

Handout 7: Gospel of Mark Notes (Talk 18)

Ryan Carroll, Reformation Fellowship, June 6th, 2021

Summary: Mark 8:27-9:1

The narrative of Mark's gospel hits a turning point. The disciples have finally recognized Jesus rightfully as the Messiah. What Messiahship will mean in actuality, however, will prove to be equally as difficult to grasp as His identity was.

Outline:

1. Gospel Retrospective—From blindness to sight: “You are the Messiah!”

a. How did we get here? Mark's Gospel account narrative retrospective

i. Issue of Jesus' identity from the beginning:

1. John's heralding of the “Mighty One” coming after him to Israel

2. Jesus' baptism and the Voice from heaven

3. Jesus' preaching the Kingdom of God is at hand

4. Jesus' authority over demons

5. Jesus' authority to heal (even on Sabbath)

6. Jesus' authority to forgive sins

7. Jesus' authority to call sinners and feast

8. Jesus' authority over the Sabbath

9. Jesus' granting authority to disciples over the demons

10. Jesus' authority to rule over nature

11. Jesus' authority to raise the dead

12. Jesus' authority to work miraculous deeds (feeding miracles)

13. Jesus' authority to pronounce what truly defiles and not

ii. Along the way, the disciples fail to adequately take in and process all the data:

1. After He stilled the storm: “Who then is this that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (4:41)

2. After he fed the 5,000: “They were greatly astonished. For they had not gained any insight from the loaves, but their heart was hardened” (6:51-52)
3. After he fed both the 5,000 and 4,000: “Do you have eyes yet do not see? Do you have ears yet do not hear?... Do you not yet understand?”
- iii. Peter, like the blind man needing two touches, finally sees: “You are the Christ!”
- iv. Changes afoot:
 1. Jesus’ question and the disciples’ response in chapter 8 constitute a turning point in Jesus’ ministry AND therefore, Mark’s narrative:
 - a. Geography: Where is he now?
 - i. Caesarea Philippi (far Northern Israel)
 - b. On the Way: Where is Jesus headed?
 - i. Jerusalem

2. “Along the way, Jesus questioned the disciples” (Mk. 8:27-30)

- a. Jesus’ first question: “Who do PEOPLE say that I am?”
 - i. The disciples’ response: Some say...
 1. John the Baptist
 2. Elijah
 3. One of the prophets
 - a. Where have we seen these responses before?
 - i. Mark 6:14-15
 - ii. All responses from the crowds see Jesus as a prophet
 1. Prophets came regularly to Israel to call them back to their God. While Jesus was indeed a prophet, the evidence potentially pointed in other directions.
- b. Jesus’ second question: “BUT who do YOU say that I am?”
 - i. Peter’s response: “You are the Messiah”
 1. This is the first time (since verse 1 of the Gospel) that this title has been used
 - ii. How does Peter make such a dramatic shift from not seeing to seeing?

1. Is it the mountain of evidence that has developed along the way? (see list above)
 - a. Maybe in part, but that isn't the whole story
2. Was it Jesus healing the blind man with two touches?
 - a. Doubtful. The role Jesus assigns to the blind man as a reflection for the dynamic that is occurring in the disciples' failure to truly see and understand probably only came with more time and reflection.
3. Or is there something more happening?
 - a. See Matthew's parallel account and Jesus' response to Peter's correct proclamation (Mt. 16:17)
 - i. "Blessed are you Simon, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you..."
 - b. Implications of this spiritual dynamic?
 - i. Do not be surprised by unbelief
 - ii. The Gift of Sight
 - iii. The Gift of Sight, but still dimly
 - iii. What does Peter think he means when he responds thus?
 1. What was the expectation about a Messiah?
 - a. Rise of the Davidic Ruler expectations
 - i. 2 Samuel 7
 - ii. Isaiah 9, 11, 49
 - iii. Jeremiah 23, 33,
 - iv. Ezekiel 37
 - b. Summary of Messianic expectations during 2nd Temple period
 - i. For the above to be fulfilled, what kind of a "King" would need to come?
 - ii. Given Peter's response in verse 32 to what Jesus will say in verse 31, we can be relatively sure that Peter's understanding of the Messiah was something along these lines.

2. But notice that Mark introduces his entire gospel (1:1) about “Jesus the Messiah, Son of God”, by proclaiming the coming not of the Messiah with a Messianic text, BUT two texts about the return of Yahweh, Himself:
 - i. Isaiah 40:3
 1. “A Voice is crying in the wilderness, make ready *the way of Yahweh* Make His paths straight” (Is. 40:3)
 - ii. Malachi 3:1
 1. “Behold I send My messenger, and he will clear *the way* before Me [Yhwh]”
 - iii. How do Jesus’ acts/authority (listed above) line up with...
 1. a return of Israel’s God?
 - a. Jesus displaying power and authority of Yahweh:
 - i. Raising the dead
 - ii. Authority over nature
 - iii. Authority over demons/Satan
 - iv. Authority to forgive sins
 - v. Authority over Sabbath
 - vi. Authority over what defiles (clean/unclean)
 2. a raising up of their Davidic King?
 - a. Jesus displaying traits of the Davidic King (as foreseen by popular 2nd Temple expectation):
 - i. A Warrior King? Not so much
 - b. Jesus displaying traits of the Davidic King (as foreseen by the OT)

- i. Reflecting the wisdom of Yahweh in his teaching?
Yes
 - ii. Reflecting the authority of Yahweh in the world?
Yes
- 3. What are we to make of this tangled web?
 - a. There are more OT prophetic texts that look ahead to Yahweh's return (after the Exile) than to the Davidic King's arrival.
 - i. More than any other expectation about various figures who may come to Israel's rescue, it was Yahweh himself who was most anticipated and hoped for by the prophets and 2nd Temple literature.
 - b. A Shocking Conclusion the text points us toward?
 - i. When Messiah arrived, it was also the arrival of Israel's God: Jesus, the Messiah, is Israel's God in person
 - ii. If we are to take the NT seriously, moving forward the identity of Israel's God cannot be separated easily from the identity of Jesus the Messiah
 - 1. "[Jesus] The Son is the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15)
 - 2. "If you have seen me you have seen the Father" (John's Gospel)
 - 3. "Therefore, God highly exalted him [Jesus] and bestowed on him the NAME which is above every NAME, that at the NAME of Jesus 'every knee should bow and every tongue confess' that Jesus, the Messiah, is LORD." (Phil. 2:9-11)

- 4. “He [Jesus] is the radiance of His [Yahweh’s] glory and the exact representation of His [Yahweh’s] nature” (Heb. 1:3)
- 4. At this point, Peter’s correct declaration about Jesus’ identity doesn’t see any of this clearly... BUT Peter has seen and had enough revealed to him to know that if the Messiah has come, and it’s Jesus, he owes Jesus fealty
 - a. That is... unless the Messiah starts talking some crazy foolish talk about, uh, I don’t know, DYING!
- c. Why does Jesus warn disciples not to tell anyone? (8:30)
 - i. The title bore significant political expectation
 - ii. The title brought about revolutionary overtones
 - iii. Historically speaking, someone claiming to be a “would-be” Messiah did not last long... Jesus needed discretion in order to fulfill his full destiny later in Jerusalem
- 3. “And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer” (8:31-33)**
 - a. Who is this “Son of Man”?
 - b. Suffering and rejected Messiah?
 - i. At the hands of the “Elders, Chief Priests, and the Scribes”
We’ve already seen hints of this during Jesus’ ministry
 - 1. Pharisees want to kill him (after healing on Sabbath)
 - 2. Scribes accuse him of being possessed by ruler of demons (after exorcising so many demons)
 - 3. Scribes accuse him of blasphemy (after claiming to forgive sins)
 - c. Dead Messiah?
 - d. After three days rise again?
 - e. “And Peter took Him [Jesus] aside and began to rebuke Him”
 - i. None of this matters to Peter, as it does not fit the picture of Messiahship he understands:
 - 1. Cognitive dissonance at it’s finest
 - ii. Peter will need more touches in order to see more clearly (just like the blind man)
 - 1. Revelation is not a guarantee of full knowledge

2. Our wrestling for truth will always be imperfect

f. Jesus' Rebuke of Peter:

i. "Get behind Me Satan"

4. Implications: What does it all mean??