

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2024: *The Book of Mark*

Lesson 1 “The Beginning of the Gospel”

Read for this week’s study

Acts 13:1–5, 13; Acts 15:36–39; Mark 1:1–15; Isaiah 40:3; Daniel 9:24–27.

Memory Text

“Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel’ ” (Mark 1:14, 15, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Failed Missionary
- III. A Second Chance
- IV. The Messenger
- V. Jesus’ Baptism
- VI. The Gospel According to Jesus
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. From the beginning of Mark, the reader knows who Jesus is (Mark 1:1). The demons know who Jesus is. But the people in the story struggle to make sense of who He is and what He is about. And when the demons move someone to tell who Jesus really is, Jesus forbids them to talk about it. So the identity of Jesus is not expressed in words so much as in Jesus’ actions. It is not until the middle of the book that someone who is not demonic finally declares who He is. After this the focus of the last half of Mark is on the approaching cross. In this story of Jesus, there is very little commentary from the writer. The words and actions of Jesus are allowed to speak for themselves. (Introduction to the Quarter)
2. None of the four Gospels lists the name of its author. But from earliest times the four Gospels were associated either with an apostle (Matthew and John) or with the companion of an apostle (Mark and Luke). The Gospel of Luke was associated with

Paul and the Gospel of Mark with Peter. Mark is first encountered as a companion of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:2, 5), but later on he is an associate of Peter (1 Peter 5:13). (Sabbath Afternoon's Lesson)

3. Read Acts 12:12. How is Mark introduced in the Book of Acts? While this is the earliest clear reference to Mark as a person, there is one intriguing possibility of a reference to him much earlier (Mark 14:50-52). Read Acts 13:1-5, 13. How did John get attached to Saul and Barnabas, and what was the outcome? (Sunday's Lesson)
4. Read Acts 15:36-40. Why did Paul reject John Mark (Acts 13:13; 15:38), and why did Barnabas give him a second chance (Colossians 4:10)? Who was Silas and what was he doing in Antioch (Acts 15:22, 32)? Why do you think Paul chose him as a traveling companion? Which of the two apostles proved to be right about Mark? Read Colossians 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:11, Philemon 24, 1 Peter 5:13. (Monday's Lesson)
5. Read Mark 1:1-8. Who are the characters in these verses? What do each of them say or do? Mark states that the passage quoted in verses 2 and 3 is from Isaiah. But the reality is a bit more complicated than that. Read Exodus 23:20, Isaiah 40:3, and Malachi 3:1. How did these three passages together combine to provide an ideal introduction to Mark's Gospel? (Tuesday's Lesson).
6. Read Mark 1:9-13. Who was present at the baptism of Jesus? What happened on that occasion? (Wednesday's Lesson)
7. Read Mark 1:14-15. What are the three parts of the gospel message that Jesus proclaimed? What is the kingdom of God and how did that arrive in Jesus? (Thursday's Lesson)
8. Can you think of a time when you failed at something? How did that experience change you and change the way you related to the failure of others?
9. Compare and contrast the gospel according to Mark 1:14-15 with the first angel's message in Revelation 14:6-7. What relation do you see between Jesus' mission in the First Century and our mission today? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Now the tradition is that the gospel of Mark is Peter's gospel, that Mark wrote out for him. An early father by the name of Papias passed on the tradition that it was Peter's gospel. But there's evidence also in the New Testament. In fact, this has been so well accepted that there used to be a translation of Mark into English that was called "The Gospel according to St. Peter," by a Jesuit Father, Father Kleist. Eventually Father Kleist joined up with Father Lilly, two Jesuit scholars, and they produced the whole New Testament. Not many know of that one, but when we get to Romans, if I can remember to bring it, one of the best footnotes on baptism by immersion is in that Roman Catholic translation of the New Testament. I must remember to bring it with me.

Now look at 2 Peter 1 for some of the evidence in scripture that supports this tradition. In 2 Peter 1, starting with verse 12, Peter says:

I intend always to remind you of these things [that he's been describing], though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. I think it right, as long as I am in this body [that is, alive], to arouse you by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body [my death] will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. And I will see to it that after my departure [my death] you may be able at any time to recall these things.

Now what would you have to do so that people could recall these things? Can you think of anything better than to have it written down? Now was Mark with Peter at the end? Look at 1 Peter 5:13, right nearby. 1 Peter 5:13: "She who is at Babylon, [that isn't in Mesopotamia, that's Rome. See, here's the evidence that Rome was called Babylon. She who is in Babylon], who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does my son Mark." So Mark was with Peter at the end. And he speaks very well of him there, as 'my son Mark'. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Mark, recorded April 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/53MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/54MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

If in our ignorance we make missteps, the Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the City of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy. {MH 249.1}

None need abandon themselves to discouragement and despair. Satan may come to you with the cruel suggestion, "Yours is a hopeless case. You are irredeemable." But there is hope for you in Christ. God does not bid us overcome in our own strength. He asks us to come close to His side. Whatever difficulties we labor under, which weigh down soul and body, He waits to make us free. {MH 249.2}

The tempter can never compel us to do evil. He cannot control minds unless they are yielded to his control. The will must consent, faith must let go its hold upon Christ, before Satan can exercise his power upon us. But every sinful desire we cherish affords him a foothold. Every point in which we fail of meeting the divine standard is an open door by which he can enter to

tempt and destroy us. And every failure or defeat on our part gives occasion for him to reproach Christ. {DA 125.2}

Christ stood at the head of humanity in the garb of humanity. So full of sympathy and love was His attitude that the poorest was not afraid to come to Him. He was kind to all; easily approached by the most lowly. He went from house to house, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to the distressed. He took the little children in His arms and blessed them, and spoke words of hope and comfort to the weary mothers. With unfailing tenderness and gentleness He met every form of human woe and affliction. Not for Himself, but for others did He labor. He was willing to humble Himself, to deny Himself. He did not seek to distinguish Himself. He was the servant of all. It was His meat and drink to be a comfort and a consolation to others, to gladden the sad and heavy-laden ones with whom He daily came in contact. {TMK 44.3}

Had Christ come in His divine form, humanity could not have endured the sight. The contrast would have been too painful, the glory too overwhelming. Humanity could not have endured the presence of one of the pure, bright angels from glory; therefore Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He came in the likeness of men. {TMK 25.4}

Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, humbling Himself, veiling His glory, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ would not have been changed. . . . In every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction, we are to see and hear and recognize God. In sight, in hearing, in effect, it is the voice and movements of the Father. {TMK 338.4}