

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 57 – February 26th – Mark 8:11-9:1

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Mark

Cranfield, CEB	<i>The Gospel According to Mark</i> (Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary), CUP, Cambridge, 4 th ed. 1972
France, RT	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (The New International Greek Testament Commentary), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2002
Guelich, Robert A	<i>Mark 1-8:26</i> (The Word Biblical Commentary, vol 34A), Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1989
Lane, William L	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> , Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1974
Taylor, Vincent	<i>The Gospel According to St Mark</i> , Macmillan NT Commentaries, London, 1952

Verses 11-13

Cf. Mt 16:1-4; Mt 12:38f; Lk 11:29. "After his first feeding miracle Jesus had crossed the lake and immediately come into conflict with Pharisees in Galilee (7:1-23); now after the second feeding miracle he returns again across the lake from Gentile territory, and again his arrival in Galilee brings him face to face with Pharisaic opposition... Jesus' refusal of a σημειον ... represents a conscious decision to terminate both his dialogue with the religious leadership and his public ministry in Galilee. Those who have not yet been convinced of his message will not now be offered any further incentive to believe. The pregnant phrase ἀφεις αὐτοῦς marks a decisive abandonment of the Pharisees, rather than any attempt to win them, just as Jesus will later 'go out from' the temple, uttering a dramatic prediction of its destruction, to mark the end of his appeal to the hierarchy in Jerusalem (13:1-2)." France.

Verse 11

Καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ ἤρξαντο συζητεῖν αὐτῷ, ζητοῦντες παρ' αὐτοῦ σημεῖον ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, πειράζοντες αὐτόν.

"Whereas in 3:22; 7:1 opposition has come from Jerusalem scribes, Mark here gives the impression that the source of the demand is the local (Galilean) Pharisees, who, on his arrival at Dalmanutha, ἐξῆλθον (from their homes, presumably) to confront him. Conscious of their (self-imposed?) role as guardians of religious orthodoxy and practice in the area, and perhaps feeling threatened by the wide popularity and influence of this unorthodox teacher, they aim to put him in his place by demanding to see his credentials." France.

ἤρξαντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl ἄρχω
midd begin
συζητεῖω discuss, question

ζητοῦντες Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s ζητεῶ
seek, look for
σημεῖον, ου n miraculous sign, sign,
miracle

"The Synoptists use σημεῖον to denote an outward compelling proof of divine authority – something which unbelief demands but Jesus resolutely refuses to give... The Fourth Evangelist, on the other hand, though he does sometimes use the word σημεῖον in the Synoptist's sense (2:18; 4:48; 6:30) uses it characteristically of the miracles regarded as signs pointing to the secret of Jesus' person, an effective manifestation of his glory for those who already believe, but for others, unconvincing." Cranfield.

οὐρανός, ου m heaven

"Given the number of remarkable events already recorded in Mark's gospel, some at least of what should have been known to these Pharisees, it is not easy to see what more they required, but perhaps they had not yet personally witnessed any of the miracles, and were not prepared to trust to hearsay. It must be remembered, too, that the scribes in 3:22 did not doubt the occurrence of Jesus' exorcisms, but attributed them to demonic rather than to divine power. For them, even admitted miracles needed some authenticating sign to show that they were 'from heaven'." France.

πειράζω test, put to the test, tempt

France comments that signs authenticating a prophet or other person claiming divine authorisation are common in the OT – citing particularly Moses and Elijah. He adds, "So the desire for a sign is not in itself self-evidently wrong. By adding *πειραζοντες αὐτον*, however, Mark indicates that the request was disingenuous... Coming from the Pharisees, the request denotes not a readiness to be convinced, but an excuse for refusing to respond to the clear evidence already available in Jesus' teaching and ministry."

Verse 12

καὶ ἀναστενάξας τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ λέγει· Τί ἢ γενεὰ αὕτη ζητεῖ σημεῖον; ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον.

ἀναστενάξας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
ἀναστεναζω give a deep groan

Cf. 7:34.

γενεα, ας f generation, age

Cf. 8:38; 9:19.

For ἀμὴν λεγω ὑμῖν cf. 3:28.

δοθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s διδωμι

εἰ δοθήσεται A Hebrewism expressing strong denial. "The εἰ being the equivalent of the Hebrew *'im* used as an imprecation. In 2 Kings 6:31 the full form is illustrated, while Ps 95 (LXX 94):11 provides an example of the usage with the apodosis omitted, the isolated protasis remaining as a form of strong negative as here." Cranfield. Ps 95:11 is quoted also in Heb 3:11; 4:3, 5.

Verse 13

καὶ ἀφεις αὐτοὺς πάλιν ἐμβὰς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸ πέραν.

ἀφεις Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἀφιημι
leave

πάλιν again, once more
ἐμβαινω get into, embark

Some MSS add εἰς τὸ πλοτον.

περαν i) prep with gen beyond, across; ii)
τὸ π. the other side

"He gets into the boat to leave Galilee and its crowds, in order to concentrate on the instruction of the disciples who now go with him εἰς τὸ περαν." France.

Verses 14-21

Cf. Mt 16:5-12; Lk 12:1. "This elusive dialogue contains a striking (and rather shocking) echo of the language of chapter 4. In 8:11-13 the Pharisees have been left in the position of unenlightened 'outsiders' of 4:11. But the language of Is 6:9-10, which in 4:12 was used to describe those 'outsiders', is now applied in vv 17-18 no less starkly to the disciples themselves, despite the fact that in 4:11 it was they who were described as the privileged possessors of the 'secret' hidden from the outsiders. Act One thus comes to an end on a sombre note; even where divine enlightenment has been given, it has not yet produced true understanding (note the repeated use of *συνιημι* in vv 17, 21, as well as other ways of expressing the same idea in vv 17, 18). This paradoxical note, already sounded clearly in 6:52 where very similar language has been used about the disciples' lack of understanding, will be maintained throughout the gospel: the patient re-education of the disciples during chapters 8-10 will leave them still bewildered by the turn of events in Jerusalem, running away in Gethsemane and leaving the women to watch the end in Golgotha, while even the women, privileged to receive a special announcement that Jesus is risen, bring the gospel to a dismal end by saying nothing to anyone, 'for they were afraid'. This pericope is thus not an incongruous note in the course of a steady upward progress, but rather sets the tone for a dénouement for which the enthusiasms and enlightenment of the earlier chapters have left the reader hitherto largely unprepared." France.

Verse 14

Καὶ ἐπελάθοντο λαβεῖν ἄρτους, καὶ εἰ μὴ ἓνα ἄρτον οὐκ εἶχον μεθ' ἑαυτῶν ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ.

ἐπελάθοντο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 pl
ἐπιλανθανομαι forget, neglect

λαβεῖν Verb, aor act infin λαμβανω

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food

εἰ μὴ except

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

πλοιον, ου n boat

Verse 15

καὶ διεστέλλετο αὐτοῖς λέγων· Ὁρᾶτε, βλέπετε ἀπὸ τῆς ζύμης τῶν Φαρισαίων καὶ τῆς ζύμης Ἡρώδου.

διεστέλλετο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s

διαστελλομαι order, command

"The imperfect tense of διαστελλετο suggests that Jesus' warning against the Pharisees and Herod is not an isolated and unprovoked exclamation, as might at first appear, but rather a summary of a more extended discourse." France.

όραω see, make sure, see to
βλεπω see, beware of, watch out
ζυμη, ης f yeast

"In the N.T. (1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:9) and also in Rabbinic Judaism leaven is a common metaphor for the evil tendency in a man which, though it may seem only a small thing, nevertheless corrupts the whole man. (In the N.T. it stands for something good only in Mt 13:33 = Lk 13:21). Mt 16:11 explains ζυμη in reference to teaching; Lk 12:1 glosses it by ήτις έστιν ύποκρισις... [The reference to Herod is] a warning against the godlessness of a man of the world, while the reference to the Pharisees is a warning against inconsistent piety." Cranfield.

The juxtaposition of the singular Ἡρώδου with the plural Φαρισαίων, and the fact that Ἡρώδιανοί are associated with Φαρισαίοι in 3:6 and 12:13 has led to the substitution of τῶν Ἡρώδιανῶν for Ἡρώδου in P⁴⁵ and other MSS.

"The inclusion of Herod (Antipas) is ... surprising, since Mark has not presented Antipas hitherto as a direct enemy of Jesus, though Antipas's interest in Jesus and linking him with John the Baptist (whom he had already executed) has alerted the reader to him as a potential threat (6:14-29), and in 9:12-13 Jesus will imply that John's fate at the hands of Antipas is a foreshadowing of his own." France.

Verse 16

καὶ διελογίζοντο πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὅτι ἄρτους οὐκ ἔχουσιν.

διαλογίζομαι discuss, reason, question

"The imperfect διελογίζοντο probably indicates that they 'went on discussing', this having been the problem raised in v. 14, before Jesus' warning about the Pharisees and Herod, which is thus brushed aside by their more important concerns." France.

ἀλλήλων, οἰς, οὖς reciprocal pronoun one another

Many MSS include λεγοντες after ἀλλήλους (cf. Mt 16:7) and have the form of the final verb in the first person plural.

Verse 17

καὶ γνοὺς λέγει αὐτοῖς· Τί διαλογίζεσθε ὅτι ἄρτους οὐκ ἔχετε; οὐπω νοεῖτε οὐδὲ συνιέτε; πεπωρωμένην ἔχετε τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν;

γνοὺς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s γινωσκω
οὐπω not yet

νοεω understand, discern
συνιημι and συνιω understand,
comprehend

πεπωρωμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s
πωρωω make stubborn, make hard,
make insensitive

"Both συνιημι and καρδια πεπωρωμενη have already occurred in Mark's editorial comment on the disciples in 6:52, which in turn recalled the reference to Is 6:9-10 in 4:12." France.

Verse 18

ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες οὐ βλέπετε καὶ ὧτα ἔχοντες οὐκ ἀκούετε; καὶ οὐ μνημονεύετε

"The specific use of the metaphor of blindness prepares the way for the next pericope, where the healing of a blind man will be used to symbolise the enlightenment which the disciples so obviously need. Jesus' attempt to provide that enlightenment, set over against the continued obtuseness of the disciples, will be a major theme of Act Two of Mark's gospel, now about to begin." France.

οὖς, ὠτος n ear, hearing

"Reminiscent of Jer 5:21; Ezek 12:2 and also Isa 6:9f. The last of these was quoted in 4:12 with reference to 'them that are without'." Cranfield.

μνημονεω remember, keep in mind

"The final words of v. 18 (καὶ οὐ μνημονεύετε) can be construed (as by UBS, GNB, etc.) as the main clause introducing the ὅτε clause that follows, but are probably better construed (as in most English versions) as a further staccato question." France.

Verse 19

ὅτε τοὺς πέντε ἄρτους ἔκλασα εἰς τοὺς πεντακισχιλίους, πόσους κοφίνους κλασμάτων πλήρεις ἦρατε; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Δώδεκα.

ὅτε conj when, at which time

πεντε (indeclinable) five

κλαω break (only of bread)

πεντακισχιλιοι, αι, α five thousand

ποσος, η, ον how much(?), how many(?)

κοφινος, ου m basket

κλασμα, τος n fragment, piece

πληρης, ες (sometimes not declined) full,
complete

ἦρατε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl αἱρω take,
take up, take away

δωδεκα twelve

Cf. 6:43

Verse 20

ὅτε καὶ τοὺς ἑπτὰ εἰς τοὺς τετρακισχίλιους, πόσων σπυρίδων πληρώματα κλασμάτων ἦρατε; καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Ἑπτὰ.

ἑπτὰ seven

τετρακισχίλιοι, αι, α four thousand
σπυρις, ιδος f basket (larger than the
κοφινος)

πληρωμα, τος n fulness, completeness,
fulfilment

σπυριδων πληρωματα κλασματος. "The first two words are equivalent to a simple noun, 'basketfuls'... and κλασματος is a genitive of content dependent on them." Cranfield.

Verse 21

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Οὐπω συνίετε;

οὐπω not yet

συνημι see v.17

"What they should have grasped from οἱ ἄρτοι is not merely that they have a ready supply of food available, but something more fundamental about Jesus himself. In view of the question which he will put to them in v. 29, ὑμεῖς τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι; it appears that he has been hoping for a more adequate grasp of his authority and mission as the Messiah, and that their inappropriate concern about food for the journey has highlighted this deeper inadequacy in their understanding." France.

Mark 8:22-10:52

France refers to 8:22-10:52 as Act Two of Mark. Its focus is upon Jesus' movement from Galilee to Jerusalem. It is 'framed' by two accounts of the healings of a blind man (8:22-26; 10:45-52) which France sees as also symbolic of the 'blindness' of the disciples. The incomprehension of the disciples is central to this section which now focuses on Jesus' private instruction of them. Jesus is seeking to prepare them for what he will suffer in Jerusalem in fulfilment of his messianic mission.

Verses 22-26

Verses 22-26 are unique to Mark. Cf. 7:31-37 for a similar healing story. France comments, "In discussing 7:31-37 we noticed the significance of the healing of the deaf and dumb man in the light of Is 35:5-6. That prophecy begins with the opening of the eyes of the blind, a work which is attributed to God also in Ps 146:8; Is 29:18. In the light of such OT passages these two pericopes together add up to a very impressive claim with regard to who Jesus is..."

"There are, then, good reasons for believing that Mark included the story at this point in his narrative because for him it illustrated a fundamental theme of the journey to Jerusalem, the curing of the disciples' blindness. But the symbolic does not exclude the literal. In this story, as in the cure of the deaf-mute in Decapolis, Mark offers also a carefully observed account of another miracle of healing, unusual in its detail, but equally a testimony to the unique authority of Jesus at the physical as well as the spiritual level."

Verse 22

Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Βηθσαϊδάν. καὶ φέρουσιν αὐτῷ τυφλὸν καὶ παρακαλοῦσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα αὐτοῦ ἄψηται.

φερω bring, carry, bear, lead

τυφλος, η, ον blind

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

ἄψηται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 s ἅπτω midd.
take hold of, touch

Verse 23

καὶ ἐπιλαβόμενος τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ τυφλοῦ ἐξήνεγκεν αὐτὸν ἔξω τῆς κώμης, καὶ πτύσας εἰς τὰ ὄμματα αὐτοῦ, ἐπιθείς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ, ἐπήρωτα αὐτόν· Εἴ τι βλέπεις;

ἐπιλαβόμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom
s ἐπιλαβανομαι take hold of, sieze

χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

ἐκφέρω bring out; lead out

ἔξω out, outside, away

κώμη, ης f village, small town

Cf. 7:33. The use of the term κώμη suggests that Jesus may have been in an outlying settlement rather than in the city of Bethsaida itself.

πτωω spit

ὄμμα, τος n eye

ἐπιθείς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἐπιτιθημι
place on, place, put

ἐπήρωτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s

ἐπερωταω ask, question

βλεπω see, be able to see

"The exploratory question appropriately introduces the uniquely 'tentative' nature of this healing story; normally Jesus has no need to ask any question, as the healing is immediate and obvious." France.

Verse 24

καὶ ἀναβλέψας ἔλεγεν· Βλέπω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ὅτι ὡς δένδρα ὀρῶ περιπατοῦντας.
ἀναβλεπω look up, regain one's sight

"In 10:51 ἀναβλεπειν means 'recover one's sight'; but here it more probably means 'look up'." Cranfield.

δένδρον, ου n tree
ὀραω see, observe, perceive
περιπατεω walk, walk about

"The contrast with seeing τηλαυγως in v. 25 makes it clear that this is intended as a description of indistinct sight; he sees moving shapes, which because they are walking about ought to be people, but he cannot yet see them clearly enough to identify them – they might as well be trees!" France.

Verse 25

εἶτα πάλιν ἐπέθηκεν τὰς χεῖρας ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ, καὶ διέβλεψεν καὶ ἀπεκατέστη καὶ ἐνέβλεπεν τηλαυγῶς ἅπαντα.

εἶτα adv. then, and then
πάλιν again, once more
ἐπέθηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐπιτιθημι
διέβλεπω see clearly
ἀπεκατέστη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s
ἀποκαθιστημι reestablish, restore
ἐμβλεπω look straight at, see

"Note the careful distinction of tenses: the aorist διέβλεψεν indicating the definite point at which the man achieved clear sight, and the imperfect ἐνέβλεπεν denoting continued action." Cranfield.

τηλαυγως clearly, plainly
ἅπας, ασα, αν (alternative form of πας) all, whole; πl everyone, everything

"The argument for a symbolic intention is strengthened by the peculiar character of this healing, as one accomplished in two stages. The 'blindness' of the disciples is similarly dispelled only gradually. Already in 4:11 they are declared to have received special revelation concerning το μυστηριον της βασιλειας του θεου, and yet that revelation has left them with much still to learn (6:52; 7:18; 8:17-18, 21). The new phase of the narrative which is now beginning will focus on their further enlightenment, but it will not be completed in a single 'cure'. Successive examples of their failure to understand will each be followed by further re-education, but even when the journey is complete and the narrative reaches its climax in Jerusalem the disciples will be characterised more by dullness and failure than by the dynamic new perspectives of the kingdom of God. Even Peter, the spokesman whose ringing declaration of Jesus' messianic status is the foundation of the disciples' new perspective, will a few verses later be rebuked for viewing Jesus' mission from the human, not the divine angle (8:29-33). He has 'seen', but not yet clearly. Of all this the two-stage healing of the blind man at Bethsaida offers an apt illustration." France.

Verse 26

καὶ ἀπέστειλεν αὐτὸν εἰς οἶκον αὐτοῦ λέγων· Μηδὲ εἰς τὴν κώμην εισέλθης
ἀπέστειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
ἀποστελλω send
μηδε negative particle nor, and not

Many MSS add μηδε ειπης τινα εν τη κωμη. France comments, "The wide range of expanded readings appear to be attempts to spell out the purpose of Jesus' instruction not to return to the village by making the 'secrecy' theme explicit. It is more likely that such explanation was added than that an originally more explicit instruction was made enigmatic."

Verse 27-33

Cf. Mt 16:13-23; Lk 9:18-22.

"We conclude that in these verses we are near to the personal reminiscence of Peter and here before us is a section based on sound historical tradition." Cranfield.

"8:27-30 (or better, the fuller complex 8:27-33) is conventionally said to be the watershed in Mark's narrative. Up to this point the tension has been building up towards its climax in the eventual recognition of who Jesus is, while from this point on, the christological question having been explicitly posed and answered, the plot sets off downhill again towards the fulfilment of Jesus' messianic mission of the cross and in his resurrection, with 8:31 and its subsequent echoes in 9:31 and 10:33-34 providing the agenda for this second part of the story." France.

Verse 27

Καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς κόμας Καισαρείας τῆς Φιλίππου· καὶ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐπηρώτα τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ λέγων αὐτοῖς· Τίνα με λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι;

τὰς κόμας Καισαρείας τῆς Φιλίππου "Here the plural together with the name of the city in the genitive clearly indicates small settlements associated with the city rather than the city itself; as a regional capital, Caesarea Philippi controlled a wide area which would contain many smaller settlements." France. Cf. 8:23.

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

ἐπηρώτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s

ἐπερωτω see v.23

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

"The christological issue is approached by asking first the more comfortably 'objective' question." France.

Verse 28

οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες ὅτι Ἰωάννην τὸν βαπτιστὴν, καὶ ἄλλοι Ἠλίαν, ἄλλοι δὲ ὅτι εἷς τῶν προφητῶν.

βαπτιστής, ου m Baptist, baptiser

Cf. 6:14-16.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

Ἠλιας, ου m Elijah

"To the multitude he [Jesus] seemed to be a prophet (cf. Mt 21:11): his Messiahship was concealed from them (see on 11:1-10). When Peter in the next verse confesses that Jesus is the Messiah, his words do not echo popular opinion, but run counter to it." Cranfield.

"Jesus is popularly perceived as a prophet. This is undoubtedly a positive, indeed a highly laudatory, assessment. But the sequel will show that it falls short of the truth about Jesus. Like many today who express their appreciation of Jesus (often alongside other religious leaders) as a great teacher, the people of his own day, as reported by the disciples, have not yet grasped the full significance of his ministry." France.

Verse 29

καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπηρώτα αὐτούς· Ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι; ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Πέτρος λέγει αὐτῷ· Σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός.

The ὑμεῖς is empathic, 'as for you...' "Jesus' ὑμεῖς δὲ indicates that a better answer is still needed, and that it is the responsibility of the disciples to supply it. If they have been entrusted with το μυστήριον της βασιλειας του θεου (4:11), surely by now they are in a position to evaluate the significance of the one through whom it has come into being." France.

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply

Cranfield points out that the term 'Messiah' means anointed and that prophets, priests and kings were all anointed with oil. He continues, "Masiah carries with it the idea of consecration to God's service, of being specially chosen by him for a particular task and specially endowed by him with power (1 Sam 10:1,6; 16:13; Isa 61:1 – with the Spirit of the LORD) to fulfil it... In the time of Jesus the term was used particularly of the hoped-for ruler who was to restore the kingdom of David to more than its former glory and prosperity... though it is important to realise that there was a great variety of messianic expectation." Peter's words expressed the truth, though he did not then rightly understand what he affirmed.

Verse 30

καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτοῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ λέγωσιν περὶ αὐτοῦ.

ἐπιτιμαω command, order

"The strength of the verb (used previously for silencing demons [cf. 3:12]) is remarkable." France.

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing

Implies Jesus' acceptance of Peter's confession. "The popular enthusiasm for Jesus, and the hope that he might be persuaded to take a more political role as the leader of a Jewish uprising (see on 6:31-44 and 6:45-46), would mean that messianic language should be seriously misunderstood on the part of both friends and enemies. In view of what Jesus is about to reveal concerning his real mission in v. 31 there could hardly be a more unfortunate misunderstanding, or one more calculated to derail his enterprise as it approaches its decisive phase in the journey towards Jerusalem. So language about Jesus as ὁ Χριστός is forbidden." France.

Verse 31

Καὶ ἤρξατο διδάσκειν αὐτοὺς ὅτι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστῆναι.

"The first prediction of the Passion is the immediate sequel of Peter's confession." Cranfield.

ἄρχω midd begin

διδασκω teach

δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must

A necessity grounded in the will and word of God. "There have indeed been plenty of indications already of the growth of hostility towards Jesus and his followers, and occasional hints that that hostility will end in death (2:20; 3:6). But what is new here is the conviction that his death will come not as the triumph of the opposition but as the fulfilment of the divine purpose, to be welcomed rather than bewailed." France.

υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (cf. 2:10) is a designation used by Jesus of himself. "It seems extremely probable on the basis of Dan 7:13, it was also fairly commonly used as a 'messianic' title." Cranfield.

Jesus may have preferred this designation to that of Messiah because the term 'Messiah' carried with it a set of unhelpful expectations among his contemporaries. "What Jesus is going to say about his fate is in sharp contrast to what ὁ Χριστός would naturally convey, and so this more elusive title is more suitable to his purpose. To speak of rejection, suffering, and death as the necessary destiny of the υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is indeed shocking enough, for the vision in Dn 7:13-14 from which the phrase derives is of a conquering, majestic figure in heavenly authority. Verse 38 will use the same title in a context which echoes the more natural connotation. But because the phrase ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου would not yet be understood to refer to a recognised messianic figure, there was no popular 'blueprint' for the mission of such a figure which would make it psychologically impossible to grasp the concept of suffering and death as his role, however unexpected such an idea might be." France.

παθεῖν Verb, aor act infin πασχω suffer

ἀποδοκιμαζω reject

πρεσβυτερος, α, ον elder

ἀρχιερευς, εως m high priest

γραμματευς, εως m scribe, expert in

Jewish law

Cf. Ps 118 (LXX 117):22.

ἀποκτεινω kill, put to death

Cf. Is 52,53.

τρεῖς, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

"Mark's phrase reflects Jewish usage, whereby 'after three days' would mean 'the day after tomorrow', but in a broader cultural context this idiom might not be understood, resulting in the embarrassment of a discrepancy between prediction and fact, in that all the gospels agree on a period of only some thirty six hours between Jesus' burial and resurrection. The phrase used by Matthew and Luke [φη τριτη ἡμερα] is therefore apologetically safer, even if in a Jewish context its meaning is not significantly different." France.

ἀναστῆναι Verb, 2nd aor act infin ἀνιστημι rise, come back to life

Cf. 9:31; 10:33-34.

Verse 32

καὶ παρρησίᾳ τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει. καὶ προσλαβόμενος ὁ Πέτρος αὐτὸν ἤρξατο ἐπιτιμᾶν αὐτῷ.

παρρησια, ας f openness, frankness

Jesus now begins to teach the disciples openly and plainly concerning his coming death.

προσλαβόμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s προσλαμβάνομαι take aside

ἐπιτιμαῶ command, rebuke

Suggests a confident and confrontational approach by Peter.

Verse 33

ὁ δὲ ἐπιστραφεὶς καὶ ἰδὼν τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ ἐπετίμησεν Πέτρῳ καὶ λέγει· Ὑπάγε ὀπίσω μου, Σατανᾶ, ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

ἐπιστραφεὶς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s
ἐπιστρεφῶ turn round, turn

ἰδὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω see

Suggests that Peter may have been acting as a spokesman for the disciples rather than having expressed a purely personal viewpoint. For the sake of the other disciples, a public rebuke of Peter was necessary.

ὑπάγω go, go one's way, depart
ὀπίσω prep with gen after, behind, away from

Σατανᾶς, α the Adversary, Satan

Cranfield thinks this to be a blunt order 'Get out of my sight, Satan', rather than a command that Peter get back in his place as a disciple, following after Jesus rather than seeking to lead him. However, Jesus words in vv 34f, using the same phrase ὀπίσω μου, leave this open to question.

France comments, "It functions here as more than just an extravagant term of abuse (a use for which there is in any case no other evidence), and implies that Peter's protest, even though properly described as 'human' thoughts (φρονεῖς τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων), is so much at odds with the thoughts of God as to be attributed to a more supernatural source. By opposing the will of God (δεῖ) for his Messiah, Peter and those who agree with him are acting as spokesmen of God's ultimate enemy (cf. Satan's role in 'taking away the word' [of God] in 4:15)." France.

φρονεῶ think, have in mind

Here in the sense 'taking the side of'. "The characterisation of Peter's ideas as τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων as opposed to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ sums up the problem which we have seen in considering the call to secrecy in v. 30. The divine purpose revealed in v. 31 makes no sense in human terms. If even the privileged disciples are unable to get beyond their 'human' understanding of the Messiah's role, what hope is there for people in general to get it right? The problem lies not at the level of competing loyalties (as is suggested by the RSV translation 'on the side of'), but at that of incompatible ideologies, of a human perspective which cannot grasp the divine purpose." France.

8:34-9:1

Cf. Mt 16:24-28; Lk 9:23-27.

Verse 34

Καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τὸν ὄχλον σὺν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἐλθεῖν, ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι.

προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself
ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

"Mark uses προσκαλεομαι to alert the reader to expect something new or emphatic to be revealed, or some new instruction to be delivered to the disciples (cf. 3:13, 23; 6:7; 7:14; 10:42; 12:43). What is surprising here is that the object of the verb is not just the disciples, whom one would expect, but τὸν ὄχλον σὺν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ. We have gained from vv 27-33 the impression that the setting is a private retreat in the countryside in the far north of Palestine, where Jesus was presumably little known and the population probably non-Jewish. A crowd of people in this area who were at least potentially followers of Jesus seems incongruous, and they will play no further part in the narrative. From the narrator's point of view, however, the introduction of the ὄχλος serves here, rather like οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν σὺν τοῖς δώδεκα in 4:10, to widen the audience for a key pronouncement; their inclusion in the audience asserts that the harsh demands of the following verses apply not only to the Twelve but to anyone else who may wish to join the movement." France.

θελῶ wish, will

ἀκολουθεῶ follow, be a disciple

ἀπαρνησάσθω Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 3 s ἀπαρνεομαι disown, renounce

"To deny oneself is to disown, not just one's sin, but one's self, to turn away from the idolatry of self-centredness." Cranfield. France may be permitted what is perhaps an exaggeration when he writes, "What Jesus calls for here is ... a radical abandonment of one's own identity and self-determination, and a call to join the march to the place of execution follows appropriately from this. Such 'self-denial' is on a different level altogether from giving up chocolates for Lent. It is not the denial of something to the self, but the denial of the self itself."

αἶρω take, take up

σταυρός, ου m cross

"The expression ... is explained by the fact that a criminal condemned to crucifixion was made to carry the cross-beam of his cross to the place of execution. The meaning here is that the disciple must be ready to face martyrdom." Cranfield. The phrase should not be domesticated.

Verse 35

ὅς γὰρ ἐὰν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σῶσαι ἀπολέσει αὐτήν· ὅς δ' ἂν ἀπολέσει τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου σώσει αὐτήν.

ὅς ἐάν / ὅς ἂν whoever
 ψυχή, ης f self, life, 'soul'
 σωζω save, rescue, heal
 ἀπολέσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἀπολλυμι
 destroy, kill, lose
 ἕνεκα (ἕνεκεν and εἵνεκεν) prep with gen
 because of, for the sake of

"ἐμου καὶ is missing in P⁴⁵ D and several OL MSS. It is not easy to see why an original mention of loyalty to Jesus should have been deliberately removed, although it could have been lost accidentally. But on the other hand the presence of ἐμου both in the comparable texts in 10:29 (with τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) and 13:9 (without τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) and in both the Matthean and Lukan parallels at this point suggests that it could be a harmonising addition here, which would mean that Mark here originally read simply ἕνεκεν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου." France.

εὐαγγέλιον, ου n good news, gospel

"The point of this verse is that the disciple who tries to save his life by denying his Master will lose eternal life, while he who loses his life for Jesus' sake will gain eternal life." Cranfield.

Verse 36

τί γὰρ ὠφελεῖ ἄνθρωπον κερδῆσαι τὸν κόσμον ὅλον καὶ ζημιωθῆναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ;

ὠφελω gain, profit, benefit
 κερδῆσαι Verb, aor act infin κερδαινω
 gain, win
 ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

"κερδῆσαι τὸν κόσμον ὅλον ... expresses the height of human ambition and achievement, measured in terms of earthly life." France.

ζημιωθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ζημιωω
 (only in pass) lose, suffer loss

Verse 37

τί γὰρ δοῖ ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ;

δοῖ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s διδομι

"A vernacular form of the third person singular aorist subjunctive of διδομι" Cranfield.

ἀντάλλαγμα, τος n something offered in exchange

"The ἀντάλλαγμα (cf. LXX Job 28:15) is the 'exchange rate' at which the ψυχή is valued; it is beyond price." France.

Verse 38

ὅς γὰρ ἐὰν ἐπαισχυνθῇ με καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ τῇ μοιχαλίδι καὶ ἀμαρτωλῷ, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπαισχυνθήσεται αὐτὸν ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἁγίων.

"The contrast between this earthly life and true life is developed now in terms of shame and honour. The honour in human society which might be preserved by concealing one's allegiance to Jesus and his teaching is to be set against the shame (repudiation) which would result in the eternal sphere. Shame here and now is a small price to pay for acknowledgement and honour then." France.

ἐπαισχυνομαι be ashamed

ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my, mine

Metzger writes, "Although the reading without the word λόγους gives good sense ("whoever is ashamed of me and my [followers]"), it is easier to account for the origin of the shorter reading as due to accidental omission by the similarity of the ending of the words ἐμοὺς λόγους, than to account for the insertion of the word in a wide variety of different types of text."

γενεα, ας f generation, age

μοιχαλις, ιδος f adulteress, unfaithful

ἀμαρτωλος, ον sinful, sinner

Cf. Mt 12:39; 16:4. The time described is that of the whole age stretching to Christ's return.

ὅταν when

δοξα, ης f glory, splendour

ἅγιος, α, ον holy

"The first clear reference to a glorious Parousia in Mk... Angels are mentioned in connection with the Parousia frequently: e.g. 13:27; Mt 13:39,41,49; 25:31; 2 Thess 1:7." Cranfield.

France strongly disagrees with this view. He writes, "Christian interpretation traditionally understands these words as referring to a specific future *event*, the parousia... I shall argue more fully at 13:26 and 14:62 that this interpretation, which seems so 'natural' to us, would not have been at all natural for Jewish readers/hearers of this gospel in the first century to whom the imagery of Dn. 7:13-14 would have been very familiar. That passage describes Daniel's vision of a *υἱος ἀνθρώπου* who is seen 'coming' (LXX ἤρχετο ...) to be presented before the throne of God where he is given universal and eternal sovereignty over all nations; the themes here of glory and of the presence of the angels are also derived from the context of that vision in Dn 7:9-10 ... The scene is thus set in heaven where God is on his throne surrounded by the angelic court, and its focus is on the enthronement of the *υἱος ἀνθρώπου* to rule over the earth. Such a scene makes an entirely appropriate contrast with 'this generation' in its rebellion against God's sovereignty; it is before the heavenly authority of the Son of Man that the disciples must answer for their loyalty or cowardice. "There is thus no reason in this context to make the verb ἐλθῆ as referring to a 'descent' to earth at the parousia. It is an allusion to the wording of Dn. 7:13, where the 'coming' is the entry of the *υἱος ἀνθρώπου* into his kingship, exercised over the earth indeed, but located in the heavenly throne room. This language refers not to a specific event, but to the state of sovereign authority to which Jesus looks forward as the proper destiny of the Son of Man. His rejection on earth will lead to vindication and glory in heaven, and his followers must be prepared for a parallel experience. The same Son of Man who is soon to be the victim of human 'justice' will then be revealed as the true and ultimate authority; disciples must realise that it is recognition before that court that will matter in the end, whatever the reactions of 'this generation'."

Mark 9:1

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰσὶν
τινες τῶν ὧδε ἐστηκότων οἵτινες οὐ μὴ
γεύσωνται θανάτου ἕως ἂν ἴδωσιν τὴν
βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει.

ὧδε adv here, in this place

ἐστηκότων Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s
ἵστημι stand

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὁ τι
who, which

γεύσωνται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s
γευομαι taste, experience

θανατος, ου m death

ἕως (ἂν) until

ἴδωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ὁραω trans
see, observe

ἐληλυθυῖαν Verb, perf act ptc, f acc s
ἔρχομαι

"The perfect tense of ἐληλυθυῖαν indicates that they are not to see the 'coming' of the βασιλεία του θεου, but rather to witness the fact that it *has* come." France.

δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

Cranfield says, "The saying which follows is one of the most puzzling in the gospels. It is often cited (along with 13:30 and Mt 10:23) as evidence that Jesus expected the Parousia within a very short time." But see Matt 24:36. Cranfield goes on to consider a number of alternative suggestions, concluding that the most probable is that it refers to the Transfiguration. "For the Transfiguration points forward to, and is as it were a foretaste of, the Resurrection, which in turn points forward to, and is a foretaste of, the Parousia; so that both the Resurrection and the Parousia may be said to have been proleptically present in the Transfiguration."

France links this verse with the previous one and comments, "This time limit is another theme which links the three sayings based on Dn 7:13-14: the prediction of 13:26 is followed by the declaration that this generation will not be over before these things have happened (13:30), and the pronouncement in 14:62 is of what 'you', Jesus' judges in the Sanhedrin, will see. These sayings are not predictions of some event in the indefinite and probably distant future. All relate to the contemporary generation. There is nothing here to suggest the parousia." France thinks that while Mark may have understood the transfiguration "to be at least a partial and proleptic fulfilment of Jesus' words", the primary reality of which Jesus is speaking is the complex of cross, resurrection, ascension, Pentecost and the beginnings of the expansion of the church in which the growth of the mustard seed becomes visible.