. Suleiman set a few up to modern view although the Tyropoean skirting wall left by Titus & the Fortress alone remains. This establishes the words of Christ Mark 13.1. So the question-"When will the walls come down and what is the sign of the kingdoms permanence?"

### **THE BEGINNING OF TRAVAIL 5-8 Don't be frightened**

The messianic age would be associated with painful world changes. The Lord forecast that some who professed to follow Him would be deceived. He predicted false cults who would in the latter day be led by men claiming to be messiah; He said that there would be many wars-don't be frightened-they don't bring the end-don't (θροεω) be frightened-this is not How the end comes-just part of the process. Gentile nations shall rise against others & hereditary monarchs too. Earthquakes in certain flaw lines (Greek topoi) and famines and civil uprisings. The turmoil of history

### **THE EVANGELISATION OF THE EARTH 9-11 Endure in the purpose**

First persecution would be Jewish -then Gentile. Believers were to be utterly dependent on the Holy Spirit. The final phase of persecution will be terrible families will divide over Christ-and all nations will hate the Christians. Amid all this history and change the NAME OF CHRIST & SALVATION are rocklike & sure! The Holy Spirit's continuance till he be taken away-hints the church's rapture

### **THE ABOMINATION THAT DESOLATES 14-23 Daniel 9 26-27**

There are verses in Daniel 9.27, 11.31, 12.1 & 11 which point to a period of "common use of the temple area-a time of neglect-and then the gift of this object or house of worship-in the vein of the old Shagatz or Idol Milcom (1 Kings 11.5). This brings silence to the Holy Place where the praises of Jehovah used to ring out. This desert silence and thing that is abhorrent in God's nose (meaning of abomination) Once in Roman times the Christians fled Jerusalem to Jamnia. Again in this great tribulation (v19) unprecedented-un-repeated Jews would flee. God would shorten the days by grace (v20). Christ turns the later disciples from falsehood to the WORD. v.23 there would be a threat to humanity in the last days-if God did not intervene to shorten days. Mothers especially vulnerable v17

### **THE NEXT GREAT GEO-PHYSICAL UPHEAVAL 24-27**

God has a "but" in v 24 -it goes "with" the tribulation. **The sun will be darkened, the moon as blood, the stars fall**-Isa 13.10, 34.4, Joe 12.10 & 31 and 3 .15 (nations gather at Armageddon) **The heavens shall shunt about like a ship at anchor.** Christ will come in glory and power at that time-no more darkness-all cleared for the amazing sight of the ages. **"They will see**-i.e. a future generation this will be

accompanied by the gathering of all the Jews who will have spread worldwide again with the gospel.

### **THE FIG TREE .28-37 Unfulfilled Prophecy**

The delicate branch or democracy of the Jewish state puts forth its branches and leaves. It has councils worldwide and is ready to bear fruit. **The generation that sees the fig fruit-in the 60s would not pass away till the whole purpose is accomplished.** Christ tells the parable of the man who goes away from home and leaves servants and the doorkeeper.. Here "day by day" watching even "sleepless night" watching is recommended. The doorman is the secret of this parable-it is everyman. The return of Christ is presented as at the doors. All of this warns us to watch for we are to be caught up and taken away 1 Thess4.17 9 (Greek ἀρπαγη) -in the day of the "thief" Matt24.43-Lk 12.39-1 Thess4.

## **CHAPTER FOURTEEN**

They began to spit on Jesus-they covered His face and smote him and said to Him-prophecy and the servants smote Him with rods 14.65

### **WITH THE GOSPEL GOES BROKENNESS-PROPHECY NO.1 1-10**

The little lady in Simon's house anointed the Saviour. It was from a broken alabaster jar she anointed His head. 300denarii.Before the invention of writing remembered poetry conveyed facts. The Greeks called the goddess of poetry MEMNOSUNE-this is the very word used of this woman. Every poet leaned on memory-every gospel message demands the same fragrant yielding of everything to Christ-2000yrs on II Here is a call to give everything to Jesus! This tells us the Lord would rise

### **THE ONE WHO DIPS IN THE BOWL WILL BETRAY ME-PROPHECY NO.2 11-21**

The prophecy is as ancient as Psalm 41.9. In Mk14.18 we have a most solemn statement re-Judas-"Better had he not been born".

There is a terrible solemnity about hypocrisy re-Christ. This man embraced and kissed the Lord over & over but his love was fickle. David's Lord gave the word to King David 1000 years before and here it took place. Mighty and solemn word. This tells us Jesus loves every sinner

### **I WILL NOT EAT OF THIS FRUIT OF THE VINE TILL GOD'S KINGDOM PROPHECY NO.3. 22-26**

Christ appeared over 40 days and ate with them-yes in Luke24.43 Jesus ate with them. He ate honey-no record of wine since then. He promised to drink wine in the future. So deeply he desired the conversion of the Jew and of the whole world. What will the ingrafting of them be-life from the dead! This great prophecy tells us the Jews will be saved

### **BEFORE THE ROOSTER CROWS TWICE YOU WILL DENY ME THRICE PROPHECY NO.4 .27-31 & 66-72**

This is written about a rooster. Now it is not so much about a rooster but about how the Lord Jesus knows the human heart, indeed the heart of a bird and beyond that the heart of time itself-and the web of events that would take place in the early morning. Well might Peter himself later say "Lord you know all things-you know I love you". He learned from the rooster.

We must learn about our fickle hearts and we must shed some tears if we are to get anywhere near Jesus-conversion-"when you are converted!" said the Lord to Peter. This tells us Jesus knows about every conversion-He foreknows. Study the self-anathematising v71 and deep sorrow of Peter v72

### **THE SCRIPTURE MUST BE FULFILLED Zech13.7 "STRIKE THE SHEPHERD" PROPHECY NO.5 27&48**

Strike the Shepherd and the flock will be scattered-POTZ. This spoke about the world-wide spread of the gospel through the apostles-it was something then begun-but was precursor to a far greater dispersion. Here we are at Gethsemane-where grapes were pressed-and never was there such pressure as the Lord endured. The request that the hour "**pass from Him**" is a request not for sleep but for the forgetting of it all. That it would go away unheeded again by the Father was not granted-for an angel came & ministered!

The warrior who was fellow to the Father was "at one" with the Father and that was mutual. The Gethsemane cup was bitter-it was also about the sinning and suffering church. He knows our sorrows

### **YOU WILL SEE THE SON OF A MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MIGHTY ONE & COMING IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN PROPHECY NO.6 53-65**

Oh yes! There is a judgment to come. The unrepentant of earlier times see the right hand & see the Son coming with the clouds of heaven. The rapture for them is "seen" (Greek *opao*) as Blind Homer saw

## **MARK FIFTEEN -THE CHALLENGE OF THE KING**

This chapter presents us with the effect of the death of Christ on five men. To which of them can you relate best?

### **PONTIUS PILATE 1-5 with 16-20**

Are you the king of the Jews? Asked Pilate. Jesus said "You calculate". Then the accusations flowed -but the Lord answered nothing. There was not even under the 39 stripes a way to get a guilty verdict. The vilification of the king's game-the spitting. Not even a Roman lawyer could proceed justly. He needed the lynch mob to solve his dilemma The world stood against Christ-it always does-will you? Will you do a Pilate publicly and really reject Him but privately admire & distance yourself consoling yourself that it doesn't matter-remember Pilate's wife

### **BARABBAS 6-15**

He was an insurrectionist. He was a chained man-v7 he had committed murder His name meant "son of a father". Some dad -maybe now long dead brought this boy into the world. The scholar Origen on Matthew 27 tells us that he was actually called Jesus Son of the Father.

The crowd had a faction who had him for its national hero. How awful. The fickle crowd is easily bought. There is no other son of God than Jesus. He came to reconcile not stir a rebellion. Christ atoned-it saved Barabbas-but did he go on to despise the Christ who died in his guilty room & stead. One of the thieves or malefactors Luke 23.32 did-one did not. What of you?

### **SIMON THE CYRENIAN 21-22 with the "Game of Kings" 16-20**

We know he was coming in from the country-probably carrying produce to market. We know he had two sons. He was compelled to bear Christ's cross Samuel Rutherford whom John studied in detail-a great Scots preacher and man of the covenant spoke of "Christ's light cross" which we carry after Jesus Simon became from that day a "cross-bearer". His sons Alexander & Rufus are mentioned here In Romans 16 Rufus is recorded as living in Rome with his worthy mother. She is mentioned as having helped Paul-(Rom16) maybe in Antioch. This means that Simon became head of a truly Christian African family. The soldiers saluted Jesus-"clinging fondly to him" with embraces-mocking-not so Simon -which are you-playacting Christianity or taking up the cross

### **THE CENTURION 33-41**

In v32 Jesus, Israel's King was treated to reviling "**Let the King of Israel come down from the cross**". The by-passers reviled Him, the Chief Priests reviled Him, and the Thieves reviled Him. Someone (v36) **ran with a sponge** and an anodyne; this nameless person fulfilling Ps69.21 offering vinegar & myrrh to help him over the last suffering.

All through this one stood by-a centurion. He was facing Jesus. He saw the immense feat of discipline. He heard the cries- **Today... Father forgive...Son behold Eloi...I thirst...it is finished...into thy hands**. "This IS" said he "the Son of God." Lk23.47 (ἦν..ὄντωζ..A "was and is" usage similar to "he was and is to come") He broke his silence- "**He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life**".

Luke "**Continuing to exist this man was righteous in this life**". (This is not good grammar but it is good thinking on the part of the centurion) God showed the centurion the life after death-and he accepted Jesus as Gods Son-what of you?

## JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA 42-47

A prominent council member-friend of Nicodemus of John 3 fame-the duo did not consent to the counsel of the Sanhedrin. He waited on the Kingdom of God. He courageously asked for the body. He fulfilled Isa53.9 EUSCHEMOS (Greek)-IN Determination=dignified gracious TOLMEO (Greek )-HE DARED-to go in one act to Pilate

AITEO (Greek)-he asked for himself-the body of Christ and obtained one of Pilate's rare favours. This man missed the Passover by this act-it was very bold- **it has been conjectured** that the house spread with carpets of the "Master" was his-the house of the last supper. He may have missed the Jewish feast-but backed the supper of the Christ. Joseph's principle might be "**take the world but Give me Jesus**" in the words of a solo piece I heard rendered 50 years ago by John Hayes in Co Tyrone, Ireland. Is the principle in the line of this song one you could call your own?

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Quite distinctive impressions of the resurrection of Christ are set down by Mark, namely the *theoretic*, the *theatric* and the *panoramic* impressions-cf Ch16 4,7 & 1 respectively. To feel these mighty impressions of the living Christ on the heart after he rose from the dead greatly moved the early disciples consolidating all Jesus had previously taught. This is the way knowledge of God is communicated. Christ would lift us up also with His disciples far above fear and sorrow

## THE THEORETIC EXPERIENCE 1-8 FEAR VERSUS FAITH (Jesus first dealt with fear-cf. exorcising)

Here we enter the strange world of the mind. The young man in white directed the trio to tell the disciples and Peter that Jesus was going before them to Galilee. Remember the word to Mary was **"Tell them I go to my Father & your Father"**

1. The mighty angel **"Fear not, He goes before to Galilee-there you will see him"**

2. The Lord **"Fear not-announce to my brethren-in Galilee they will see me"**

3. The young man **"Don't be astonished tell the brethren & Peter they will see Jesus in Galilee"** Mark tells us they were **shaking & ecstatic** (meaning that they could not add it up for very frenzy-in time they put words to it!!! (16.14)

Fear clouds facts-the facts were the TOMB WAS EMPTY- the GRAVECLOTHES were vacated- the angel had given a valid MESSAGE- the PREVIOUS EVENTS were a real if stupefying sequence of miracles

*Norman Vincent Peale-the word "worry" is derived from the concept "to choke". It chokes the facts. Fear is 1st of the 4 life motives: fear; hope; faith; love. It is negative & does not bring "New life"*

## THE THEATRIC EXPERIENCE 9-11 SORROW VERSUS FAITH (We see it with the force of drama)

Mary Magdalene first looked as if in a theatre when the LORD appeared to her. Peter is careful to show that she faithfully went to carry the news. She "marched" with purpose, she reported the "victory" of Jesus to those who were **weeping out of great sadness**. Both entered a period of mourning and bemoaning themselves. Now Jesus appeared in the form of a gardener to console their sad hearts. I call this theatric. The Lord uses one whose sorrow he has resolved to bring comfort to others.

As we read in the fuller account by John-He comforts Mary as she weeps Greek (KLAIO) This is the first thing to notice -Christ and His resurrection message affords the world its greatest comfort

*Beverly Sills-famed songstress whose first child was born deaf & second mentally retarded-"The first question you ask is "why me?"-the second is "Why them?" That's how she learned to cope.*

*Dr Truett -whose gun went off by accident shot & fatally wounded chief of police. Told his wife "I can preach no more"*

cf Peter-God gave him 3visions in re-commissioning him ; a vision of youth for Christ; of leading the church and of feeding it by doctrine. He was in fact assuring him, "Have no fear from now on you are my man"

## THE PANORAMIC EXPERIENCE 12-20 DOUBT VERSUS FAITH (Jesus deals with the corpus of believers)

"There shall you see Him" v7 this meeting full of joyful anticipation and hope was the greatest confirmation of the 40 days. It was to Galilee that Matthew says Jesus arranged "to draw up soldiers" Matt. 28.16 (Greek=τασσω) Jesus came right in among them and told the **whole church** to campaign to the end of the age. They doubted it was truly Jesus (Greek δισταζω) but Jesus came in close as to say "I am the captain" and I have the authority and the means through all the ages to enable you". cf *Wellington's answer to the doubting young missionary to -India- "what are your instructions?"*

So the LORD fittingly appeared as a "stranger" v12 -because He had something else in mind. As to the powers in question the reason for what's called the longer ending of Mark is to show the powers that were given-No.1.Linguistic capability. No 2. Health insurance No.3 Empowerment & enrichment of disabled lives

*Congolese saying -"Lord you be the needle, I'll be the thread"....Every apostle went abroad. The view of Christ we have in Matt28 & Rev 1 is of the Lord who wants us to evangelise to a finish. Robert Athlington "Gladly would I make the floor my bed, a box my chair, a box my table rather than that men should perish"*

**THE END**