

The Gospel of Mark (Lesson 03) -

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Concerning the studying

I **recommend** to you to read through the respective book in the bible at first. Our manual is the bible. And then to go through one to two pages of the material every day, which implies to also look up and read the given bible scriptures to become thoroughly acquainted with the subject. Another suggestion would be to use this material as one's regular devotion.

If you would like to **obtain a degree (certificate) at the end of the seminary**, you need to answer the **test questions** at the end of each lesson and send or email it to us with your full name and address. And now I wish you lots of joy and spiritual profit during your bible study.

Pastor Joh. W. Matutis

PREFACE

- The Gospel of Mark is probably the oldest gospel we possess
- Mark is a (re-) narrator of the story of Jesus, who shares personal memories of eye witnesses in a simple way. At first sight you might think that the gospel of Mark is only a shortened edition of the gospel of Matthew. But if you take a closer look you will soon recognize that he gave a special impression of the working of the Holy Spirit. Everything he reports of Jesus in his gospel originated in what he heard and learned from Peter.
- Right in the beginning of his gospel he announces its content and its goal: the Good News of Jesus Christ the Son of God (Mark 1, 19)
- Mark does not only tell about the past works of Jesus, but he also points to the fulfillment of salvation: **“You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has risen!”** (Mark 16, 6)
- Matthew and Luke have a large extend of material in common. Mainly speeches. Mark does not include many speeches.
- Mark emphasizes the **theocratic aspect** of Jesus being and His works, while Luke and John rather emphasize the universalistic one.
- Matthew describes Jesus as the King of the Jews, which fulfills the Old Testament.
- Mark, however, portrays Him in His original personal uniqueness as the new, absolute **revelation of God** in Israel.
- Matthew shows Jesus in battle and conflict with the corrupted and forfeited traditions of the ancient Judaism because of His true office as a **prophet, priest and king**. But Mark tells us about Jesus fighting against the mighty powers of **disbelief and demons** which He overcomes with total power of victory.
- While Matthew shows us the fulfillment of the OT prophecies and the priesthood, Mark rather emphasizes the break forth of the Kingdom of God.
- In Mark Jesus is the fulfillment of the the old prophecies of the Messianic era. From the beginning till the end Mark describes the miraculous power of Jesus and how he confronts the satanic forces with victory.
- Mark does not react to the ancient religious contentions. (An image of his attitude: not to put on two tunics. Mark 6, 9)
- While Matthew continuously points to his time: “In those days this and that happened”, Mark slides over it using **“now”**

The Gospel of Mark has the least systematic structure

The outer structure of the gospel of Mark expresses the inner development of Jesus

- At first Jesus reveals His glory
Who is He? This question could be used to describe the first main part (Mark. 1,14 bis 8, 26)
- After Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah on behalf of all the disciples, the evangelist intensely deals with the forthcoming suffering of Jesus. This is the second main part of this gospel (Mark 8, 26 – 10, 52)
- Several times Jesus announces here that His way to glory will lead through suffering and death (Mark. 8, 31/ 9, 31/ 10, 33). Several times it speaks of misunderstanding or rebellion of one or more disciples concerning this path of suffering. And every time Jesus rebukes them. Mark wants to point out that also the disciples had to be ready to chose the same way as Jesus.
- The third main part (Mark. 11,1 bis 16, 8), shows how the disciples recognize the crucified Son of God, and how He was glorified by the father through redemption.

That the gospel of Mark has **no Judaic teaching elements** aligns with the whole NT. Mark starts his gospel with Jesus **among wild animals** and closes his account with the words: "Preach the gospel to **all creatures.**"

AUTHOR

The author can be found (or guessed) in the small episode where it says: "***Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around his naked body and the young men laid hold of him, and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.***" (Mark 14, 51-52)

This note is totally out of connection with the rest of the story of Gethsemane, that it is almost certain that it must be a personal memory of the author. It could be compared to the signature a painter puts in a corner of his painting. Therefore the author is supposedly not one of the 12, but surely he also experienced the suffering in Jerusalem.

- The tradition of the ancient church agrees to call the author Mark, with the surname John (John was his Jewish name, and Mark his Latin name)
- He was the son of a certain Mary, in whose house the leading men of the first church gathered (Acts 12,12)
- He was a nephew of Barnabas (Col 4, 10) and probably also a Levite by birth just like him. Barnabas and Paul took him with them when they went to Jerusalem to present the love sacrifice of the church of Antioch (Acts 11, 29-30; 12, 25)
- Mark also accompanied them on their first mission journey. Only there the incident of Gethsemane occurs again: When the missionaries went from Cyprus to Pamphylia and had to pass the mountains of Pisidia and Isauria to reach Asia Minor, Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13, 5+13) Therefore he became the source of the separation between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15, 37)
- About ten years later, however, we find Mark again among the co-workers of Paul, who gives him the best report (Philem 24, Col 4, 10)

The author of the gospel of Mark is the John Mark of the Book of Acts.

Originally he was called by his Israelite name "John", but later he must have taken on the Roman name "Mark". Similar to Paul he occurs with his Roman name.

His interest in the conversion of the Gentiles (the Canaanite woman and the officer near the cross) shows that he is open to **Paul's Gentile mission**. On the other side he also describes how Jesus' identity as the Son of God remains hidden before the Jews, and how the stubbornness and blindness made them kill him.

He was acquainted with the Latin language, and it can also be assumed that he became the interpreter of Peter later (Eusebius, Irenaeus and Tertullian believed that). In the gospel of Mark, his profession as an interpreter shines through when he translates the Latin terminologies (Mark. 6, 27/ 7, 4+8/ 15, 38+39+44 oder Mark. 12, 42/ 15, 16/ 10, 12/ 15, 21).

The many stories of Peter reveal that he used to **spend much time with him**. Also the fact that he spares him: He does not say that it was Peter who cut off the ear of the servant. He only mentions that it was one of those nearby. Also Matthew calls him one of Jesus' followers. Also Luke does not reveal the name, but he tells that it was the right ear and that Jesus healed him. Only John says that it was Peter and also gives the name of the servant: **Malchus**.

Mark does not pay much attention to detail. He rather focuses on the main and important things. The other evangelists provide for supplements and immersions.

In Mark 14, 11 it is reported that the high priests offered Judas money for the betrayal.

Matthew also knew how much it was: 30 pieces of silver (Matthew 27, 3)

A last indication for the **relationship between Paul and Mark** we find in 2. Tim 4, 11 where Paul asks Timothy to bring Mark to Rome. If Mark followed this command he must have arrived at Rome in 63/64 AD. Between the first and the second imprisonment of Paul he seemed to be the right hand of Peter. He was also with him when he wrote his first letter (probably from Rome) (1. Pet 5, 13)

Some bible interpreters assume that Mark could have been one of the 70 disciples of Jesus, because he was with Jesus' followers in the garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was arrested. (Luk 10, 1-24)

Maybe the story of the man with the **water pitcher** (Mark 14, 13) is the personal calling of Mark. It is possible that he was **the one carrying the pitcher**, the only son of the widow Mary (Acts 12, 12) whom he helped with her hard work. Because **carrying water** used to be the work of the women. Men were carrying the wineskin. He might also have been the **rich young man** who once came to Jesus and left him being sad (Mark 10, 17-23), also because Jesus pointed out to him the command of "honoring your father and mother". He took those words to heart and did the impossible and humbled himself.

Concerning the gospel of Mark

Mark does not put an emphasis on the teachings of Jesus. He only quotes few words of Jesus.

His main theme is the revelation of the crucified Son of God.

On one hand he shows Jesus as the Son of God who is recognized by His father (Mark. 1, 11/ 9, 7), but also demons identify Him as the Son of God (Mark. 1, 24/ 3, 11/ 5, 7) and even the people realize that He is the Son of Man (Mark 15, 39). In addition Jesus Himself claims the Divine honor of the Messiah (Mark 14, 62)

Whenever Mark speaks of Jesus, he talks about Jesus the beloved **Son of God** (Mark. 1, 1/ 9, 7) in whom the Kingdom of God came to our world (Mark 1, 14).

For this reason Mark shows right in the first main part of his gospel how many new things became reality for human beings through the coming of Christ. (Mark. 1, 16 bis 3, 12):

- The word of Jesus is mightier than anything else before (Mark. 1, 22+27/ 2, 12),
- Jesus word is mightier than all evil things (Mark. 1, 23+31-34+39+40-50/ 2, 1-12/ 3, 1-12).

And **Jesus is portrayed as the Son of God**

- who is placed above the angels (Mark. 13, 32),
- who claims to have the authority of forgiving sins (Mark. 2, 10),
- who proves His power and sending by miracles (Mark. 1, 31/ 4, 41),
- who shows His authority in the casting out of demons (Mark. 1, 27/ 3, 23).

On the other side Mark describes the continuously increasing rebellion against Jesus by His contemporaries

- the mocking and trouble by the crowd (Mark. 5, 40/ 6, 2),
- the incomprehension and hostility by the Jewish leaders (Mark. 2, 1 bis 3, 6),
- the incomprehension even among His own disciples (Mark. 4, 13).

Those are all oppositions that eventually lead Him to the dishonor of the cross.

The goal of the gospel of Mark is, to explain the incident of the cross. For this reason Mark contrasts Jesus failure not only with the final triumph of redemption, but he also proves that all of it had to happen according to the mysterious plan of God.

- **Christ had to suffer to redeem all men** (Mark. 10, 45/ 14, 24).
- It was prophesied in the scripture (Mark. 9, 12/14, 21+49).
- Jesus Himself chose the way of abasement and suffering (Mark. 8, 31/ 9, 1/ 10, 33).
- He also taught this to His disciples and pronounced it to them (Mark. 8, 34/ 9, 35/ 10, 15+24+29+39/ 13, 9-13).

The Jewish imagination of the Messiah at that time of a glorious hero of victory did not match the suffering and self-denial of Jesus. To emphasize that Jesus can not be understood without his commitment being abased, it is also hard to understand Jesus command to remain silent until he has risen from the dead. (Mark. 9, 9):

- to say nothing about His miracles (Mark. 5, 43/ 7, 36),
- to say nothing about His true identity (Mark. 8, 30).

instead of **the title of the title "Messiah"**(Mark. 8, 29), which was strongly influenced by the human imaginations of power, Mark preferred to call Jesus the mysterious name **"Son of Man"**. In this name majesty and abasement is included at the same time (Mark. 2, 10/ also view Matth. 8, 20).

Mark seems to have used Luke and Matthew as sources. But he also has a lot of unique texts (i.e. Mark. 3, 20+21/ 4, 26-29/ 7, 31-37/ 8, 22-26/ 11, 11-14/ 14, 51+52/ 16, 9-11), and texts with a unique style (i.e. Mark. 1, 42/ 5, 4+5/ 7, 3+4/ 9, 21-26/ 10, 24+34+49/ 12, 32-34).

Mark starts all of his texts himself and also finishes them himself. And the material which he shares with Matthew and Luke (39 passages altogether in Matthew it is 23 and in Luke 18) he prepares the material in his own way though.

Mark points to Jesus' deeds more than to His teachings.

He tells of **18 miracles** of Jesus but only refers to 4 of His parables (Mark. 4, 2-20+26-29+30-32/ 12, 1-9) and only of one great speech (Mark. 13, 3-37). He repeatedly points to the teachings of Jesus but does not explain the content of those teachings (Mark. 1, 21+39/ 2, 2+13/ 6, 2+6+34/ 10, 1/ 12, 35).

Most of the teachings that he reports originated from disputes with the Jewish religious leaders. (Mark. 2, 8-11+19-22+25-28/ 3, 23-30/ 7, 6-23/ 10, 2-12/ 12, 10-11+13-40).

Mark highlights that Jesus always spoke in parables when he taught the crowd (Mark 4, 33-34) because His reign still had to be disguised at this point and kept as a secret that could only be understood by faith (Mark 4, 11-12) For this reason he forbid the demons, the healed and also His disciples to tell the people that He was the Messiah.

RECEIVER

From the content of the book it can clearly be seen that it was addressed to an audience who was not familiar with the customs and regulation of the Jewish traditions, so that these had to be explained.

Subsequently some indications:

- There were **no prophecies** at all except for the only one referring to John the Baptist. (Mark. 1, 2-3).
- There are only very **few quotes**, because to the Gentiles the OT was not of prior importance.
- There is no **gender register**, because it was of no interest to the Gentiles.
- **There are careful explanations of the Aramaic words:** for example Mark. 3, 17 „Boanerges“; Mark. 5, 41 „Talitha kumi“; Mark. 7, 34 „Hephata“; Mark. 10, 46 „Bartimaeus“; Mark. 14, 36 „Abba“; Mark. 15, 22 „Golgotha“; Mark. 15, 34 „Eli, Eli, lama asabthani“. Therefore the readers were not acquainted with the language.
- There are **explanations of Jewish customs** and geographic details, which were unknown to the Romans (Mark. 7, 2-3/ 12, 8/ 14, 12/ 15, 42/ 1, 9/ 11, 1). **Latin terminologies** like „Legion“ (Mark. 5, 9-15), „Speculator“ (Mark. 6, 27), „Sextadecimani“ (soldiers of the 16. legion), „Centurion“ (Chief officer), etc are being explained. In the old manuscripts it was common to use all of those terminologies
- **Latin names of** persons are given, for ex. Mark himself who was called John in Judea

Those features, as well as several quotes out of the traditions of the fathers support that the gospel of Mark was written for the Christians in Rome

The gospel was addressing Roman Christians above anyone else (view composition)

COMPOSITION

It is assumed that Mark wrote his gospel after the death of Peter, which means after the year 64 AD, the year of Nero's murder of the Christians. A closer look reveals that the destruction of Jerusalem was still to come (Mark 13, 14) as far away as the evangelizing of the Gentiles (Mark 13, 10). Therefore the gospel must have been written shortly after the beginning of the Jewish war 66 AD.

Mark adopted much of Peter

Some evidence:

- much detailed information that only an eye-witness could provide, certain passages that can only refer to Peter: Mark. 1, 16+29+36/ 3, 16/ 8, 28+29/ 9, 5+6/ 10, 28/ 11, 21/ 13, 3/ 14, 29/ 16, 7,
- leaving out incidents where Peter was praised and pointing out his flaws (compare Mark. 8, 27-30 with Matth. 16, 13-23/ 6, 51-52 with Matth. 14, 28-33/ 14, 30+66-72),
- the character of Peter shows in his appreciation of Jesus deeds, Peter was a man of action
- **the gospel of Mark is a comment to the important passages of Jesus' life** just like Peter pointed it out before Cornelius (Apg. 10, 36-41).

The gospel of Mark seems to be birthed at the same time as the gospel of Matthew, while the gospel of Luke must have been written several years before.

Historical evidence:

We own more old reports about the creation of the gospel of Mark.

In the following we will only name the most important:

- **Papias**, bishop of Hierapolis, was born and taught by one of Jesus' disciples in Palestine. This one reported the origin of the gospel of Mark this way: Mark, who was **the interpreter of Peter** wrote an account about everything he remembered in detail what was said and done by Christ. He did not write an orderly account. He had never accompanied or heard the Lord speak. His source was Peter. Therefore Mark made the mistake of writing things down just as he remembered, because his most important concern was not to leave out anything he heard and not to make up lies.
- **Irenaeus** said that after the death of Peter and Paul, the student and interpreter of Peter wrote down the sermons of Peter.
- **Clemens of Alexandria** (religious teacher, about 160-220) amends the testimony of Papias, saying that when Peter was preaching in Rome many Christians asked Mark, his companion, to write down everything he heard.
- **Eusebius**, the famous theologian of his era add in his church history to the quote of Clemens: The audience of Peter asked Mark, his companion, to write down the teachings of the apostles and did not leave him alone until he did so. Peter was happy about that and after he received a word from the Holy Spirit he expressly allowed the scriptures to be read to the

These biblical and historical evidences lead us to this conclusion: the gospel of Mark is a report of the gospel that Peter preached

The place of composition is Rome

The time of composition was when Peter was about to die, or right after his death. If Peter truly became a victim of Nero's persecution it was composed about 64-65 AD, but definitely before the year 79 because it does not yet mention the destruction of Jerusalem

AUTHENTICITY

The whole ancient church approves of the authenticity of the gospel of Mark in a way that can only be credited to the gospel of Mark.

The several indications of the church fathers make it reasonable to believe in the originality of this biblical book. The only difficulty can be found in the end of the gospel in Ch 16, 9-20, a passage that is missing in most of the oldest writings. Some experts think that Mark was hindered to continue his writings so that another author added the final part in order not to let the gospel end abruptly.

In a **Aramaic book of the gospel** of the tenth century it states over Ch 16, 9 : "of Ariston, the Presbyter" (probably the disciple who reported about Jesus to Papias): To provide for a satisfying end of the gospel of Mark, a short summary of the story of redemption was added.

We are in fact not sure, whether the original last paper of Mark's gospel was lost, or whether Mark had to stop writing because he died or had to flee suddenly due to persecution, so that his work remained incomplete.

PURPOSE AND GOAL

From the first line Mark characterizes his gospel: Beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The author emphasizes the divine glory and greatness of the person Jesus Christ, who in fact proves Himself to be a servant of God by His deeds. Matthew for example highlights Jesus as the speaker, Mark rather describes Him as a man of action.

His main interest is to show the work of Jesus, the extraordinary, the hero, his victorious performance on earth which could not even be overshadowed by the cross. He enjoys to tell stories of Jesus in a traditional way and to quote characteristic details. Those narrations do also carry a certain drama, the people are close and familiar to us, and the great Saviour is distinguished.

CONTENT AND ARRANGEMENT

Mark does not care too much about the chronological order of his accounts. He simply lets pictures full of life and freshness pass us by. And yet a certain plan can be identified which is similar to the one of Matthew. We look at the arrangement considering "Jesus, the servant of God" to be the main theme.

1. <u>The preparation of his servant hood</u>	Ch	1,1-13
His herald, John the Baptist		1,1-8
His water and spirit baptism		1, 9-11
His first crucial victory		1, 12-13
2. <u>The beginning of His service</u>		1, 14-45
His Good News		1, 14-15
His first four disciples		1, 16-20
His first preaching and healing		1, 21-28
His first triumph		1, 29-45
3. <u>The enemies of the servant</u>		2, 1-3, 6
A cliff opens: How can He forgive sins?		2, 1-12
Calling of Levi: Why does He eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?		2, 13-17
Questions concerning the fasting: disciples of John and of Jesus		2, 18-22
Pick up corn: Why do the disciples do this on a sabbath		2, 23-28
Healing on the sabbath day: and they waited for Him if He would heal on sabbath		3,1-6
4. <u>The great works and speeches of the servant</u>		3, 7 - 8, 26
approach of the crowd		3, 7-12
Calling of the true disciples		3, 13-19
Revealing the false disciple		3, 20-35
The sermon on the lake in parables		4, 1-34
Triumph over storm, spirits and death		4, 35-5,43
A prophet is not without honor except...		6, 1-6
Sending and teaching of the disciples		6, 7-13
Herod' s judgment of Jesus and John		6, 14-29

Return of the disciples	6, 30-33
Feeding of the five thousands	6, 34-44
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Jesus walking on the sea	6, 45-56
Jesus and human statutes	7, 1-23
The faith of a Syro-Phoenician	7, 24-30
Healing of a deaf-mute	7, 31-37
Feeding of the four thousands	8, 1
Challenge for signs and wonders	8, 10-21
Healing of the blind in Bethsaida	8, 22-26
5. <u>The proclamation of suffering by the servant</u>	8,27 to 10,45
You are the Messiah	8, 27-30
First proclamation of suffering	8, 31-33
The sufferings of the disciples	8,34-9, 1
Glorification: Glory in spite of suffering	9, 2-13
The boy with the mute spirit	9, 14-29
Second proclamation of suffering	9, 30-32
Teaching of the disciples	9, 33-10, 37
Third proclamation of suffering	10, 32-45
6. <u>The works of the servant in Jerusalem</u>	10,46t o13,37
On the way to Bartholomew	10,
46-52	
Entering Jerusalem	11, 1-10
Charge and court in the temple	11, 11-33
Parables and teachings	12, 1-44
Prophecies	13, 1-37
7. <u>The suffering and death of the servant</u>	14-15
The attempt of murder of the leaders	14, 1-2
The anointing of the sacrifice	14, 3-11
The last Holy Easter supper	14, 12-25
Gethsemane: readiness of the sacrifice	14, 26-52
Interrogation and judgment of the sacrifice	14,53-15,19
Golgotha: The perfect sacrifice	15, 20-41
Burial: the dead sacrifice	15, 42-47
8. <u>The triumph of the servant</u>	16,1-20
The empty grave	16, 1-8
Appearances	16, 9-14
Command of mission	16, 15-18
Ascension to heaven	16, 19
Beginning of the mission	16, 20

Keyword of the gospel of Mark: Serving

Key verse: „For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life for the redemption of many“. (Mark. 10, 45)

MISCELLANEOUS

Special Characteristics

- almost no quotes from the Old Testament
- lack of the story of Jesus' birth
- few speeches and parables
- the liveliness of the narration

Reports that only occur in the gospel of Mark

- fear of the parents, that Jesus lost His mind (3, 21)
- Parable of the seed that grows by itself (4, 26-29)
- Healing of the deaf-mute(7, 31-37)
- Step by step healing of the blind (8, 22-26)
- The urging to be watchful (13, 33-37)
- Boy who fled without his clothes (14, 51-52)

Testimonies of Jesus of...

- God, the father (1, 11/ 9, 7)
- John the baptist (1, 7+8)
- The family (3, 21/ 6, 2-4)
- The disciples (8, 29)
- The demons (1, 24/ 3, 11/ 5, 7)
- the enemies (2, 7/ 12, 14/ 14, 63+64)
- a Gentile (15, 39)

Jesus, the Lord

- Over nature (4, 35ff./ 6, 45ff.)
- Over sickness (1, 30-34/ 1, 40-42 etc.)
- Over death (5, 22-43)

- Over the sabbath (2, 23-28/ 3, 1-6)
- Over Satan (1, 12+13/ 1, 34)
- Over the demons (1, 23 bis 2/ 1, 39/ 3, 11 etc.)

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Full of breeziness and dynamic Mark describes the life of Jesus.

- He tells about Jesus in the desert with the wild animals;
- How He cursed the fig tree which died to its roots ;
- How Jesus sleeps during the storm on the sea.
- He reports in detail about the blind beggar of Jericho and knows his name: Bartholomew, Son of Timaeus. This accuracy also applies to the numbers, times, etc.
- He describes Jesus' worries, but also His anger
- How Jesus healed all of them and how the ones who were suffering wanted to touch Him, and how all of them were healed. (Mark. 9,15);
- How Jesus actions were always victorious over the evil powers
- He reports of Jesus prophecy of His own death, which is less emphasized than in the gospel of Matthew.
- He tells of Jesus' words on the cross, but only gives an account of : "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (A cry of mourning of the Lion of Judah)
- He narrates the doubts of the disciples concerning Jesus' redemption and their sadness. But as soon as Jesus appears all of that is forgotten, the mood changes, they even receive their assignment to go out into the world and preach the gospel.

Mark always portrays Jesus in a Divine human position, that moves the people and their heart. They marvel, they hope, they trust, they are amazed, but they are also full of fear. At a fast pace he goes through Jesus' life. As an explanation for the charismatic account of Mark could be that he was variably accompanying Paul and Peter in their mission, and wanted to depict the apostolic agreement between the both of them.

The evangelist tries his best to prove that Jesus was the expected Messiah.

According to the expectations concerning the Messiah at that time, it was clear that the Messiah had to be able to heal. And if Jesus truly was the Messiah, He was supposed to effect such things. Therefore it is remarkable that the gospels are full of the miracles that Jesus performed.

Especially eye-catching are the three great encounters with the "demonic" in the synagogue at Capernaum (Mark. 1, 23), at the east shore of the sea (Mark. 5, 1) and the foot of the mount of Glorification (Mark. 9, 14). In all of the healing stories in Mark it is not about the so-called suggestive or exciting healings, but here people were healed by the Almighty power of God. .

Just like the healing of the deaf-mute (Mark. 7, 32) or the blind (Mark. 8, 22); also compare the quiting of the storms (Mark. 4, 35).

The word „Son“ did not necessarily have to mean that you belong to someone according to the physical birth, it could be used to show affiliation with a certain group, profession of people, even God.

- In this manner angels, for example, as members of the heavenly household, were called "Sons of God" (Gen 6, 2+4/ Job 1, 6/ 38, 7/ Ps. 89, 7).
- God addressed Israel as "His first begotten Son" (Ex. 4, 22/ Hos. 11, 1.),
- and also the king or the suffering, righteous wise man could be called "Son of God" (Ps. 2, 7/ 2.Sam. 7, 12-14).
- In the Qumram-scrolls (of the period when Jesus lived) the **royal Messiah** was titled "Son of God" (4. Qflor 1-14).
- If Christians, who at first came out of Judaism, called **Jesus** the "Son of God", they wanted to express the affiliation between Jesus and God.
This was out of question after Easter at the latest (Rom. 1, 4/ 1.Thess. 1, 10).
- That the ancient Christians called **Jesus** the Son of God, had two reasons:
 - Jesus always called God only His father. (Mark.14, 36/ Matth. 11, 25/ Luk. 11, 2).
 - The Messiah was always considered to be the Son of God.
- To Mark Jesus always was the Son of God (Mark. 1, 11), even though the thought of the virgin birth was not a major topic for him. To him it was more important that the Roman centurion confessed Jesus as the Son of God underneath the cross. (Mark. 15, 39).
- Markus puts forth all of his effort, to prove to His readers, that the crucified and risen one has always been the Son of God.
 - When the voice was speaking from heaven during His baptism
 - confronting the demons
 - confronting the disciples
 - up to the centurion underneath the cross

They all acknowledged Him as the Son of God, by His deeds and words He proved Himself (only the people of Israel in particular did not recognize Him as the Son of God) The readers, that believed in Him as the Son of God after redemption, were supposed to be encouraged and assured by reading the gospel.

- Peter applies in Acts 2, 34 the 110. Psalm to Jesus, where it says: “Be seated to my right “. This was applied to the redemption and exaltation of Jesus

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- Paulus said in Acts 13, 33: „God made Jesus the Lord and Christ through redemption” That was the ancient faith of the first church. They also connected the words of Psalm 2 to Jesus, where it says: You are my Son. Today I have begotten you. In Jesus the Messiah and the Reign of God is manifested.
Here it is assumed that before He was not the Messiah or the Son of God at all, apart from the calling of His purpose. In the gospels it can be seen, that Jesus on earth was „a prophet mighty in word and deed“ (Mark. 6, 4/ Luk. 7, 16+39/ 24, 19/ also compare. Rom. 1, 4).
- If Jesus was only honored as the Son of God after the redemption and ascension, God must have made that decision before hand, and not at the day of redemption. Already the sending and the purpose of Jesus was included in His plan. Therefore Jesus must have been the Son of God before, if not by “might”, not by power and glory which was expected of the Messiah. But according to the inner dignity and the claim. That's how the disciples welcomed Him through the lips of Peter (Mark. 8, 27) as the Messiah, who appeared as the not yet crowned or at the point of His hope, but as the one who was predestined. They were sure that He was the one.
- During the baptism in the Jordan river, they heard from heaven, for the first time, that He was called or chosen (Luk. 3, 22).
Is, 42, 1-9 describes the election and development of the “Servant of God”. Mark picks up this thread. Also the spirits speaking through the possessed recognize Him (Mark. 1, 24+34/ 3, 11/ 5, 7), as well as the devil (in Matth. 4, 3+6).

In the gospel of Mark Jesus is the “Servant“.

„For the Son of man has not come to be served, but serve and give his life for the redemption of many” (Mark. 10, 45)

Mark. 1, 1-13 – The preparation of the servant

John the baptist appeared as the fulfiller of the OT prophecies (Mark 1, 2-8):

- He was the forerunner of the Lord and a preacher of repentance for the people
- His preaching was addressing and drawing all the people
- John only wants to be the forerunner of Jesus.
- He breaks with the traditions, the temple, the priesthood, etc..
- He breaks with sin and unrighteousness and calls every one to do the same

Also Jesus is being baptized. The baptism of John is the **Baptism of the Proselytes**. In this baptism the ones of the Gentiles who wanted to belong to the people of God. But John treated all “Jews” without exception as “Gentiles”. If they wanted to belong to the new covenant of God they had to be baptized.

John „proclaimed the baptism of repentance“ (turning back)

- Also the Jews have to turn back to God.
- Confess their sinful nature and humble themselves before God.
- Therefore John demands the confessions of sins, because he knows that only by acknowledgment there will be a change. Jews used the law for centuries for chastisement (Gal. 3, 24). But this did not make them any better and could not prevent the moral decline.
- In this baptism people and also Jesus were reduced to a sinner Jesus. Jesus Himself puts Himself on the same level (of a sinner) and joins them. Only John the baptist had the permission and the ability to do that. He was the Son of a priest, who placed the sins of the people upon an animal sacrifice and send it into the desert. (Lev 6, 4 bis 10, 21-26).
- Mark reports shortly about the effect and the preachings of John, so that the inhabitants of the province Judea and even citizens of Jerusalem came to be baptized.
- The baptism of John was according to the gospel on behalf of Jesus and the evangelists to prepare Him for His performance (Mark. 1, 9+10), because right after the baptism of Jesus and His public performance, the mission of John comes to an end.
- The words of Peter in Acts 10, 37 reveal that God only equipped and anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power at this point, (Luk. 4, 14/ 5, 17), therefore only then He could do His mighty works (Acts. 2, 22/ Matth. 11, 20+23/ 13, 54+58/ 14, 2/ Luk. 19, 37).

Mark. 1, 12+13 – Also Jesus was tempted. After Jesus had fulfilled all righteousness before God, He was baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit. Then He allows Himself to be tempted (He goes into the wilderness to the wild animals where all the other Asaels, „scapegoats“, were. He is being tempted, because He wants to be equal to us in all things and not claim to be an exception. He became human, submitted to the law and

got baptized without protesting. Therefore He submits Himself under the sin and the sinful mankind. He fully identifies with us.

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The Holy Spirit carried Jesus into the wilderness, the loneliness (with the animals, the scapegoats). He does not seek it freely, he suffers it by force. In the story of temptation Satan takes the lead, and challenges Jesus to act, gives Him commands. In His loneliness He is with the wild animals. Just as once Adam was in Paradise when he was tempted by an animal. In this manner the second Adam starts His spiritual development, and has to prevail against the wild animals. (Phil. 2, 6) Even though He is in the image of God, He does not take authority by force. After He had passed the test, angels came to serve Him. When it is mentioned, „**that He lived with the wild animals**“, the prophetic ideal of the Messiah announces the return to the piece as it was in paradise. (also view Is. 11, 6-9). Through the Fall of Man the unity between man and animal was broken (Gen. 3, 17-19), and here with Jesus the restoration of the Divine order begins.

The tempter uses three ways to tempt Jesus: Need, jealousy and selfishness. He tries to persuade Jesus to misuse His Divine power and to act according to His own will. “Are you the Son of God?”, this is how the tempter wants to move Him to use His wonder-working power out of purpose. But Jesus emphasizes purposely that you are only supposed to serve God “alone”. The devil continued to encourage Him to reach His destination quickly. But Jesus always waits until the hour of God has come. Until the time is full.

Mark. 1, 14-45 – The beginnings of the Servant

Mark. 1, 14+15 – The mighty works of Jesus in Galilee. Jesus starts, when John the forerunner was delivered up. This terminology is also used for Jesus death.(Rom. 4, 25/ 8, 32). How John finishes His race is not imparted by Mark. He seems to consider it common knowledge. After the baptist had finished his race, Jesus starts His ministry. (Acts 1, 22/ 10, 37).

The reason why Mark determines the beginning of Jesus works in Galilee and not in Judea, like the gospel of John proposes (Joh. 3, 22-26, esp. verse 24), because this was where the stories of Peter started.

- Mark already started to use the terminology “gospel”
- While Matthew is speaking of the Heavenly Kingdom, Mark talked about „the Kingdom of God“, without explaining what exactly this means.
- Mark also send before hand: „The time is (or the times are) „full“. He assumes that the deadline that God had set for the world has come, and that now begins the judgment, the Last Days and the Salvation of God. With these words Peter starts off his Pentecost message. (Acts. 2, 16+17).
- To speak of fulfillment requires that there is a connection between the different periods of the Divine plan of salvation. (1.Kin. 8, 24/ Acts 1, 7/ Dan. 2, 21/ 1.Hes. 5, 1 / Rom. 16, 25/ 1.Cor.2, 7/ Eph.1, 4/ 3, 9+11/ Col. 1, 26/ 2.Tim. 1, 9/ Matth. 25, 34):
 1. At first there is a **time of preparation** (Hebr. 1, 2/ 9, 9/ 1.Petr. 1, 11),
 2. Then the **time of patience** (Rom. 3, 26/ Acts. 17, 30),
 3. Then the **“fullness of time”** (Gal. 4, 4). This is the time that was chosen for the coming of Christ.
 4. The time of **salvation** began (Rom. 3, 26),
 5. And the time that lasted **until Parousia** (the next coming of Jesus) (2.Cor. 6, 2),
 6. And finally the **eschatological day** (1.Cor. 1, 8), and judgment day (Rom. 2, 6), which follows the Last Days (1.Tim. 4, 1).
- **The Greek language knows 2 words for “time”:**
CHRONOS, which means time as a period, and the other is **KAIROS**, which is a certain moment, for example concerning the harvest (Mark. 12, 2) or the figs (Mark. 11, 13). In Mark. 1, 15 Jesus uses KAIROS. The crucial moment has arrived.

Mark. 1, 16-21 – The first disciples were called. At this point Mark first explains to his Roman readers the geography of Galilee. The foundations of those reports are the statement of Peter. Jesus took notice. Because Peter himself talks about all of that, he does not need to introduce himself with his fathers name, like we can see with the other brothers. He is the “Simon”. Those four first disciples build a group which is distinguished from the circle of the twelve. This can also be seen in the other gospels. They were the close friends and helpers of Jesus.

The disciples were invited to follow Jesus, and they lived with Him, denied the world for Him and have a different assignment than the others. He wanted to turn His disciples into “fishers of men”.

Capernaum is now the place of Jesus' works. At this place there was the broad street of commerce (caravan street) to Damascus. Therefore there was a tax office (Mark. 2, 14). Also the Roman army was stationed there (Matth. 8, 5-15).

It is also assumed that Jesus had a residence here. (Matth. 9, 1). Also Peter lived there. We owe him most of those reports. .

Jesus appears in the synagogue (Mark. 1, 21-28/ comp. Luk. 4, 31-37). Mark does not tell us what Jesus was teaching in the synagogue, only **that He taught with authority** and not as other Pharisees. Jesus did not have to prove His authority by calling upon some authorities (rabbis, Scribes, etc.), He speaks the

promises and the commands that we know from the Sermon of the Mount: "But I tell you ... "

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Mark. 1, 23-27 – The devotion was interrupted by a demon possessed. Mark said he had an unclean spirit. Luke said he was demon-possessed. (Luk. 4, 33). In this case the boy was totally defeated by the demon. He himself speaks on behalf of the demon: "What have we to do with you?" or "What do you want from us?" and also answers "You have come to destroy us. " In a similar way the demon possessed in Mark. 5, 7 or Matth. 8, 29 speak. The demons within the possessed acknowledge the Messiah and are scared of Jesus. Because it is certain that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1.Joh. 3, 8).

Mark. 1, 24 – The demons know exactly why and for what Jesus came and who He is.

- He is the Holy One of God, that means He belongs to God (Joh. 6,69).
- He was sent and chosen by God, and the only one who was sanctified and connected with God in such a special way.
- He is the Messiah (Joh. 10, 36/ 17, 17).
- He is the Son of the living God (Matth.16,16).
- The demons know the servant of God (Acts 16, 16+17, the have the spirit of a seer“).
- They also recognize the ones who think they are somebody but are not. (Acts 19, 11-17).

Jesus and the true believers need no testimony of the spirit of lies. To them the Spirit of God testifies. It is obvious to Mark that Jesus was the chosen one, and that the hour of the demons' destruction had come.

Casting out of demons was a part of Jesus ministry. He was come to destroy the works of the devil. As soon as the possessed saw Him , they fell down before him and screamed (Mark. 3, 11). Jesus does not seek to do this, but the possessed throw themselves before His feet freely. He considers His success a gift of God. In Luk. 11, 20 He casts out the demons with "the finger of God".

The person with the unclean spirit needs to remain silent. The message that Jesus is the Messiah was not supposed to be spread, especially not by the demons. The Kingdom of God had to be denied and despised. Jesus proves Himself by overcoming this enmity. Mark. 1, 34: „...He cast out many demons, **but He did not let them proclaim that they knew who He was.** “

Being demon possessed is a part of the religion. There the world was full of spirits. In Judaism demons were called unclean spirits (Zach. 13, 2). Indifference or denial concerning religious cleanness were traced back to unclean spirits.(Mark. 3, 11/ Matth. 10, 1/ 12, 43/ Luk. 4, 33+36). But also psychological disorders (Mark. 5, 1-20) or physical sufferings (Mark. 9, 14-29/ Luk. 13, 10-17) were blamed on the demons. Jesus shared this point of view. (Matth. 12, 22-29, 43-45/ Luk. 8, 2).

According to His conception, which is also represented in His speeches (Matth.12,26 /Luk.1019),demons form a solidly united army of powers, **whose leader is the devil.** This is also called „**Kingdom of Satan**“. The people considered all diseases a work of the demons, for example fever (Luk. 4, 39), lameness (Luk. 13, 11+16), blindness and muteness (Matth. 12, 22).

Markus used to distinguish the demonic as a certain group of sick people (Mark. 1, 32+40). He also considers all cases where the suffering had a severe, scaring character, for example seizure and screaming tantrum or other conditions of agitation where the person loses control of his body and senses. Like epileptic hysteria (Mark. 1, 23), screaming tantrum (Mark. 5, 2) and epilepsy (Mark. 9, 17).

The first miracle

- Mark and Luke report of the casting out of demons in the synagogue as the first miracle.
- The first miracle that **Matthew** describes is the healing of a leper by the touch of Jesus.
- The first miracle that **John** talks about is the turning of water into wine.

Their points of view are as different and characteristic as their gospels.

Matthews focus is upon the reign of Christ, His Kingdom and law in opposition to the former hierarchy, statutes and traditions.

- **Luke** sees humanity delivered of demons and diseases. chen.
- To **Mark** the authority of Christ over the kingdom of darkness is the most important thing, and that Jesus teachings need to be acknowledged as sth new.
- **John** cares about the power of Jesus about the untamable element "water". Jesus turns water into wine. In his gospel the changing power of Jesus is highlighted, with which he turns the dark world into the world of God.

All evangelists are about the victory of Jesus. But everyone describes it in a different way.

Mark shows that the synagogue is unable to prevent that a demonic person disturbs the order of the synagogue and thus proclaims war against the Kingdom of God in this Holy place.

Jesus in the house of Peter (Mark.1, 29-39/ comp. Matth. 8, 14/ Luk. 4, 38-44).

Jesus did not only talk, he also acted. It is He who is also Lord over all physical needs.

Jesus heals the mother in law of Peter, so that she can continue to serve. God always has a purpose. Mark. 1, 31: „The fever went away and she served them. “

Mark portrays the personality of Jesus and what kind of impression he made upon the crowds. He performed with authority (Mark. 1, 27+28), the people were amazed and agitated. But still they do not have a clear insight. Especially the blinded Jews do not realize that they are dealing with the Son of God. They remain

with one question: **What is this?** (compare „Man hu“ - Ex. 16,15).

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The overall attitude of the servant

Mark. 1, 35 – Jesus authority is a result of prayer:

- He prays in the morning,
- He prays outside in lonely places ,
- He also spent many nights in prayer.

Mark. 1, 36-39 – Jesus assignment is the proclamation. He preaches first and then He heals and casts out the demons. Only the preaching brings about the change. Because faith comes from hearing the word of God.

Mark. 1, 40-45 - Jesus does not want to make a show, does not want to cancel the law and regulations. Therefore He sent the leper to the priest. (Lev. 14, 1 bis 8, 10).

He forbids any propaganda on His behalf. But was it possible to hide the results of His healing power?

Jesus heals a leper. Leprosy was one of the worst plagues of the orient, a punishment of God that left people totally helpless (Num. 12, 10/ 2.Kin. 5, 9/ Luk. 4, 27). If Moses, Elijah and Elisha could heal leprosy then the Messiah also needs to be able to heal them. And **Jesus had the authority to declare them clean**, and the priest was supposed to confirm it.

Mark works his way to point out that according to God's counsel the Jews were supposed to remain „**stubborn**“ (comp. Mark. 4, 12/ Is. 6, 9+10). According to God's plan the Jews were not supposed to find the knowledge of Him. Actually God does not want this incomprehension among them, but he foresaw it and it served His plans (such as the hardened heart of the pharaoh in Ex. 4, 21/ 7, 3). The prophecy of Isaiah (Is. 6, 9+10) is repeated in the New Testament : Matth. 13, 13-15/ Joh. 12,40/ Acts 28, 26+27.

Mark. 2, 1-12 - Jesus has the authority over forgiveness and healing.

Here Mark shows (Mark. 2, 1 bis 3, 6) **five encounters** with the scribes and the Pharisees or the leaders of the people, and he depicts how deep a severe the breach between Jesus and the official Judaism was. And when in the end of his account the opponents of Jesus decide to kill Him (Mark. 3 ,6), it is nothing new to the Christian reader, but: after the reader got to know all the stories that happened before, he is able to understand the necessity of this end. When the differences were so severe, there was no possibility of winning them over. It had to lead to an enmity to death. The comparison of those 5 stories had a teaching purpose for Mark and the first church and was a part of the church tradition.

Without forgiving of sins there is no healing. James 5 tells us, before you pray for the sick, the sick is supposed to confess his sins before God. (Sin is rebellion against God) And the rebel or the disobedient one are cast out of the Kingdom of God and its blessings. When Jesus forgave their sins, He opens a door to God and His Kingdom. Because according to the understanding of the people, the sick one is marked and punished by God and therefore cast out of the Kingdom of God. But Jesus delivers people of their sins and allows them to become members of the Kingdom of God again.

Jesus treats the evil at its root. He leads the sick to acknowledgment of sin and to forgiveness, and then He tells them to get up, and therewith effects the physical healing. Above all Jesus came to redeem the people from their sin. Because sin is the reason that the people perish.(Pro 14, 34).

Mark. 2, 6+7 - Jesus is dealing with the scribes.

The beginning of it was the dispute about the topic **forgiveness of sins** (Mark. 6, 7).

- To the scribes it was clear that only God can forgive sin (Es. 34, 6-9/ Ps. 130, 4/ Is. 43, 25/ 44, 22).
- In the OT the ability to forgive sins was not affiliated with the Messiah at all.
- Therefore to them it was blasphemy and assumption to the scribes, a severe trespass that was usually punished by stoning sentence. (Ex. 24, 15+16).
- As a matter of fact Jesus was really judged for blasphemy in public(Mark. 14, 61+62).

The „scribes“ are „writers“, that copied the Torah with great seriousness. Not everybody could read and write and not all had access to the law, like by ownership of the scrolls, the ability to read, the knowledge of the Hebrew, which was not the popular speech, etc. After the Babylonian captivity the profession of the scribe, later the profession of the rabbi, was established. The first one who owned this title was Ezra (Ezra 7, 6 /Neh. 8, 4).

The whole science of the scribe was referring to the Holy scripture. All influence and power over the people was based upon the scripture. In those days Jesus was something like the **the advocates** and **theologians of Israel**. With relentless reasoning power the scribes figured out a system of regulations out of the scriptures with the purpose to provide legal statutes for the Israelites in all circumstances of life.

The gospels give us several examples. The bible (the Torah) forbade any work on the sabbath and the scribes made it their responsibility to determine the term “work”. Without a doubt **reaping** is work and

therefore forbidden. Thus you are not allowed to glean ears to eat of their grains, because according to their interpretation it belongs to the act of reaping (Matth. 12,2).

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The scripture demands the **tithes of the harvest**, thus the tenth grain of caraway belongs to God, as well as the tenth sheaf (Matth. 23, 23), and who did not harvest the caraway in his own garden, but bought it on the market he had to tithe, lest he was sure that the seller had already paid the tithes.

They were building „**a fence around the law**“ (Matth. 23, 4+5), by going further than the requirements of the law. To protect themselves or to avoid mistakes they invented safeguards. A typical example are the „**40 strikes minus one**“ (2. Cor. 11, 24). The law determined the highest punishment at 40 strokes (Lev. 25, 3), and the scribes reduced it by one so that the command would never be trespassed by mistake. The law required a cleansing rituals after impurity but the scribes required the execution of the rituals before each meal (Matth. 15, 2). Jesus charged them for their exaggeration and eccentricity.

The old teacher were **untouchable authorities** for the ones who were submitted to them (Matth. 5, 21): „What was said by the old ones“ was binding for the ones who followed them. In this way the regulations were imparted from generation to generation. At first they were imparted orally but later they were **written as essays by the eldest** (Matth. 15, 2). And in this manner they were put on the same level as the word of God. With wise prudence Jesus refused this theoretic occupation of the scribes, especially the essays of the eldest. (Matth. 23, 13-31). The Talmud deals in large parts with things that are long passed and have now meaning for the service anymore, like the sacrifice and the priesthood, the High Council, things that became obsolete after the going down of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple and the scattering of the Jews. All the OT laws concerning the ceremonies and customs for the land of Israel and the service in the temples of Jerusalem, they could also only be **correctly executed there (in Israel)**.

Mark. 2, 13-15 – the calling of Levi, who is called Matthew later (comp. Matth. 9, 9)

Jesus receives the tax collectors. What and who were the tax collectors? In the gospel tax collectors **and sinners** are called in one breath. This is from the strictly Jewish point of view. Tax collectors were Jews who collected the taxes on behalf of Rome. They were hated by the people because they worked for the ones who occupied their country and therefore served the Gentiles. In addition they often required more than they were supposed to (Joh. 7, 49). Therefore also the ones who dealt with them or were affiliated with them were sinners and considered unclean. That Jesus was acquainted with such people shows that God had not given up on them yet.

Mark. 2, 16+17 - Jesus said “Yes” to the sinners He did not come for the righteous but for the sinners and He is calling them to repentance.

Mark. 2, 18-20 - Jesus is the bridegroom.

Who are the wedding party and who is the bride?

Jesus is **the head** (Eph. 1, 22/ 5, 23/ Col. 1, 18) and we are the **members** (1. Cor. 6, 15). The church is His body, and this are we (Eph. 1, 23). The saints are one unity with Jesus. **Israel is the bride**. The daughter **Zion**. This thought traverses the Bible like a common thread. (Is. 62, 11/ Matth. 21, 5). It is this daughter with the unclean spirit (Mark. 7, 25), that needs to be redeemed and cleansed (Song. 4, 22/ Micah 4, 8). (Lam. 1, 6). The church will be enraptured. And only at the point when the number of the Gentiles is fulfilled (Luk. 21, 23+24), the new Jerusalem will come down from heaven, and robed like a bride.

Mark. 2, 21-22 - Jesus explores new ways.

Jesus message is totally new. It is not a patchwork. It brings about a totally new structure.

Mark. 2, 23-28 – freedom and lawfulness

David already defied the Mosaic statutes. (1. Sam. 21, 1).

There are human and divine laws.

There are eternal and irrefutable rules and rules that were only applied to certain situations.

To pick up grains from the field of your neighbor with your hands was allowed, but to use a sickle was forbidden (Deut 23, 24+25).

The Pharisees did not necessarily have a problem with , **WHAT** the disciples did, but **When** they did it.

Jesus wants to teach that there is no law against righteousness and where the spirit of the Lord is there is freedom. A man is supposed to find joy and refreshment through the celebration and is not supposed to suffer hunger and need.

Jesus gives His accusers **two answers from the law** (1. Sam. 21, 2-7/ Num. 28, 9+10).

Here the service in the temple regularly broke and ignored the sabbath. The same thread Jesus uses in Joh. 7, 22+23: „You circumcise the child even on the sabbath“, even though the circumcision was not of Moses but originated in the period of the Patriarchs when there was no law. Here Jesus argues rabbinically and asks how much more it should be allowed to heal somebody.

Even in the **Talmud** it is written: The sabbath is in your hands and not you in the hands of the sabbath. It is written the Lord gave you the sabbath. (Ex. 16, 29/ Ez 20, 12).

Jesus did not break the sabbath. He was the light Himself and came to chase away the shadows. And the sabbath was only a shadow of Christ, of the future (Col. 2, 17/ Hebr. 10, 1), And it had to make room to the

things which are perfect.

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Jesus cleanses His disciples of the malicious accusations of the Pharisees, with the words:

„For I am pleased with charity (goodness, mercy) and **not** with sacrifices (Hos. 6, 6/ 1.Sam. 15, 22/ Amos 5, 21/ Hos. 2, 21+22). To Jesus love is the most important thing (Hebr. 10, 5-10/ Ps. 40, 7-10/ Mark. 12, 33).

The disciples did not pluck the grains to waste time, but because they were hungry. Everything they had, they left to live of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus said that the law was made for the people and not the people for the law. **He manages to bring principles into the right order.** Man was not created to heed the statutes of the law, rather was it given to serve him. Since the sabbath was given to man, man can also decide how to handle it. The redeemed man is not under the law anymore. He is delivered of the bondage of law. The law is no longer his master, but rather his companion. As an answer to the charges of the Pharisees Jesus heals a man with a crippled hand (Mark. 3, 5). That was a prophetic action and a demonstration of His authority. This makes His enemies more than upset. He broke their ancient regulations, and then He puts them to silence and embarrasses them in front of the whole crowd (Joh. 11, 53/ Matth. 22,16).

We need to learn to believe in the whole but rightly divided bible.

- Some parts are for certain groups and certain periods of time.
- Some are main things other things are not of prior importance. The foundation always has to be right, the facade can be molded.
- Some things were only given for the people of Israel.
- Some things were a foreshadow of Jesus and found their fulfillment in Jesus.
- Some things are for all times.
- Some things are for eternity.
- Some things can only be applied during our lifetime.
- Some things were said to the inhabitants of Israel (in the diaspora).
- Some things are only for the country of Israel, where Jesus says: "To the ones of old it was said so, but I am telling you a new thing".
- Some things were addressed to the apostles.
- Some things were addressed to the church.
- Some things are human opinions. Paul emphasizes that.
- And some things are really the Word of God, valid for all times.
- Ant other things are determined by the ancient culture.
- Paulus said to Timothy: "Apply the word of God in the right way" (2.Tim. 1, 9-14/ 4, 2)

Mark. 2, 23 to 3, 6 – Disputes about the sabbath. In the beginning it was **only the 7th day** where God rested and also man was supposed to rest (Gen. 2, 2.)

Also in Ex. 34, 21 only **the 7th day** was supposed to be free of work. Israel was supposed to take part in the rest of God as a foretaste of God's sabbath that truly began through Christ. Because before Christ, God did not rest from His works. He chose Israel and guided them. He sent Jesus, woke Him up and took Him. He sent His Holy Spirit. Those were strong activities of God and no sign of rest anywhere. To God this only began after the perfection of the time of salvation (Hebr. 4, 1-10). God's works are still to be continued by Jesus and the Holy Spirit (the Godhead).

God's promise concerning the sabbath is not yet fulfilled and will only be activated after the time of salvation is full (Hebr. 9, 28/ 12, 22-24/ 1.Thes. 5, 23)

Only since the exile the sabbath became the faith dogma and tradition for the Jews, yes, even became a standard of the faith in Yahweh, also because of the help of the exile prophets' prophecies (Is. 56, 1-8/ 58, 13/ 66, 23/ Jer. 17, 21-27/ Ez 20.12,26,10,24 / 22,8,26/ 23,38 / 44,24/45,17/ 46,1,3,12). Especially after the return from the Babylonian captivity the sabbath became a corner stone of the Jewish piety and identity. (Neh. 9, 14/ 10, 32/ 13, 15-22). The sabbath customs that are still executed today can be traced back to the Babylonian Talmud and the exile era (in the captivity of the Babylonians) and have nothing to do with the revelation of God.

Jesus and the apostles visited the synagogue on the sabbath day to participate in the service and make use of the right to address a word of exhortation to the visitors of the service (Mark. 1, 21/ 6, 2/ Luk. 4, 16-21/ 13, 10/ Acts 13, 14+42-44/ 16, 13/ 17, 2/ 18, 4).

Jesus did not get into a conflict with His contemporaries **because of the sabbath** but **because of the interpretation** of the sabbath regulations. To Him the completion of the creation of heaven and earth (Ex 2, 1) the inevitable requirement for the sabbath. God rested of His works and man created after His image should also rest. And since the reign of God started with Jesus, He is shaking the false and religious dogma of the Jewish understanding of the sabbath. (Mark. 2, 28/ 11, 9). In the OT Yahweh is Lord over the sabbath (Lev. 23, 1/ 2.Mos. 31, 13), but since there is Jesus and God is working through Him God as the creator is still at work. Therefore it cannot be talked about any kind of sabbath rest. Only after the full completion of the work of God through Jesus and the Holy Spirit (both are godheads), which means only after the redeemed ones have entered the rest of God, and after Jesus and the Holy Spirit have completed their work – the **true**

sabbath rest is accomplished (Hebr. 4, 9). According to Deut 5, 15 the sabbath is for the people and the animals.

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And **Jesus is the fulfillment of the law**, also of the sabbath command. He was risen on the first day of the week, on a sabbath day. This day is the true completion of the Divine week of work. At this point the rest of God began. At this point the religion and lawfulness came to an end.

Mark. 3, 1-6 – Jesus is provocative.

The tension around Jesus increased. He did not try to deny it but confronts the situation. He scandalizes the wrong teachings of Judaism. In this case the sabbath: "May you do good or evil on the sabbath.." Actually the healing of the man with the crippled hand could have been delayed to the next day. There was no current need or danger. But Jesus sees through the people. They are seeking a reason to accuse Him.

Mark. 3, 1-3 - Jesus heals the man with withered hand.

This was not the first healing of Jesus on a sabbath.

In the gospels there are **seven healings on the sabbath**:

- the deliverance of the possessed in Capernaum (Mark.1, 21),
- the healing of the mother in law of Peter (Mark. 1, 29+30),
- the healing of the sick of Bethsaida (Joh. 5, 9),
- the healing of the man with the withered hand (Mark. 3, 1+2),
- the healing of the blind (Joh. 9, 14),
- the healing of the woman with the crooked spirit (Luk. 13, 10-17),
- the healing of the dropsy (Luk. 14, 1+2).

In addition there are also general statements pointing to **numerous sabbath healings** in the gospels (Mark. 1, 32-34/ Joh. 7, 21-23). Jesus wanted to redeem people of the yoke of the Pharisees' tradition and the strict and false interpretations of the Mosaic laws and regulations. He did this by tearing down the old and building the it up anew.

Mark. 3, 7-12 – The healing presence of Jesus

Jesus came to do good and to comfort. He does what the synagogue cannot do.

Mark. 3, 13-19 – The calling of the true disciples

The new leaders of the chosen people were supposed to be 12 in number like the tribes of Israel.

This number is being restored after the fall of Judas Iscariot (Acts 1, 26). This number is kept in heaven for eternity. (Matth. 19, 28/ Rev 21, 12-14). Therefore the crowd of the people of God symbolically consists of the 24 eldest (12 patriarchs and 12 apostles). Jesus gives His disciples authority over demonic spirits (Mark. 3, 14+15). This was the preparation for their coming office (Mark. 1, 34+39, Mark. 6, 7-13).

The title "**the twelve**" remained the title for the called disciples of Jesus (Mark. 4, 10/ 6, 7/ 9, 35/ 10, 32/ 11, 11/ 14, 10+17+20+43). This number "twelve" might be an indication of Israel, but at no point it is said that it talks about the "new" or "spiritual" Israel. They were only the "heart", a "remnant" of a coming, **new form of community** of the church (which did not exist yet) (Matth.16, 16-20/ Acts 1, 2-8/ Rom. 16, 25+26). **The church as such was still a secret.** (1.Cor. 2, 7/ Eph. 3, 9/ Col. 2, 2+3). It was forbidden as long as Israel and the temple existed, which means until the crucifixion and the redemption of Jesus. Only on Pentecost at the **„General Assembly“** (of the believers who were left in Israel) of the 120 (12x10) the church was birthed and revealed from God (1.Cor. 2, 7+10/ Eph. 3, 5+9/ Col. 1, 26). This secret was announced in Dan. 2, 18+19 and was applied at Pentecost (Acts 2, 5-11). **The secret is** the salvation work of Christ. (1.Cor. 2, 8), and also the calling of the Gentiles to this salvation (Rom. 11, 25/ Col. 1, 26+27/ Eph. 3, 6) and finally the whole restoration of all things in Christ being the head of all (Eph. 1, 9+10/ 1.Cor. 4, 1/ 13, 2/ 15, 51/ Eph. 5, 32/ 2.Thes. 2, 7/ 1.Tim. 3, 9+16/ 2.Tim. 1, 9+10/ Rev. 1, 20/ 10, 7/ 17, 5+7).

That Jesus had 12 disciples, is a known fact to Paul and the apostles. The 12 are being displayed as a group (1.Cor. 15, 5). Jesus had many disciples, followers and devotees. Not all of them always followed Him at the same time, think of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, the woman who anointed His feet, etc. Not all disciples were known to Jesus as real and true "disciples" because not all were necessarily doing the will of God. Jesus Himself said: Many are called, but few are chosen (Matth. 22, 14).

The name **„Peter-Kephas“**, that Mark uses from this point in His account is a riddle, after he always called him **„Simon“**. And it remains unknown why Jesus called Him that. No other disciple received a different or additional name like Peter (Matth. 16, 18/ Joh. 1, 42). A solid nature like a rock was not a character that would have applied for Peter. Maybe it was a prophetic name, to point out a goal that he was supposed to accomplish: "to become tough". Even his student Mark knows nothing of it. That Peter's name is the first in the list of the apostles refers to the fact that He was leader of the ancient church and the most important man for Mark.

Mark. 3, 20-35 – revelation of the false disciple

Mark picks up the offenses and accusations that were made against Jesus and His followers by the scribes (Mark. 3, 20+21+30), and worked them out like for example: **„He lost His mind“**, which suggests a sick, religious fanatic (Acts 26, 24/ 2.Cor. 5, 13), or that He had an **„evil spirit“**, or He would work through Satan Himself. Jesus defended Himself against His accusers in self-explanatory parables, for example: how can a

kingdom stand if it is divided against Himself (Mark. 3, 23-27).

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Jesus says: "nobody can enter the house of the strong man (steal from him and rob him, etc.), if he had not conquered him first" (Mark. 3, 27). Jesus proved that He was stronger and has the Holy Spirit (Mark. 1, 12+13) in the casting out of spirits (Mark. 3, 39).

The residence of the enmity against is in Jerusalem. The members of the High Council (Pharisees) are the ones who always oppose Jesus (comp. Mark. 2, 24/ 3, 6). All of His activities are a thorn in their side (comp. Mark. 3, 10+11), they accuse Jesus of being in a covenant with the devil (or that He can only accomplish His work through the devil).

Mark put their accusations this way:

- they say He has the „**Beelzebub**“ ,
- that He casts out demons with the help of demons,
- that He Himself is a slave and servant of the devil,
- that He has access to the power of the prince of darkness,
- and that with his help He is successful in all He does.

Jesus answers to them that this is nonsense and a contradiction in itself. A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (comp. Matth. 12, 25-29).

Mark uses the word : „**Beelzebub**“, which means Lord of the home.

The other form is „**Beelzebub**“, and means Lord of the flies and refers to the god of flies (idols of the Philistines) (2.Kin. 1, 2). Jesus speaks in Mark. 3, 27 of the „**Beelzebub**“ (Matth. 10, 25). This name which cannot be found anywhere else is a surname of the devil.

There Mark adds a major speech of Jesus.

Mark. 3, 28-30 – The sin of the „blasphemy of the Holy Spirit“

Jesus has discerned here between the blasphemy of the Son of Man and the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (Matth. 12, 31+32). One will be forgiven, and the other not.

The sin of man can be excused if he is mistaken concerning the glory of Jesus, where the identity of the Son of Man is covered in lowliness (Matth. 8, 20). But there is no excuse for the man who shuts his eyes and heart from the revealed works of the Holy Spirit that Jesus accomplishes, by tracing it back to demonic powers and therefore counts Jesus among the enemies of God. Thus the person consciously rejects Jesus' offer of salvation (Hebr. 6, 4-6/ 10, 26-31).

To compare a demon to Jesus, because of what is obviously a work of the Holy Spirit, means to reject and deny the light of the Divine grace and its forthcoming forgiveness. .

Whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit denies himself the access to the forgiveness of God.

One of the works of the Holy Spirit is to reveal sin and to cover sin (Joh. 16, 8+9). Which means the acknowledgment of sin, the conviction that you are a sinner and the testimony of forgiveness is a work of the Holy Spirit and the advocating before God.(comp. Joh. 8, 21/ 15, 22/ Rom. 8, 26+27), the mediation of the gifts (Acts 2, 38/ 11, 17/ 1.Cor. 12, 1+7/14, 1), the fruit (Gal. 5, 22) and then also our redemption (comp. Rom. 1, 4/ 8, 11+14).

To blaspheme is to say something bad about someone else, to humiliate s.o. To shame and disgrace, belongs to the defiling things that come out of the heart (Matth. 15, 19), and cuts you off from the Kingdom of God (1.Cor. 6, 10). Who blasphemes, wars directly against God. The severeness of the blasphemy is determined by revelation. Jesus (who is God) revealed in the flesh. Therefore He proclaimed forgiveness to the ones who blasphemed against the Son of Man. „Father forgive them for they don't know what they are doing“. But where God is revealed in spirit, man knows what he is doing. The more the blasphemy goes against God's revealed presence, the greater the guilt.

Mark. 3, 31-35 – The true relatives of Jesus

It is awkward that the reports of Jesus' family occurs in connection with unclean spirits in all the gospels. They are outside and try to keep Him from preaching, To Jesus His only true family are the ones who are connected with Him in the spirit, who has the spirit of Christ/ the Holy Spirit and who does the will of His father (Mark. 1, 14-20).

Mark. 4, 1-34 – The preaching at the lake and the parables

Mark only included three parables of Jesus in his gospel. Every evangelist was independently inspired by the others on what they were to include. Parables are images wrapped up in words. They are short and accurate comparisons of popular speech (Matth. 13, 10-13/ 6, 3/ 7, 14/ 15, 14/ 16, 18). Jesus really liked to use parables (Luk. 12, 16+18/ 15, 7+10), even though the people did not really understand Him in spite of the simple images. Eventually faith comes by revelation (Mark. 12, 12/ 4, 11).

For Jesus there are only two groups. Some who understand and some who don't. The ones who are inside and the ones who are outside. Even the disciples have a hard time to understand Jesus (Mark. 4, 13). A topic that is particularly highlighted by Mark (Mark. 6, 52/ 7, 18/ 8, 17+18+21+33/ 9, 10+32/ 10+38).

At this point Jesus concern is the Kingdom of God. In a mustard seed there is so much power even if its beginning is weak and unremarkable.

If it is sown once, the Divine power of growth it holds will be revealed. God and man are starting here. The beginning seems inconsiderable. It develops, not noticeable on the outside, by its own inner strength in levels of growth until its completion. "The earth brings forth of itself"... that means the Kingdom of God has its own power within itself. The seed grain has its power of life in itself, but hidden, without knowing.

The mysteries of the Kingdom of God were supposed to be revealed to the disciple by the Holy Spirit (comp. Joh. 13, 7). The others remained in stubbornness. It is not to blame on God but on the people personally, on their own decision and readiness whether they wanted to receive or not.

The parable **of the sower** was only delivered by Mark in this way.

By the parables Jesus describes for example the being, the becoming, the perfection and the coming of the Kingdom of God on this earth.

- The success of the message is determined by the hearers (Matth.13,3-8).
- **The development of the Kingdom of God:**
 - the deadline for Israel (fig tree, Luk. 13, 6-9)
 - the Lord's supper (Luk. 14, 16-24)
 - the bad vine dressers (Matth. 21, 33-44)
- **The whole development of the Kingdom of God until the end:**
 - it depends on your own co-work (Mark. 4, 26-29)
 - the involvement of dishonest means (Matth. 13, 24-30, tares)
 - growth until the world is embraced by it (Matth. 13, 31+32, mustard seed)
 - growth until the world is saturated (Matth. 13, 33, leaven)
 - first collection and then inspection (Matth. 13, 47-50, fisher net)
 - first called and then rejected (Matth. 22, 1-14, royal wedding feast)
- **The completion of the Kingdom of God**
 - Only the ones who were ready could go (Matth. 25, 1-13, the ten virgins)
 - the workers in the vine yard (Matth. 20, 1-16)
 - the entrusted talents (Matth. 25, 14-30)
 - the entrusted minas (Luk. 19, 11-27)

In parables Jesus always describes the attitude of members of God's Kingdom.

- **Their attitude towards God**
 - the humility before God (Luk. 18, 9-14)
 - they joy of the Lord, that sacrifices everything for the highest treasure (Matth. 13, 44-46)
 - the prevailing in prayer before God (Luk. 11, 5-10/ 18, 1-8)
- **Their attitude towards Jesus**
 - Only the doing and not the hearing of Jesus words lead to beatitude (Matth. 7, 24-27).
 - But it depends on the gratitude (Luk. 7, 40-47).
- **Their attitude towards the world**
 - the attitude towards their neighbors (Luk. 10, 25-37, the good Samaritan)
 - unlimited forgiveness towards their insulters (Matth. 18, 21-35)
 - unselfish joy when a sinner converts (Luk. 15, 4-7, he lost sheep; Luk. 15, 8-10, the lost coin Luk. 15, 11-32, the lost son)
- **Their relationship to earthen treasures**
 - the foolishness of trusting in perishable goods (Luk. 12, 16-21)
 - the abjection of the selfish use of the earthly treasures (16,19-31, the rich man)
 - smart use of the temporary goods for eternity (Luk. 16, 1-9)

Jesus uses in the gospel of **John** processes and things of the visible earthly world as weak parables of higher, spiritual things and works

- To the **Samaritan woman He talks of a water** that He could give her which will make her never thirst again (Joh. 4, 10-15).
- He talks of a heavenly bread where even manna is nothing compared to it (Joh. 6, 32).
- He calls Himself the light of the world (Joh. 8, 12),
- the good Shepherd (Joh. 10, 14),
- the right vine yard (Joh. 15, 1) etc.

Jesus works four miracles

The named miracles of Jesus are only as sign to prove His Divine sending. They are only highlighted, reported, mentioned and listed to confirm and testify. In reality He did not only work the accounted miracles but did and said much more (Joh. 21, 25). Whether it is concerning the miracles or the teachings, Mark only gives us a taste of it.

Mark. 4, 35 bis 5, 43 – Triumph over storms, spirits and death

And yet, all the wonderful revelations of Jesus' power can not turn the Jews away from their stubbornness and their disbelief.

- **Jesus quites the storm** (Mark. 4, 35-41). He demonstrates His power over the storm and the seas. The more the disciples get to know Jesus the more their fear must decrease. Jesus is in the boat with the disciples. He is asleep, but He is only testing their faith. It looks like He forgot about them. But they are supposed to experience Him as the mighty overcomer. Jesus is still the patron of His church. Actually the men were supposed to be used to storms from their childhood. It was a whirlwind and dangerous weather. The elements were raging. Demons were the root of the problem. But Jesus was asleep and not disturbed by them. **At this point a part of Jonah's story is revived.** (Jonah 1, 5+6). It is about a prophet on flight, of course also asleep during the same danger. **Jonah provokes the danger by His presence.** But Jesus offers the promise and assurance of safety. Because the disciples did not really understand what was going on they hesitated so long to wake up Jesus. **Their problem** was not a lack of faith or even small faith. They were scared. **„Why are you so scared?“** (Mark. 4, 40). **Jesus „threatened the wind“** (Ps. 106, 9: „and he threatened the sea...“also Ps. 89, 10). **Jesus does the same work as His father before.** In Ps. 29, 3 it says: „The voice of the Lord echoed over the water...“ If Jesus threatens and calms the wind, **He does the same**, what the Prophet Nahum said (Nah. 1, 4: **„He threatens the sea“**). The Lord also threatened the fever (Luk. 4, 39). Jesus needed **no tools**, to accomplish His mighty works. **Moses** used his stick (Ex 14, 16+21+22), **Elisha** the mantle of Elijah (2.Kin. 2, 14). But with Jesus one word is enough. The people were wondering and amazed: **„What kind of man is He?“** (Mark. 4, 41). Here the words of **Psalms 89, 9+10** or of **Psalms 107, 23-31** become practical and alive and are fulfilled. At this point Jesus proves that He is also Lord over the water and the wind. **The sea** is an image of the restless and sinful people of the world. (Dan. 7, 2+3/ Rev. 13, 1/ Is. 57, 20).
- **Jesus is Lord over the demons** (Mark. 5, 1-20). Nobody but Jesus could handle the possessed one. It is one of the acts of deliverance which are hard to understand in the NT. The boy was under the authority of an evil spirit. In Mark. 1, 25 He speaks directly to the spirit and commands Him to be cast out. **People are looking for deliverance.** Therefore they bring a mute to Jesus (Matth. 9, 32), and another time a mute and blind (Matth. 12, 22). In both cases the muteness is blamed on an evil spirit. The deaf and mute in Mark 7, 32 was suffering a physical disease, there were no demons cast out. **The gardener** was serving satan and was full of demons. There are different forms of being possessed. Jesus is Lord over all kinds of demons, and also sovereign over this case. Nobody could overcome him (Mark. 5, 4). The first question that needs to be asked is, how could a man be so possessed of a demon that not even travelers could pass the street. Luke said that he had no clothes and that after the healing He sat at Jesus' feet and was reasonable. When Jesus commanded the unclean spirits to leave, they refused to go. Had He still commanded them to leave, this might have killed the man (Mark. 9, 26, in this case the boy was lying on the floor like he was dead) The demons asked to go into the pigs. Jesus hears their plead and it leads to destruction for them. They went into pigs who threw themselves into an abyss and perished. **Here questions arise.** Does Jesus kill creatures of God, in this case the pigs? Are they not part of creation? Does He allow the demons to be cast into innocent animals? In addition they are not only pigs. They were also the property of someone. To destroy them, was to destroy foreign property. But nobody is claiming to own the pigs. And nobody asked why Jesus did that. The keepers of the pigs just asked them to go away from their area. **What happened here?** The man was reasonable and sitting at the feet of Jesus. He even wants to stay with Him and become His disciple (Luk. 10, 39/ Mark. 5, 5+18-20). The man confessed Jesus and was cleansed of all the unclean spirits. His whole lifestyle changed radically. Just like with Zacchaeus (Luk. 19, 1-10) or with the lost son, who also ended up in the pigsty (Luk.15,16-19).

An illustration: If somebody in our church was converted and experienced the grace of God, he also brings his life into order. If somebody, for example an **esoteric** he would also clean his house and equip it with all kinds of occult things after his conversion. So if somebody was an **alcoholic**, he would clean his house of all alcoholic drinks. Or if he was a **smoker** he would throw away the cigarettes. The people **in Ephesus** were dealing with witchcraft and they all rid themselves of their books and burned them publicly (Acts 19, 19-20).

Here the same thing could have happened. The man himself was the owner of the pigs and he himself could have caused it that the pigs were chased away and thrown into the abyss. Nobody could say anything against that. It was his property and he could do with it whatever he liked. And in addition the pig was considered an "unclean" animal. He probably said: Jesus if you can deliver me I can live without the pigs and live a clean life. This could be the consequence of his conversion and deliverance. And the servants were getting scared. Because if something like that would continue they would lose their jobs.

Mark. 5, 21- 43 - Jesus is the Lord over sickness and death.

Which is a contrast; on one hand the people ask Jesus to go away and in the next moment someone falls down before Jesus and asks Him to come to his house, in this case even one of the leaders of the synagogue. Jesus left the feast that Levi had prepared for him. And the people followed Him because they wanted to be witnesses of His failure or His success.

On the road there is also the healing of the woman with the blood issue. Mark has so much information that he puts in his texts and includes them in the major stories as small in between. Like with the healing of the woman with the blood issue. It is a delay and a test of Jairus' patience. While Jesus was still healing the woman's sickness, Jairus receives the message that his daughter had died and that he should not consult the Master any more. But Jesus says "Fear not". He encourages Him.

Jesus takes his three apostles Peter, James and John. Those three were later supposed to be the witnesses of the happenings of the world redemption. These are the **three chosen ones** among the called. But at the same time they were also to become „one" and support him during the redemption. (Matth. 18, 19). When they came to the house there was a crowd. In the midst of all the chaos Jesus said: "the child is only asleep" Luke only adds: "the people knew that she had died"... All three evangelists said: "The girl was only sleeping. The same thing Jesus said about Lazarus: „Our friend is only sleeping" (Joh. 11, 11). Even though He died and was already decaying. To Jesus death is only some kind of sleep. Jesus commanded to chase the crying people out of the house. This has two reasons: First their presence was inappropriate and dispensable. And secondly they were mourning over somebody who was not dead but asleep. The faith of Jesus in action.

Mark is the only one who mentions the word of command to death: „**Talitha kumi**". Mark loves it to use the foreign words of the miracle (for example **Hephata**, Mark. 7, 34). Jesus often laid on His hands when he healed the sick (Mark. 5, 23/ 6, 5).

Mark. 6, 1-6 - A prophet is not without honor except in His own house

Jesus faces disbelief wherever he goes: „Where did He get all of this?" He did not get this wisdom and abilities - which they all heard of -from His family, it must have been given to Him. Mark expresses their attitude towards Jesus with the words: "they took offense at Him". They rejected Him because they knew Him from His childhood and also know His family.

In Mark. 6, 3 the human father of Jesus is not mentioned. Only that He is **the son of Mary**. Maybe this is a hidden indication of the virgin birth of Jesus. Further there are four brothers of Jesus mentioned by name. **James**, one of Jesus brothers became the leader of the first church in Jerusalem. (Acts 12, 17/ Gal. 1, 19).

The evangelists highlight, that Jesus did not mighty works in Nazareth because of their disbelief. Some healings already happened **by the laying on of hands** in the past. Therefore healings by laying on of hands were not considered miracles by the authors of the new testaments. It was nothing extraordinary.

Mark. 6, 7-13 – Sending and assigning the disciples

Jesus expects faith, especially of His disciples. They are supposed to continue His work. „**He gave them power**", the ability and the right, "over the unclean spirits", to cast them out (Mark. 1, 26). This authority was supposed to be confirmed by their message (Mark. 6, 13/ 1, 32-34+39), and therefore they healed many sick (Mark. 3, 10). Their assignment was a sign of the coming of God's Kingdom.

Only Mark reports that the disciples anointed the sick with oil (olive oil). This happened for two reasons: because of its healing attributes (Luk. 10, 34/ Jam. 5, 14) and secondly because of its symbolic character as representing Jesus authority. **To anoint the sick with oil** is and was an ancient Christian tradition(Jam. 5, 14).

The disciples were not supposed to be the burden of anyone. Where ever they were received they were supposed to make use of the hospitality. They were not supposed to insist when they faced rejection. They also received authority over the unclean spirits. Their assignment was the continuation of the sending of Jesus.(Joh. 20, 21).

Mark. 6, 14-29 – Herod's judgment of Jesus and John

It is the same Herod of the Passion Story. He is caught by His tenants.

He kills John the baptist, the „**voice of God**“ (Matth. 3, 3/ Mark. 1, 3/ Luk. 3, 4/ Joh. 1, 23).

Therefore Jesus does not talk to Him (Luk. 23, 7-15, bes. V.9), because He already heard the „voice of God“ and killed it. In the end He reveals himself as the voice of God (Acts 12, 22).

Herod also wanted to kill Jesus, but he was afraid of the people.

Herod believed that John the baptist had risen from the dead when he heard of Jesus.

He must have had a terribly bad conscience and was probably scared. Because if someone came back from Hades he was not a usual person any more.

Mark. 6, 30-33 – the return of the disciples

Here the disciples of Jesus are called „**apostle**“. They were sent from Jesus Himself. They were the ones sent by Jesus. According to Heb. 3, 1 Jesus Himself was an apostle (with reference to Is. 48, 16/ 61, 1).

Mark. 6, 34-56 – feeding of the five thousands

In this chapter we can find great miracles that made a big impression on the Jews. The miracles of the feeding and the walking on the water. As well as many healings of the sick. The feeding gave comfort to the people that they would not starve if they followed Him. He would not beg for bread (Ps. 37, 25).

The requirement of the miracle was:

- the people had to encamp before the Lord. Because God is the God of order (1.Cor. 14, 33). The people were not supposed to rebel against the order that Jesus gave them.
- Somebody had to share the bread and put it into Jesus' hands. Without true commitment God cannot work..
- There had to be tools (people) of God to share and serve. The distributors were not supposed to distribute the gifts (bread) of God, otherwise they would be throwing the gifts of God into a barrel without bottom.
- In the end the leftovers will be gathered carefully and nothing was supposed to be lost. This act suggests to deal with the blessings of God carefully.

Mark wants to show that without our active co-work Jesus cannot work mighty miracles.

Jesus goes to all the cities and markets to teach and preach, heal all kinds of diseases. Our text tells us of one miracle after another. The daughter of Jairus, the woman with the issue of blood, the two blinds, etc. The need of the people was incredibly severe. Jesus is full of compassion. **The people perish spiritually**, because it does not receive the right spiritual food. The people are spiritually confused and lost their way like sheep without shepherds. The harvest is plenty. We should ask God for workers for God's harvest, that He should send workers into His harvest.

Mark. 6, 45-56 – Jesus walking on the sea

This part proves that Jesus is also the **Lord over the elements**. At first disciples believed they would see a phantom. They cried out of consternation (Mark. 2, 12/ 5, 42). The disciples here are spiritually blind (Mark. 3, 5). Water is untamable. Jesus also works miracles greater than that. The turning of water into wine belongs to it (Joh. 2, 11). He reveals the glory and the disciples believed in Him. Jesus basically works His miracles for only one reason: to bring people to the faith in Him.

Mark. 7, 1-23 - Jesus and the human statutes

Statutes are requirements, regulations and laws, that people gave themselves. It is human commands and usually refer to exterior things (Gal. 4, 3+9/ Col. 2, 8+20), and they enslaved themselves, like for example the cleaning rituals. Those were „**traditions of the old**“. Those are not the regulations of Moses' law but the rules of the rabbis. Jesus does not get into the questions of the cleaning rituals too much, He uses the opportunity to tear down the mask of the ones who pretended to be worried. He calls the piety of His opponents hypocrisy. It is possible to make God's law invalid by human statutes. And it shows that the root of all evil is deeper. It is right in the heart, nowadays we would say in our sub-conscience.

Mark. 7, 24-30 – faith of a Syro-Phoenician

Markus reports how Jesus goes past the border of Galilee 3 times (Mark. 4, 35/ 5, 20/ 6, 32-52/ 7, 24 to 8, 10). This is His first and only time to Palestine which shows that He also wanted the gospel to be preached to the whole world (Mark. 13, 10/ 14, 9). Therefore Jesus was the first one to go to the Gentiles. It was supposed to remain a secret what He did there and the faith of the woman required a lot of Him (Matth. 15, 24). This woman was Greek, but not according to her birth because she was a Syro- Phoenician (Matth. 15, 22), but according to the culture she was a Gentile (Joh. 7, 35/ Acts 16, 1). Her daughter had an unclean spirit (Mark. 1, 23/ 5, 2). She convinced Jesus and talked Him into helping her. That was a deliverance **from the distance** where the person did not even have to be there. The mother received the confirmation of her daughters' healing without her being there.

The **counterpart of this** is the healing of the servant of the **officer of Capernaum** (Matth.8, 5-13). Both people were healed even though Jesus did not see them an lay hands on them. In both cases the evangelists did not even see Jesus working a miracle. He was just reacting to their faith of the ones who asked Him. (Mark. 7, 29/ Matth. 8, 13).

Mark. 7, 31-37 - Healing of a deaf-mute

Only Mark tells of this miracle. It builds the en of a narration cycle (Mark. 6, 32 to 7, 37), and leads to a confession of Jesus by the people (Mark. 7, 37). This healing also symbolizes the opening of the ears of the disciples (Mark. 8, 18+27-30). In Mark. 8 it is about the confession of Peter (Mark. 8, 27-30). This healing of the deaf-mute is referring to Is. 35, 3-6.

Jesus casts out the demons and heals the sick that was a great and important part of His ministry. It is what made Jesus popular in Galilee (Mark. 1, 44-45/ 5, 20+43).

Here Jesus was in a foreign country. From **Tyre** over **Sidon** and back to **Decapolis** near the sea of Genezareth, which was like Tyre an "only" Jews country. Paganism and superstition was widely spread. But especially the gentiles had an open ear for Jesus (Mark. 8, 11).

Jesus has to avoid a crisis (riot) because the Jews and Herod were looking for Him. John the baptist was just recently killed at that point.

Awkward healing. He took Him away from the crowd and put His finger in his ears and touched his tongue with his saliva, then He looked to heaven, sighed and said to the deaf-mute: "**Effata**", which means open up. In other healings Jesus did not sigh. Mark likes to describe healings as a process and development. He advises the **daughter of Jairus to eat**. The blind of Bethsaida (Mark. 8, 22-26) was healed in several levels. Also here Jesus uses His finger and saliva, like here and there. **The deaf-mute could only barely talk.** His organ of speech was withered. Jesus took the sick aside. He did not want to feed their superstition. He wanted to treat him in quietness, and not be disturbed. Since Jesus could not minister to the deaf-mute with words He had to address him with other strong images. Almost like in a school for deaf-mutes, He talks to him in sign language. In Mark. 9, 25 there is also a deaf-mute man but he was treated totally different. He became deaf-mute because of a demon. **Demons prefer to block and occupy the doors to our senses.** Therefore there were so many blind, deaf, mute and lames in Jesus era. The „possession“ of the people back then was great and widely spread.

Mark. 8, 1-9 – Feeding of the four thousand

Need is not always a sign of being forsaken by God, but can also hit you on God's way. It is usually a test and trial, or God wants to show us a new thing and take us to the next level. Here with 7 only 4000 are being fed and also only 7 baskets remain left over. In Mark. 6 with 5 breads, 5000 were fed and still 12 baskets were left over. Jesus wanted to tell sth to the disciples. Mark. 8, 18-21 does not answer to the appearances of the Pharisees or the righteousness of works which they represent.

Mark. 8, 10-21 – requirement of signs and warning

The pharisees only wanted to dispute and argue with Jesus (Mark. 1, 13/ 10, 2/12, 15), or tried to make Him tell them the source of His authority (Mark. 3, 22-30/ 11, 27-33/ Deut. 13, 2-5/ 18,18+22). For this reason they asked of Him a sign from heaven so that they could recognize Divine legitimation (the evidence of His sending). In the Old Testament they used to have **stream** to ask God and interpret His answer. (Judg. 6, 36-40/ 7,13-14). It was used to ask God for a sign (Deut. 4, 1-8) to confirm His sending of God, the presence of God and to be reassured.

At the point of intersection between the Old and New Testament the people of God were casting **lots** (Acts 1, 26). But then all of that stopped because they had the faith in the Holy Spirit who is guiding them concretely (Rom. 8, 4+14+16/ 1.Cor. 2,10-16). And for the church there was even given „**the gift of leadership**“ (1.Cor. 12, 28) and that is how the Saints are know taught and lead by the Holy Spirit. The **anointing** and the **presence of the Holy Spirit** (the godhead) was a sufficient sign to them (1.Joh. 2, 20+27).

We are slightly addicted to miracles and always want a **visible sign** for the work of God. But Jesus does not answer to this addiction of His contemporaries. He does not answer to them. Because He Himself is already among them as a sign of God from heaven.(Luk. 2, 34/ . Joh. 3, 2/ 12, 37 / Matth. 12, 38-39/ 13, 58).

Mark. 8, 14-21 – Be careful of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducee

- **The Pharisees** are the complacent ones, they are proud of themselves that judge others and set themselves apart from others. They have rejected God over the statutes and regulations of man and tried to earn the grace of God by works.
- **The Sadducees** did not believe in the redemption and judgment of God. Therefore they were undisciplined and conformed to the spirit of that time. It was a worldly hierarchy marked by immorality and indifference. They were the educated and rich ones, the lofty ones among the people. From them the disbelief flows through the whole nation. It were the priests

above all.

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They believed the law of Moses and only believed in their own logic and judgment and take this as a measurement of the word of God. They believed in the law but not in the prophets.

The unfaith was at first an issue of the scribes, but soon the whole nation was saturated by it like a leaven. **Jesus warns of being judgmental** like the Pharisees and the Sadducee Old or new? Strict or der lax? Jesus says „**be careful**“, that you do not lose your freedom. In every party and group you submit your conviction under the group. And this is how you become a victim of outer appearances.

Mark. 8, 22-26 – healing of the blind in Bethsaida

Only Mark tells us of this healing, and also in detail. The counterpart of this healing can be found in Mark. 7, 31-37. It is the **only miracle that Jesus did in two steps and that happened at a pace.**

At first a „little seeing“. The sick did not make a lot of effort to be able to see. But only the second laying on of hands finishes the healing process and lets him see. With this description the Almighty miracle power of Jesus is mixed with nature. The healing process was started by the touch of the eyes with His saliva (Joh. 9, 1-7). The **saliva** and the **laying on of hands** and wake up the faith of the blind and therefore the ability to see is being restored step by step. „**To see**“ was a metaphor for „**understanding**“ in the NT era. This healing is also a message and an image of Israel and the disciples. They see the right things but they only understand in part. **Jesus guided the blind out of the village**, probably to connect with Him personally and to protect him from the nosy crowd and get him out of their influence. All healing miracles also have a **prophetic character** for the work of God on Israel. Jesus wanted to express that the right understanding of His sending could only be through a personal relationship with Jesus without influence of the crowd, the other Jews.

Mark. 8, 27-30 – Are you the Messiah?

At this point the disciples receive sight themselves.

The church around Jesus is a community for the revelation of the glory of God. And this community only results of the presence and revelation of the Holy Spirit. The true Christian faith is a **Revelation-Religion** only. Everything has to be literally revealed to the believers, only at this point they can truly believe. All that the believer has always has to be imparted, unlocked and confirmed by revelation. (Joh. 14, 26/ 15, 20/ 16, 4). **The Holy Spirit** has taken the part of Jesus for the believers till today (Joh. 14, 16/ 16, 7). The announced assignment of the Messiah in the OT was the sending of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2, 33) and to renew humanity by the Holy Spirit (Is. 11, 2/ 42, 1). And this only happened after Jesus was lifted up and went to the father and His glorified body and there regained His Divine power and position. And then He asked the father to send the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit which was sent connects with His testimony of Jesus and the personal testimony of Jesus (from the gospel), and this is the „**two-edged sword**“ of the spirit (Joh.16, 7-15/ Eph. 6, 16).

Mark. 8, 31-33 – First proclamation of suffering

The confession of Peter (Mark. 8, 29) is the center of the gospel of Mark.

Here the disciples receive divine revelation of the Holy Spirit of Jesus, that He is the Christ, the **Son of the living God.**

- Before they were asking, **who is this Jesus?**
- After the confession of Peter he puts his emphasis on the cross and the resurrection of Jesus: : **What is His assignment as the Messiah?**

Until that point the people did not understand the identity of Jesus and the religious leaders fought and criticized Him. In the mean time Jesus had already reached the most northern part of the promised land, and there where the hostile armies (of Babylon, etc.) pressed into the promised land. The judgment, the ruin came from them. And now the salvation and redemption of Christ would also take its course from there (Is. 14, 31/ 41, 25/ Jer. 1, 13-16/ Jer. 47,2).

Like the water from the five sources of the Jordan **flows down** to the Dead Sea, the way of Jesus goes **down** to Jerusalem, to take the city for God and therefore fulfill all that was prophesied by the prophets.

Mark. 8, 34 to 9, 1 – Discipleship of suffering

This section is the fourth main part in the gospel of Mark.
Here Jesus began to teach His disciples, or started to explain to them how their future would look like.

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He told them that,

- **„He would suffer a lot..“** (Is. 53, 4+11)
Jesus prophesied that everything must be like that and that His sending and His Messianic assignment needs to be fulfilled. He says everything is necessary. That this is the Divine plan for Him. Peter did not want to believe it (Mark. 8, 33). Jesus called him „satan“, as the true originator of such thoughts. The command was not referring to Peter but to satan personally. Peter was unknowingly used as the mouth of satan. God's will concerning Jesus was the cross, and He refused to leave this path.
- **„He would be rejected..“**
A suffering Messiah brought about new thoughts concerning His discipleship. The ones who followed Him were not supposed to live better than the Master (Ps. 118, 22/ Matth. 21, 42/ Luk. 17, 25/ Acts 4, 11/ 1.Pet. 2, 4+7). **Jesus is the chief corner stone**, the completion of redemption who was rejected. He even becomes the stumbling block of the Jews (Hag. 1, 9/ Zach. 1, 16/ Is. 8, 14/ 28, 16/ Zach. 3, 9/ 4, 7). And Jesus is still the **stumbling block** of the Jews (Matth. 21, 42/ Acts 4, 11/ Rom. 9, 33/ Eph. 2, 20/ 1.Cor. 3, 11).
- **„He would be killed.“** (16, 21/ Luk. 9, 22/ Acts 3, 15/ 2, 23)
All of this happened according to God's plan. The prophecies of the Old Testament proved the counsel of God (Acts 3, 18/ 4, 28/ 13, 29).
- **„and that He would rise after three days..“**
And Jesus was risen by the intervention of God Himself (Acts 2, 32+36/ 3, 13-17/ 4, 10/ 5, 30-31/ 7, 52/ 10, 39-40/ 13, 27-30/ 17, 31/ 1.Thess. 3, 14).

To the disciples the promised Kingdom of God reached a whole new dimension, for which they had not yet been ready (Mark. 8, 32).

Mark. 9, 2-13 - glorification: glory in spite of suffering (Matth. 17, 1-9/ Luk 9, 28)

While He announces His suffering to the disciples He Himself was glorified. For this He only picks His favorite disciples and also forbids them to tell anyone what they had seen before His resurrection. **His face and His garments were glorified.** Moses and Elijah appear before Him, the representatives of the OT (Law and Prophet) They talk to Him about the Divine act of salvation (Luk. 24, 27/ Mark. 9, 31). This glorification shows clearly and also rebukes the opinion of the crowd, that Jesus in **neither Moses nor Elijah**, and that He is also not one of the prophets. In this appearance the disciples receive the divine answer which is highlighted by the voice from heaven (Mark. 9, 7). What Jesus Himself experienced during His baptism (Mark. 1, 11), the disciples have to hear for themselves (Deut. 18, 15), and like the Roman centurion had to see for themselves (Mark. 15, 39).

The **glorification of Jesus** was not for the ones who did not believe. It was not even for all disciples. It was only for His chosen ones (Matth. 16, 16) . During the glorification they learn that He chose death for Himself and that in spite of death the victory is surely His and that therewith the work of the law and the prophecies of the prophets would be fulfilled.

The glorification of Jesus **was the opening of His passion.** At this point He aligned Himself once more with the eternal counsel of God (Matth. 17, 1-9/ Luk. 9, 28-36). This glorification was the supernatural start of Jesus earthly way of suffering. The hidden indwelling divine glory broke forth out of His earthen vessel and caused Him to shine in His heavenly glance. This change of His outer appearance connected with the voice of God from heaven and the appearance of the mighty witnesses of the old covenant was supposed to be a powerful encouragement of the faith of Jesus and His 3 disciples.

Mark. 9, 14-29 – The epileptic boy

At first the disciples failed in this case. Jesus wants them to face what happens when He is not with them anymore. All of a sudden the disciples are helpless. The statement of Jesus: **“oh you unfaithful people“**, points to spiritual failure. The lack of faith in God (Mark. 9, 33/ 10, 27).

Mark. 9, 30-32 – Second announcement of suffering

Here He announces that the Son of Man would **fall into the hands of the Gentiles and His enemies**, and will be delivered over to them. This terminology is a connection to the betrayal of Judas (Mark. 3, 19/ 14, 41/ Luk. 24, 7) and His crucifixion by the sinners (Gentiles)(Is. 53, 6+12/ Acts 2, 23/ Rom. 8, 32).

Mark. 9, 33 bis 10, 37 – Teaching the disciples

Jesus explains His disciples and the children what true greatness is. The disciples were arguing among who was the greatest among them. In Mark. 9, 35 Jesus says that you can have a higher position in His Kingdom by serving (Mark. 10, 43-45).

Mark. 10, 13-16 - Jesus and the children

Parents brought their children before Jesus to let Him touch and bless them. They had a responsibility for their children. The disciples wanted to reject them, saying the children were not old enough that they could understand Jesus. But Jesus said, let them come, because the Kingdom of God belongs to them.

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Mark. 10, 17-27 – Warning of wealth and riches

It is not that riches are bad, Jesus is more concerned about our attitude towards it: We should seek Jesus (The Kingdom of God) and not riches. The ones who love Him can expect all blessings from Him and depend on Him. Jesus says you cannot serve both God and mammon (Matth. 6, 24). The freedom of wealth (possession, job, family) and a freely chosen poverty that Jesus demands was not known in the OT in this way (Mark. 6, 8/ 10, 28/ Matth. 10, 9/ Luk. 18, 18-30). Through the asking of God for bread in the Lord's prayer (Matth. 6, 11), Jesus expresses His total faith in God as a standard. While in the OT wealth was almost always the requirement of a blessed life, it was worth striving for and a positive sign of divine blessing (Gen. 24, 35/ 26,12/ Deut. 15, 6/ 1.Sam. 17, 25/ Job 42, 12). But in the New Testament it is the other way around. Why? Here Jesus became poor to make us rich by His poverty (2.Cor. 8, 9/ Phil. 4, 19/ 1.Cor. 1, 5/ Rom. 10, 12). It applies to spiritual wealth, which is expressed by independence of wealth. Christians are supposed to be like Christ. Clean on the inside. The reason is the wealth of God (Rom. 2, 4/ 9, 23/ 11, 26/ Eph. 2, 4). In revelation the wealth addressed is material as well as spiritual (Rev. 6, 15/ 13, 16/ 18, 3+15+17) (Rev. 2, 9/ 3, 17/ 5, 12).

Mark. 10, 32-34 – Third proclamation of suffering

For the third time Jesus explains what will happen to Him. Since He knew the prophetic scrolls very well, he could calculate and assume what He would have to face (Mark. 10, 33-34).

He concretely prophesies that ..

- They would deliver Him over (Mark. 8, 31)
- They would sentence Him **to death** (Mark. 14, 64)
- and deliver Him to the **Gentiles** (the Romans) since it was not allowed to the high council to execute the death sentence (Mark. 15, 1+9-10)
- before they executed Him (Mark. 15, 24-25) the Romans would mock Him (Mark. 15, 18+20),
- spit at Him (Mark. 15, 19),
- and scourge Him (Mark. 15, 5).

Mark. 10, 35-40 – Plea of the sons of Zebedaeus

In Matth. 20, 20-23 the mother (Salome, a sister of Jesus' mother, view Matth. 27, 56/ Mark. 15, 40/ Joh. 19, 25) and asked for a privileged position on His side. Here the brothers plead for themselves (James and John – they were **cousins** of Jesus). They wanted to be seated to His left and right in His Kingdom of glory (the Messianic Kingdom). Maybe they thought their relationship with Him being one family would help them. Therefore they asked Him personally in a quiet moment. So that we have two different reports. .

Jesus emphasizes, that whoever wants to have a seat with Him in His glory also needs to take part in His suffering and drink from the **cup of death and suffer**. It is a biblical image that is pointing to His upcoming passion (Is. 51, 17).

The cup was a common metaphor for joy (Ps. 23, 5/ 116, 13) or also as in this case the judgment (Ps. 75, 7-8/ Jer. 25, 15-28). Jesus applied this image on Himself, because He was about to drink from this cup freely (Mark. 14, 36/ 15, 34). The same thing can be seen here with the image of the baptism (it is talking about the baptism of suffer), the pain that God puts on Him (Is. 53/ Job 22, 11/ Ps. 69, 2+15/ Is. 43, 2/ Luk. 12, 50/ 9, 22).

James, one of the sons of Zebedaeus, was killed by Herod 44 AD (Acts 12, 2). His brother John, however probably died at a high age of a regular death (Joh. 20, 18-22).

Mark. 10, 41-45 – Duty of the first is to serve.

Jesus is the firstborn of God. He humbled Himself before all creation and took on the likeness of a servant and became the servant of all.

Jesus came „to serve and give His life as the price for many“ (Mark 10, 45).

Here a couple of NT terminologies of redemption

- to buy on the market (slave market) - 1.Cor. 6, 20/ 7, 23/ 2.Pet. 2, 1/Rev. 5, 9/ 14, 3-4.
- to redeem on the slave market - Gal. 3, 13/ 4, 5/ Eph. 5, 16/ Col. 4, 5.
- **Ransom** – Matth. 20, 28/ Mark. 10, 45.
- to redeem someone with ransom – Luk. 24, 21/ Tit. 2, 14/ 1.Pet. 1, 18.
- **To buy off** – Luk. 21, 28/ Rom. 3, 24/ 8, 23/ 1.Cor. 1, 30/ Eph. 1, 7+14/ 4, 30/ Col. 1, 14/ Hebr. 9, 15/ 11, 35.
- **Deliverance** / redemption – Luk. 1, 68/ 2, 38/ Hebr. 9, 12.

Jesus gave Himself to redeem all (1.Tim. 2, 6), so that the ones who were under the law could be redeemed/ or bought off Gal. 4, 5. The redemption was an exclusive work of God, that was executed by Jesus (Rom. 3, 24). Therefore we can be made righteous without human effort (1.Cor. 1, 30). Because now Jesus became the redeemer of God for all of us (Eph. 1, 7/ Col. 1, 14).

Mark. 10, 46-52 – The blind Bartimaeus encounters Jesus. This is the last account of healing in the gospel of Mark. Mark mentions the family name „Son of Timaeus“, which pointed to the fact that he was later a part of the church and also well known.

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Bartimaeus cried: „Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me“ (Mark. 10, 47). Many became upset, not because he was crying so loud but rather because He praised and proclaimed Jesus as the son of David.

„Son of David“, is the title of Jesus, which is mentioned in Marks' gospel. And he calls Jesus the Messiah and a successor of David (2.Sam. 7, 8-16). „Son of David“ was the acknowledged title for the king Messiah (Is. 11, 1-5/ Jer. 23, 5-6/ Ez. 34, 23-25/ Matth. 1, 1/ 9, 27/ 12, 23/ 15, 22/ Rom. 1, 3). The Jews were sure that the Messiah would be a son of David (comp. Joh. 7, 41-42/ Ps. 89, 4-5/ Is. 9, 1-6/ Hos. 3, 5/ Amos 9, 11). Because David himself called the Messiah „Lord“ (Mark. 12, 36-37/ Ps. 110, 1).

This blind Bartimaeus calls out what the seeing but unbelieving Jews did not want to see. When Jesus asked Him what He can do for him, he answered: „Rabbuni“, I want to see again (Mark. 10, 51).

Rabbuni – this is a special personal name and means „my Lord, my Master“ (Joh. 20, 16). Bartimaeus received sight and followed Jesus on His way and also became a follower of Jesus (Mark. 8, 34). Whose eyes are opened from the Lord is also ready to follow Jesus on His way. This healing finishes the important section about the discipleship (Mark. 8, 31 bis 10, 52).

Mark. 11, 1-10 – Entering Jerusalem

This 5th main part of the gospel of Mark describes Jesus' work in Jerusalem

- He judges the Jewish religious leaders for their rejection they had towards the messengers of God and especially towards His son
- He warns of the coming judgment over Jerusalem and all the people.

The donkey upon which Jesus enters Jerusalem. The donkey was outside of the city in a village. It is emphasized that it was an untamed donkey and that nobody ever rode it.

Mark. 11, 11-33 - Charge and judgment

Before Jesus enters Jerusalem, **he condemns the fig tree**. It is the only miracle where Jesus punishes. It is a clear prophetic symbolic act for Israel. The tree bore leaves but no fruit. An image of the people of Israel. It should be a warning example (Luk. 13, 6-9). The tree was promising, but unfruitful. An indication for the spiritual unfruitfulness of Israels.

The fig tree was withered to the roots and totally dried out.

- In the OT threats of **judgment for Israel** the destruction of the fig tree was announced(Jer. 5, 17/ 8, 13/ Hosea 2, 14/ 9, 10+16 / Micah 7, 1/ Joel 1, 7+12).
- **figs** were also one of the fruits that messengers brought when they returned (Numb. 13, 24)
- **Nathaniel** was lying under the fig tree and wondered „what good thing could come from Nazareth“ (Joh. 1, 48).

Instead of **explaining the image of the parable**, Jesus simply exhorts His disciples: „Have faith in God“, and teaches them how to pray.

The cleaning of the temple (Mark. 11, 15-17)

The dealing with ritually unclean things was blooming along with the trading of the tools which were necessary for the ritual: wine, oil, salt, holy animals and birds for sacrifice, etc.

In Palestine there was money around from at least three different sources at that time:

- Imperial – Roman money,
- Greek money from the provinces,
- and Jewish money from Palestine itself.

The money exchangers kept the required Jewish currency at their stands, for the temple taxes (Ex. 30, 12-16). Every male Jew had to pay it from the age of twenty. They exchanged them against the Greed and Roman coins, which were imprinted with portraits of people and were therefore considered for idol worship.

With the exchange rate there was a lot of corruption involved. In addition there were always carriers going trough this part of the temple using it as a short cut, and therefore made this area a permanent

transition area. (Mark. 11, 16).

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Jesus was upset about this misuse of this area of the temple. He chased them all out of the temple. Because outside in the city there were enough markets where you could trade and sell. **This event aroused the attention of the attendees** and Jesus started to teach, especially what the temple was actually there for referring to the Old Testament (Is. 56, 7) and that God wishes that the Gentiles as well as the Jews would use the temple as a place of service for God (Joh. 12, 20). This thought seemed to be important to Mark concerning his readers in Rome.

He went into the forecourt of the temple, not the Holiest of Holies. He was all about restoration of the temple (Mark. 14, 58/ 15, 29+30). „*Judgment starts in the house of God...*“

When the religious leaders heard this they thought of ways to kill Jesus (Mark. 11, 18-19).

- because they also made profits in those deals
- they were afraid of him, because he was popular among the people and had authority
- all the pilgrims who came from all the ancient world to celebrate Pass Over at Jerusalem, were amazed and taken aback by Jesus and His teachings (Mark 1, 22+27/ 6, 2/ 7, 37/ 10, 26).
- His popularity kept the Jewish authorities from arresting Him right away.

Mark. 12, 1-12 – Parable of the „bad vine dressers“ (Matth. 21, 33-46/ Luk. 20, 9-19)

Jesus Himself spoke of His enemies in parables many times. In images He describes how the leaders and authorities of the Jewish nation dealt with the servants and messengers of God

It is interesting how exact Mark describes the treatment of the servants

- the first one is beaten on the back and sent home empty handed
- the second one is bruised on the head, mocked and humiliated
- the third one was killed

The main idea is: several sendings: increasing abuse and increasing stubbornness.

With this parable Jesus addresses the high council, who asked him and tried to plan a trap for Him (Mark. 11, 27/ 12, 12) With this parable He also tries to warn them from the consequences of their actions (Is. 5, 1-7).

Mark. 12, 13-17 – The question of taxes

They wanted to trap Jesus and catch Him. Hypocritically they welcome Him as a Master and try to disguise their true motives. **Should man pay taxes to the Emperor?** The money went directly to the Emperor. It was commonly hated because it was a symbol of the surrender of the Jews under Rome (Acts. 5, 37).

They use His answer during the charge in court. Jesus had no Roman coin, because it carried the picture of the Emperor. This meant a trespass against the command concerning idol worship. He doesn't even look at it. He just asked what was on the coin: „the Emperor“ (Mark. 12, 16-17). It was a denar (Mark. 6, 37), a small Roman coin, the only piece of money which was accepted for the payment of the Imperial tax. Next to the picture the coin also had the Latin inscription: „Tiberius Caesar Augustus. Son of the divine Augustus“ and on the back there was the picture of the Emperor with the inscription: „Pontifex Maximus“ (high priest), which must have been a serious abomination for the Jews. If the Jews used the coin as an official tool for payment, they acknowledged the divine authority of the Roman Emperor.

Jesus answered with wisdom: „***Give to the Emperor what belongs to him and to God the things which belong to Him.***“

At this point Jesus declares **understandable for the Jews** war between the Israelites and the Emperor who claims to be like God. What of Israel belonged to the Emperor? Nothing. It is the nation of God, His own possession. His own cities. At the same time He suggested that He had nothing to give to him. (Luk. 23, 2).

Eventually this became the pretended reason for the charge of the Jews before Pilate, to get him to crucify Jesus.: „He rebelled against Rome and the Emperor.“ (Luk. 20, 20-26).

The Romans who heard His answer did not understand the message and thought it was in order. But the Jews understood the message of His answer differently.

Mark. 12, 18-27 – the question of resurrection (Matth. 22, 23-33/ Luk. 20, 27-40)

This time the **Sadducees** asked him a catch question. They formed the upper class and belonged to the ancient families of the priesthood. They had much influence and were usually friendly with the Romans. They basically did not believe in resurrection, the last judgment and the existence of angels and demons. (Acts 23, 6-8). To them only the five books of Moses were mandatory.

The gospel of Mark only mentions the Sadducees at his point. They also approach Jesus in a hospital way and call Him „Master“ . To them it is about the honor between brothers“ (5.Mos. 25, 5-10).

After **resurrection, whose wife will she be?** They are actually making fun of resurrection. Jesus explains to them that after resurrection there will be no such thing as marriage.

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Marriage does only exist in the present world order, where death reigns, necessary and sufficient so that mankind would not die out. The angels, whose existence the Sadducees deny (Acts 23, 8), are immortal and **live according to a different order**, where a marriage-like relationship and reproduction is not necessary. Their whole life is dedicated to the relationship with God. And man will also live in this condition later.

Jesus rebukes the Sadducees and shows them how they are wrong, because also in the **Pentateuch** (5 books of Moses) there is faith in resurrection (Mark. 12, 26-27/ Ex. 3, 6). God is not a God of the dead. He was always the God of the fathers. What He could not be if they stopped to exist after their death. Jesus openly tells the Sadducees **“you are wrong“** (Mark. 12, 24), if you deny the resurrection and life after death.

Mark. 12, 28-34 – What is the highest command? (Matth. 22, 34-40/ Luk. 10, 25-28)

A scribe (probably a Pharisee), who had overheard the discussion of Jesus with the Sadducee was impressed by Jesus answer and asked Him one of the most argued questions of Judaism. The scribes usually referred to 613 single commands (365 restraints and 248 commands) in the law. He points out the command of loving God as yourself and loving your neighbor. Because these include everything. All attempts of Jesus' enemies to failed and nobody dared to ask Him another question. (Mark. 12, 34).

Mark. 12, 35-37 - Jesus, the son of David (Matth. 22, 41-46/ Luk. 20, 41-44)

The scribes were of the opinion that the Messiah had to be an heir of David. The Jews believed strongly in the Messianic sonship of David (Mark. 10, 47/ Joh. 7, 41-42). It was a conviction that was based upon the OT (2.Sam. 7, 8-16/ Ps. 89, 4-5/ Is. 9, 1-6/ 11, 1-12/ Jer. 23, 5-6/ 30, 9/ 33, 15-17+22/ Ez. 34, 23-24/ 37, 24/ Hos. 3, 5/ Amos 9, 11). The scribes were right about that but their teaching concerning this matter was incomplete (Mark.9,11-13).

Jesus went even further saying, that the Messiah was **also the Lord of David**. Therewith Jesus with His Messiah claim, went further than their hopes and imaginations could go. David called the Messiah „Lord“ (Ps. 110, 1/ Hebr. 10, 12+14). In **Psalm 110** David names as one of the privileges of the Messiah the **universal Kingdom** and His **eternal Priesthood** (2.Sam. 7, 1/ Zach. 6, 12-13). In Jesus this saying of God literally became true (comp. Rom. 8, 34/ Hebr. 10, 12/ 1.Petr. 3, 22/ Matth. 22, 44/ 27, 11/ 28, 18/ Acts 2, 34-35/ Hebr. 1, 13/ Rev. 19, 11+16).

Mark. 13, 1-37 - Prophecies

Here Jesus prophesied the destruction of the temple (Mark. 13, 2). This also meant the end of the present era, the end of Israels (Matth. 24, 3) and the beginning of the Last Days until the Second Coming of Jesus. For this time in between, (Mark. 13, 10/ 14, 9), the time of missions, persecution and temptation, Jesus said four times „give heed“, or

- Jesus prophesied over the temple (Mark. 13, 1-4). A foreign force would destroy it (Mark. 11, 15-17/ Jer. 7, 11-14).
- He gives them a parable.
- He warns them of false teachings and of persecution.
- He announces wars and catastrophe
- He repeats the suggestion of the delay of the end („but the end is not yet come...“).
- He suggests the assumption that before the end, a long time would pass
- He gives the world wide preaching of the gospel as a sign of the end
- He speaks of a time of mourning, chaos and destruction (sacrileges).
- And then He speaks of His Second Coming in glory (after all of the affliction)

Mark. 14 and 15 – Jesus suffering and death in Jerusalem

In the story of passion it is calculated according to different times.

- After the Roman system (which we still use today) where the day starts at midnight.
- And after the Jewish system, where the rising of the sun starts the beginning of the new day (Mark 13, 35).

In addition there were also 2 different calendars used (feast calendar). The sun calendar (12 months at 30 days each and 5 leap days) and the **moon calendar** (month has 29 days).

- The patriarchs and the Israelites from Egypt were referring to the **sun calendar** in the beginning. (Gen. 23, 14-17/ 34, 18-26).
- The Canaanites also referred to it before the Israelites came into the country.
- Also Noah's flood was calculated according to the sun calendar (Gen. 7, 11/ 8, 14)
- But the Jews who returned from Babylon (conformed to their surrounding) used the **moon calendar**, and therefore the Jewish calendar refers to the lunar orbit..
- While God expressly commanded to celebrate the month of „**Abib**“ (Deut. 16, 1) as the first month of the year (Ex. 23, 16), after the exile „**Nisan**“, was determined to be the first month of the year by the priests in Jerusalem (without reason or command of God) and was adjusted to the moon

- With the separation of the nation of Israel Jeroboam I already tried to push a reformation concerning the calendar (1.Kin. 12, 32).
- The rabbis tried to harmonize the change of the calendar
- The people of **Qumram** determined their feasts according to the sun calendar and rejected the moon calendar of the priests as ungodly and pagan. Also the faithful Jews did that, as Jesus. They continued to hold on to the ancient sun calendar so that they always started with the Wednesday as the day of the new year-, pass over-, and feast of tabernacles (the 4.day of creation was the creation of the firmament). Also the wedding of Canaan was on the 3.day (Wednesday) (Joh. 2, 1).
- Jesus does not use the **priest calendar** in Jerusalem (Joh. 5, 1).
- Jesus was crucified and rose according to the sun calendar, which was always one day ahead of the priest calendar of Jerusalem
- Mark relies upon the sun calendar in his gospel and mentions the sun (Mark. 1, 32+35/ 4, 35/ 13, 24/ 15, 42).

Mark. 14, 3-11 – The anointing of the sacrifice

This anointing should not be mixed up with another anointing that took place in Galilee earlier (Luk. 7, 36-50). John reports an almost similar anointing (Joh. 12, 1-8), which happened 6 days before the Pass Over feast.

Mary poured oil over the head of Jesus. John describes that she poured the oil over Jesus feet (Joh. 12, 3). Both is possible, there was enough oil. And the reports also talk about a waste.

Mark. 14, 10-11 – Betrayal of Judas (Matth. 26, 14-16/ Luk. 22, 3-6)

Judas betrayed Jesus out of his own motives. He went to the high priests by himself and was not forced. He suggested to do it without sensation (Luk. 22, 6). This unexpected offer, that they had never dared to hope for. They promised to pay him 30 pieces of silver like he required (Matth. 26, 15). This was only the „**tenth**“ part of the oil that Mary used (300 silver coins – the wages of one year).

Mark. 14, 12-25 – The Lord's supper

The Lord's supper took place during the time of Pass Over and after the Pass Over meal. But it was not the same as the Pass Over meal. What Jesus is trying to say here must have been abominable to the Jews (Lev. 3, 17/ 7, 26-27/ 17, 10-14). Jesus figuratively shares His body with the disciples before it is given up to the mocking, scourging and crucifixion (every disciple gets one piece of Him, like once the Israelites of the lamb when they left Egypt).

Mark. 14, 26-52 - Gethsemane: Readiness of the sacrifice

- Mark introduces Jesus in prayer for the third time (Mark. 1, 35/ 6, 46).
- Gethsemane means „**Oil press**“.
- Jesus is shaking, scared and afraid (Mark. 9, 15/ 16, 5-6/ Phil. 2, 26).
- His soul is sad (Mark. 14, 38).
- He throws Himself to the ground (Matth. 26, 39).
- He sweats blood.
- He asks God, if it is possible...
- He submits to the will of God

In a garden sin emerged (Eden) and in a garden Jesus conquers the devil. Satan did not want Jesus to die on the cross. Jesus was weak during the battle. An angel strengthened Him.

Mark. 14, 36 - Jesus calls His father “Abba” in the spiritual warfare at Gethsemane“ or „my father“. This only occurs in two other parts of the New Testament (Rom. 8, 15/ Gal. 4, 6). „**Abba**“, was the common way to address the father for royal Jewish children to their father. It was a term of familiar belonging and closeness. Never would the Jews have called God this name – from their point of view this would have been unseemly. That Jesus called God „Abba“ was something new and extraordinary. Probably He called Him that in His prayers and therewith expressed His close relationship with His father who was God (Matth. 11, 25-26/ Joh. 3, 35/ 5, 19-20).

Mark. 14, 44 bis 15, 19 – Betrayal, denial, interrogation and judgment of the sacrifice

Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss (Mark. 14, 44-47). Mark only tells us of one attempt of armed resistance (Joh. 18, 10). Only Luke tells us about Jesus healing the ear (Luk. 22, 51). **Malchus** was a servant of the high priest

Jesus does not resist when they arrest Him. Jesus was not a revolutionary who acted in the dark. He was an acknowledged teacher. Daily he taught in the temple publicly (Mark. 11, 11) and in Jerusalem (Mark. 11, 17). But they did not arrest Him (Mark. 12, 12/ 14, 1-2). That they tried to arrest Him like a criminal in a „**cloak and dagger operation**“ reveals their gutlessness. Mark also highlights that this only happened to

„fulfill the scripture“ (Is. 53, 7-9+12). When the disciples realized that He did not resist and let them arrest Him, they all left Him (Mark. 14, 27).

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Mark. 14, 55-56 – The high council tried to get witnesses to testify against Jesus, to sentence Him to death, **but they found no witnesses**. They found nobody who could say something concrete against Him. There was actually not a lack of witnesses, because many gave a wrong testimony, but their charges were not considered because the contents were contradictory. They Jewish law demanded at least 2 witnesses on one accord (Numb. 35, 30/ Deut. 17, 6/ 19, 15).

They found some witnesses (Matth. 26, 60) who agreed that they heard Him say: I want to tear the temple down and build another one in a few days”. According to Mark also these testimonies were contradictory. This statement was a mysterious message of Jesus, view Joh. 2, 19. He was talking about His body (Joh. 2, 20-22). The witnesses interpreted His words as a prophecy concerning the temple. But also this was invalid.

Then the high priest asked Jesus Himself about His identity (Mark. 14, 61). Jesus remained silent and did not defend Himself with a word (also view Is. 53, 7). This irritated the court. Then the high priest changed his **question tactic** (Mark.14, 61-62/ comp. Mark.1,1/ 8, 29). He asked Him directly: Are you the Messiah the Son of the Most High? The term „Most High“ is a replacement of the term for „God“. Jesus answered **„I am“**. This is the first time in the gospel of Mark, that Jesus publicly declares that He is the Messiah. He also added a prophecy to this statement from Ps.110, 1 and Dan. 7, 13. **„And you will see the Son of Man seated at the right of God and coming on the clouds of heaven** (comp. Mark. 8, 31+38/ 12, 36/ 14, 61).

Mark. 14, 63-64 – The high priest tore his garments, therewith he wanted to express that from his point of view Jesus blasphemed God. It is a symbolic gesture of disgust and outrage. Such an act was basically expected from a high priest whenever he was confronted with a blasphemy. According to the Mosaic law the blasphemy of God was punished with death by stoning sentence (Lev. 24, 15-16). Without any further interrogation the high council demands a judgment.

- Since there were no more objections they all **judged Him** (Mark.10, 33), guilty to death.
- **The tearing apart of the garments by the priest** was also his own sentence to death (Lev. 10, 6) and the destruction, or end of the office of the high priest (which was erased after 70 AD)
- **Some of the high council spat at Him** (Mark. 14, 65). To spit into someone's face was the deepest expression of despise and a serious personal offense per se (comp. Num. 12, 14/ Deut. 25, 9/ Job 30, 10/ Is. 50, 6).
- Because He said He was the Messiah they **covered His face and beat Him with their fists and commanded Him to prophesy who had hit Him**. There is an indication of the traditional testing of the Messiah, which referred to a rabbinic interpretation of Is. 11, 2-4. The true Messiah could also see without eyes (comp. Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 93b). But Jesus refused to react to this test and remained quiet (comp. Is. 53, 7/ 1.Pet. 2, 23).
- When Jesus was brought back to the **temple wards** they followed the example of the leaders (comp. Mark. 14, 54), **and hit Him in the face with open hands** (Luk. 22, 63-65).

Mark. 14, 66-72 – Peter denies Jesus three times (Matth. 26, 69-75/ Luk. 22, 55-62/ Joh. 18, 15-18+25-27). All four evangelists report this and each one of them in a different way without contradictions though. Mark's report probably refers to Peter's version. The fire test of Peter happens during the same time of the interrogation of Jesus before the high council.

- **Mark. 14, 66-68 – one of the high priests' maids recognizes Peter**. She was probably watching the gates of the inner courtyard (Joh. 18, 16). Peter followed Jesus with some distance into the inner courtyard (Mark. 14, 54/ 15, 16). After taking a close look at him she exclaimed: **„And you were also with Jesus...“**. John was there with Peter (Joh. 18, 15). She did not recognize him (John) even though he knew the high priest. It was the disciple that Jesus loved (Joh. 20, 2)
- **The exclamation identified Peter rightly as one of Jesus' disciples**, but he denied, or refused to admit his relationship to Jesus because he was scared to lose his life. He uses a typical Jewish excuse: I do not know or understand what you are saying. And to avoid further recognition He went out to the outer courtyard.
- **And the cock crowed** (Mark. 14, 68). It must have been the cock of the priest, which was somewhere on the compound. The crowing and the presence of the cock were of symbolic character for Peter as well as for the high priest.
- **The cock** was a symbol of **overcoming the darkness** because of his relation to the break of day, as well as an image of watchfulness. The superstition of the people said that the first crow of a cock would be to chase away the demons of the night. Secondly: His strong zeal to reproduce also made

him a symbol of **fruitfulness**. The animal was considered unclean and therefore had nothing to do in the areas of the sanctuary. The crow of the cock actually also reveals the immorality of the high priest.

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- Peter continued to deny it even when they said: “ You are from Galilee“, his language revealed him (Matth. 26, 73). **He condemned himself** and **swore**, that he did not know the person they all were talking about. What did Peter say here? He does not recognize Jesus anymore. The one who does not say anything, does not defend Himself and takes the beating. Even Pilate said: „Behold, what kind of man“ (Joh. 19, 5). But at this point Jesus had left his “being human” behind. It is the “Son of God” suffering.

Mark. 15, 20-41 - Golgotha: The perfect sacrifice

Mark just simply says „and they crucified Him“. The readers in Rome knew that the crucifixion Mark is talking about happened at the third hour (9:00 am) (Mark. 15, 25).

Mark tells us in a climatic order about five phenomenons that came along with Jesus death:

- an awkward (3-hour) **darkness** (Mark.15, 33). This might have been a cosmic darkness (comp. Is. 5, 25-30/ Amos 8, 9+10/ Micah 3, 5-7/ Zeph. 1, 14-15).
- **Jesus cry** (My God... Mark. 15, 34). This was a cry of a suffering righteous one, who expressed His faith to God (Ps. 22, 2+28). **Jesus loud cry** (Mark. 15, 37/ Luk. 23, 46) was a sign that He did not die the usual death of a crucified (Mark. 15, 39). Usually these would hang on the cross for two to three days and fell into a delirium before they died. Jesus was conscious until the end.
- His death happened suddenly – at a time that He determined Himself. He had declared it publicly that nobody could take His life unless He gave it freely (Matth. 20, 28/ Mark.10,45). That is why Pilate was so surprised that he was already dead (Mark. 15, 44-45).
- the tearing of the temple curtains (Mark.15, 38)
- the confession of the Roman centurion (Mark. 15, 39). Jesus death as an answer to his prayer. It impressed the centurion so much that he confessed: “This man was the Son of God”. This confession of a Gentile (Roman) centurion was the peak of the revelation of the Messiah secret in the gospel of Mark and is a contrast to the mocking of all the ones named in this chapter of Mark. (Mark.15, 29-32+35-36)

Mark. 15, 42-47 – burial: the dead sacrifice

Jesus' burial was the official confirmation of His death. A corpse (at the cross) could only be removed with an official permit and release according to Roman law

It was a bold action of Joseph of Arimathaea to ask Pilate for the corpse of Jesus

- He was a wealthy and reputable counselor, a member of the high council (Matth.27, 57).
- He disapproved the decision of the court to kill Jesus (Luk. 23, 51).
- He was waiting for the Kingdom of God (Mark. 1, 15) a designation that he was a faithful Pharisee, which called themselves Essenes.

Only Mark enhances how the quiet man, who was secretly sympathizing Jesus, turned into someone who boldly confessed Jesus

- He asked for Jesus' corpse, even though he was no relative.
- He was asking for a favor that would actually never have been granted, because Jesus was sentenced due to high treason
- With the touching of the corpse, he risked a ceremonial defilement before the feast.
- A member of the high council confessed Jesus publicly.

Pilate gives him the corpse right away, (that was extraordinary), but made sure that Jesus was truly dead. The generous move of Pilate can be explained with the assumption that he also considered Jesus innocent (Mark. 15, 14-15). Also **Nicodemus**, who is a member of the high council too, helps Joseph of Arimathaea with the preparation (Joh. 19, 39-40). Jesus was brought into a new unused grave, that Joseph of Arimathaea had set up for himself (Matth. 27, 60/ Joh. 19, 41-42). And it was closed with a heavy stone.

Mark. 16, 1-8 – The empty grave

The resurrection of Jesus **is the divine seal**

- of the prophets' testimony
- of the self-testimony of Jesus
- of the apostles' testimony
- of Jesus sonship of God
- of our resurrection

That is why the apostle (Paul) strongly point out, that there are eye witnesses (1.Cor. 15, 6).

There are three main evidences of the resurrection

- **the proof of experience** – you were saved by it (1.Cor. 15, 1+2)
- **the proof of scripture** – according to the scripture Jesus did not only die but He also rose (1.Cor. 15, 3)
- **the proof of testimony** – more than 500 people saw the risen Jesus (1.Cor. 15, 5-12)

This was a necessity in the story of salvation (1.Cor. 15, 13-19): ***If Christ is not risen, our preaching was empty and your faith is also empty. Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have***

perished.

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If Jesus had not risen and the grave was empty, then somebody must have taken His body.

Three groups can be suspected in this case: 1. The Romans, 2. the Jews and 3. the disciples

1. **The Romans** would not have a reason, because they wanted quietness within their provinces. A stolen corpse would not help to accomplish that goal.
2. **For the Jews** that rumor of Jesus' resurrection was the last thing they would have wished for. They even demanded a guardian so that there would be no misunderstandings .
3. **Last but not least there are the disciples** that need to be considered. Maybe to cover up or start a rumor but they were the last to expect the resurrection. They all were confused when they heard of the resurrection. A respective announcement of their Master **was facing total incomprehension and disbelief.** The reports of the females about the resurrection of Jesus was just gossip to them. They were blinded by pain. In such a situation **nobody starts a fraud or pretends** a resurrection. And by the way: **The first witnesses of the resurrection suffered much and died as martyrs later.** How was all of this possible if there was a lie behind it that they made up?

Many years later **Peter**, who was one of the first eye witnesses of the events wrote: „**For we did not follow some kind of smart, made up stories, when we proclaimed to you the mighty coming of Christ our Lord, but we were eye witnesses of His power and greatness**“ (2.Pet. 1, 16)

Mark. 16, 9-20 – Controversial verses

Many accept the 12 Verse as an amendment of the gospel of Mark. It is one of the most controversial verses in the NT. There were many copies of Mark's gospel where the verses did not appear. Justinus the martyr (app. 148 AD), Tatian (app. 170 AD) and Irenaeus quote verse 19. where the verses 9-20 were written in a different Greek than the rest of Mark. Many assume that Mark was not able to finish His gospel. Maybe he suddenly died, or the last part was somehow lost and rewritten or re-added by another author. However, this part aligns with the content of the other gospels.

Mark. 16, 9-14 – Three appearances of Jesus

In the report of Mark it says: He revealed Himself. The others could not see or recognize the risen one if He did not reveal Himself to them (Luk. 24,16+31).

- Jesus appeared to comfort His disciples. They were sad and down. They were all mourning and crying about Jesus (Mark. 16, 12/ Acts 1, 21).
- also the Emmaus disciples were very sad (Luk. 24, 13-35). They did not believe Mary's account (comp. Mark. 16, 10-11).
- Jesus appeared to the disciples in a different image (Mark. 16, 12) than to the women.
He appeared to them differently, than they knew Him before. They ask Him: are you the only stranger who does not know what happened during the past days? (Luk. 24, 34+37).

At last – He appeared to the eleven (Mark 16, 14). Also here He revealed Himself to them and rebuked their small faith and the stubbornness of their hearts.

Mark. 16, 15-18 – Assignment of mission

The assignment was to **“go“** and **„preach“** and the hearers were only supposed to believe and get baptized. Faith was the requirement for salvation. Who did not believe did not need a baptism. The foundation of faith for the condemnation of disbelief and the salvation of faith (Rom. 3, 21-28/ Eph. 2, 8-10).

There are five signs supposed to follow those who believe

„signs“ are supernatural events that accompany the divine origin of the apostolic message (Mark.16, 20). The signs were a proof for the truth of their faith, the first believers proclaimed and not according to the measure of their personal faith. The signs were really important to the believers (2.Cor. 12, 12/ Hebr. 2, 3-4).

The believers were supposed to be able to do in Jesus name:

1. miracles (Mark. 6, 7-13/ 9, 38-40)
2. cast out evil spirits and demonstrate the victory of Jesus over Satan. The twelve and also the seventy had already cast out demons before (Mark. 6, 14). The casting out of demons was usual among the apostle and the members of the first church (Acts 8, 7/ 16, 18/ 19, 15-16).
3. speak in new tongues (comp. Acts. 2, 4-11/ 10, 46/ 19, 6/ 1.Cor. 12, 10/ 14, 1-28),
4. if they were pressured to hold or chase away snakes,

5. if they were forced to drink something deadly it was not supposed to harm them in any way. These verses speak of the protection of God, and that the believers could not be hurt if they should be forced to such things by their persecutors. (Acts 28, 3-5).
6. **lay hands on the sick** and the sick were to be healed. To them this was the sign of the authenticity of their proclamation.(Acts 28, 8/ 1.Cor. 12, 30).

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Mark. 16, 19 – Ascension to

After His sending, Jesus was taken up in heaven and took His place with God (Acts 7, 56). And therefore the work of Jesus on earth was finished. The victorious risen one had ascended to heaven. The one who was lifted up on the cross (Joh. 12, 32+33/ 8, 23), was lifted up into glory by God (Phil. 2, 9/ Acts 2, 33/ 5, 31, Ps. 110, 1).

Mark. 16, 20 - Begin of the Mission

After the Ascension to heaven the disciples continued Jesus work here on earth. They went out and preached the gospel (proclaimed, or talked about the story of Jesus) in all places and therewith continued the sending of Jesus. During all of that the Lord confirmed their words with signs and miracles following them.

Test-Questions

1. What does Mark try to prove to his readers?
2. How many parables of Jesus are included in the gospel of Mark?
3. How many and which miracles does Mark tell us of?
4. Who were the scribes?
5. Where (in Mark) and about what does Jesus dispute with the Sadducees?
6. With which two main questions does Mark deal with?
7. How does Mark describe the life of Jesus?
8. What kind of miracle did Jesus word that was considered a crime in Mark?
9. What did the Sadducees want to know from Jesus?
10. When and where does Jesus admit in Mark that He is the Messiah?
11. What should the followers of Jesus be able to do in His name?
12. What is special about the gospel of Mark?
13. Who was Mark?
14. From which part of the temple did Jesus chase the merchants away and why?
15. At what point does the title "son of David" come up in Mark?

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Basically: There are no grades or evaluations for the test. We only want to make sure that you have understood and worked through the material.

Next lesson – Gospel of Matthew

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