

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 60 – March 1st – Mark 10:13-31

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 13-16

Cf. Mt 19:13-15; Lk 18:15-17; Mt 18:3.

Verse 13

Καὶ προσέφερον αὐτῷ παιδία ἵνα αὐτῶν ἄψηται· οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἐπετίμησαν αὐτοῖς.

προσφερω present, bring (before)

"The unspecified subject of προσέφερον may reasonably be assumed to be the parents of the children. Their very anonymity helps to make the point about status: they, and their children, are not anybody special." France.

παιδιον, ου η child

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

I.e. lay his hands on them and bless them.

ἐπιτιμαω command, rebuke

"Presumably the disciples meant to save Jesus from being troubled." Cranfield.

"Lest the words ἐπετίμησαν αὐτοῖς be taken to mean that it was the children who were rebuked, a wide variety of witnesses expanded the text to read ἐπετιμων τοις προσφερουσιν... The reading adopted by the text is strongly supported." Metzger.

Verse 14

ιδῶν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἠγανάκτησεν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ἄφετε τὰ παιδία ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς με, μὴ κωλύετε αὐτά, τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

ιδῶν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄρω see
ἠγανάκτησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
ἀγανακτεω be indignant, be angry

"It covers both irritation at their failure to learn and repugnance at their attitude in itself. Only a few verses earlier they have been found hindering someone whom Jesus approved (9:38-39), and the repetition of κωλυω here brands them as obstructionists who stand in the way of the generous intentions of Jesus." France.

ἀφημι allow

κωλυω hinder, prevent, forbid

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind

"The genitive is possessive, the meaning being that the kingdom 'belongs to such' (cf. Mt, 5:3,10) – not that it 'consists of such'. ... To find the reason why the kingdom of God belongs to children in any subjective qualities of the children is surely to misunderstand: the reason is rather to be found in their objective humbleness, the fact that they are weak and helpless and unimportant, and in the fact that God has chosen 'the weak things of the world' (1 Cor 1:26ff; cf. Mt 11:25 = Lk 10:21). Cranfield.

France comments similarly, "If in 9:37 the focus was, as we have argued, not on children as such but on those whom the child in that pericope represents, the 'little ones' of the kingdom of God, the meaning here is likely to be the same. In that case the pronouncement τῶν τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is not only or even mainly about children, but about those who share the child's status. It is to such people, the insignificant ones who are important to Jesus (who will of course include, but not be confined to, children) that God's kingdom belongs. It is the literal children whom Jesus tells the disciples to allow to come to him, but the reason is that they belong to and represent a wider category of οἱ τοιοῦτοι, who are the ones who matter to God."

Verse 15

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ὃς ἂν μὴ δέξηται τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς παιδίον, οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς αὐτήν.

"The fourteen ἀμὴν sayings of Mark are generally understood to mark out particularly important pronouncements, and several of them convey promises or warnings about spiritual rewards and penalties (see 3:28; 9:1; 9:41; 10:29). Here, too, there is a warning against failing to enter the kingdom of God." France.

δέξεται Verb, aor act subj, 3 s δεχομαι
receive, accept

"While 'entering' it apparently refers to eternal destiny, 'receiving' it relates more to a person's attitude and response towards God's demands in this life. To 'receive the kingdom of God' means to be God's willing subject, gladly embracing the radical values which Jesus has come to inculcate. It is such 'reception' now which is the key to 'entry' hereafter." France.

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

"The reference in ὡς παιδίον again is not to the receptiveness or humility or imaginativeness or trustfulness or unselfconsciousness of children, but to their objective littleness and helplessness. To receive the kingdom as a little child is to allow oneself to be given it, because one knows one cannot obtain it as one's right or attempt to earn it. (To think of any subjective qualities of children here is to turn faith into a work.)" Cranfield.

Verse 16

καὶ ἐναγκαλισάμενος αὐτὰ κατευλόγει τιθεὶς τὰς χεῖρας ἐπ' αὐτά.

ἐναγκαλισάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s ἐναγκαλιζομαι take into one's arms, put one's arms around

Cf. 9:36.

κατευλογεω bless

τιθεὶς Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s τιθημι
place

χειρ, χειρος f hand

Verses 17-22

Cf. Mt 19:16-30; Lk 18:18-30.

Verse 17

Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ εἰς ὁδὸν προσδραμῶν εἰς καὶ γονυπετήσας αὐτὸν ἐπηρώτα αὐτόν· Διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσω ἵνα ζῶν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;

ἐκπορευομαι go or come out

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

"The repetition of ὁδος does not allow us to forget what lies ahead, and puts the call to follow him (v. 21) in a sombre context." France.

προσδραμων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
προστρεχω run up to

"A vivid detail which suggests the man's eagerness." Cranfield.

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
γονυπετεω kneel

"The combination of προσδραμων and γονυπετησας (see on 1:40) suggests a degree of seriousness, even of urgency, which is well borne out by his opening words." France.

ἐπηρώτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s

ἐπερωταω ask, question

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

ἀγαθος, η, ου good

"The addition of ἀγαθε is remarkable: Mark nowhere else uses ἀγαθος of a person, and its combination with διδασκαλος (producing a form of address for which no contemporary Jewish parallel is known) suggests either flattery or an outsider with an unusually positive view of Jesus (one who in terms of 9:40 must be regarded as ὑπερ ἡμῶν). It is the unusual character of the address which gives the cue for Jesus' probing response in v. 18." France.

ζωη, ης f life

αἰώνιος, ου eternal, everlasting

κληρονομεω receive, gain possession of,
inherit

He asks the question that really matters.

Verse 18

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός.

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

"Jesus directs the young man's attention away from himself to his Father, who is the only norm of goodness." Cranfield. He wants the questioner to think concerning the nature and character of God.

Verse 19

τὰς ἐντολὰς οἶδας· Μὴ φονεύσης, Μὴ μοιχεύσης, Μὴ κλέψης, Μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσης, Μὴ ἀποστερήσης, Τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα.

ἐντολη, ης f command, order, instruction
οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

φονεω murder, put to death

μοιχευω commit adultery

κλεπτο steal

ψευδομαρτυρεω give false evidence or testimony

ἀποστερεω defraud, rob, steal

"Since μη ἀποστερήσης is an unexpected intrusion into the well-known clauses of the decalogue, its omission in some significant witnesses is best explained as deliberate, either because it was not recognised as one of the commandments (and could be seen as merely repeating the theme of μη κλέψης) or by assimilation to Matthew and Luke, who also omit it." France. France thinks that the term may be "an attempt to draw out in more behavioural terms the implications of the tenth commandment: appropriating someone else's possessions is likely to be a practical result of coveting."

τιμαω honour, reverence

The commandments "are the answer to the question about eternal life, not because a man can keep them and so earn eternal life, but because, if he honestly tries to keep them, he will be brought to recognise his bankruptcy and prepared to receive the kingdom of God as a little child.

"Only commandments of the Second Table are mentioned (cf. Mt. 7:12; Gal 5:14; Rom 8:8-10), not because they are regarded as more important than those of the First Table, but because it is by a man's obedience to the former that his obedience to the latter must be outwardly demonstrated." Cranfield.

Verse 20

ὁ δὲ ἔφη αὐτῷ· Διδάσκαλε, ταῦτα πάντα ἐφυλαξάμην ἐκ νεότητός μου.

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say

ἐφυλαξάμην Verb, aor midd indic, 1s

φυλασσω keep, guard

The middle means 'keep oneself from' and would refer therefore not to the commandments themselves but to the acts they prohibit.

νεότης, ητος f youth, youthfulness

"The man's naive reply makes it clear that he has not understood the Commandments nor ever really taken them seriously. But he was no more mistaken about the Law's real seriousness than were his Jewish contemporaries generally." Cranfield.

Verse 21

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ἠγάπησεν αὐτὸν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ἐν σε ὑστερεῖ· ὕπαγε ὅσα ἔχει πώλησον καὶ δὸς τοῖς πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἔξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι.

ἐμβλέψας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

ἐμβλεπω look straight at

ἀγαπαω love, show love for

σε Pronoun, acc s συ

ὑστερεω lack, have need of, fall short of

"The one thing lacking is the all-important thing, a single-hearted devotion to God, obedience to the first of the Ten Commandments. For the fact that the man goes away with darkened countenance is the sign that he has made his riches into an idol, from which it is too hard to part." Cranfield.

ὑπαγω go, go one's way, depart

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as, how much; pl. as many as, all

πωλεω sell, barter

δὸς Verb, aor act imperat, 2s δίδωμι

πτωχος, η, ον poor, pitiful

A particular command given to a particular person.

θησαυρος, ου m treasure store

δευρο adv. come, come here

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a disciple

"The addition of ἀρας τον σταυρον (σου) in A W and many later MSS, even though not in conformity to Matthew and Luke, looks very much like a 'moralising' expansion." France.

"The command is at the same time a gift. Jesus offers himself to him: he is himself the answer to the man's question, the way to eternal life. To inherit eternal life one must lay hold of it where it is offered as a gift in the person of Jesus." Cranfield.

Verse 22

ὁ δὲ στυγνάσας ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ ἀπῆλθεν λυπούμενος, ἦν γὰρ ἔχων κτήματα πολλὰ.

στυγναζω be shocked or sad

λυπεω pain, grieve; pass be sad, sorrowful

"His sorrow is a hopeful sign; for it means that Jesus, who loved him, has not let go his hold on him – the barb has stuck. Whether his sorrow was turned into repentance and faith we are not told." Cranfield.

"His sorrowful decision illustrates the Q saying, οὐ δυνασθε θεω δουλευειν και μαμωνα. Peter will be quick to point out the contrast with the decision he and his colleagues had made when they first met Jesus (v. 28)." France.

κτημα, τος n possession, property

Verse 23

Καὶ περιβλεψάμενος ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ· Πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελεύσονται.

περιβλεπομαι look around
δυσκόλως adv with difficulty; πως δ. how hard it is
χρημα, τος n mostly pl possessions, wealth, money

Verse 24

οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἐθαμβοῦντο ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν ἀποκριθεὶς λέγει αὐτοῖς· Τέκνα, πῶς δύσκολόν ἐστιν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν·

ἐθαμβοῦντο Verb, imperf pass indic, 3 pl
θαμβεομαι be amazed or shocked
πάλιν again, once more
ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply, say
τεκνον, ου n child

For the affectionate use of τέκνα cf. 2:5, also John 13:33; 21:5.

δυσκόλως, ον hard, difficult

Many MSS read ἐστιν τοὺς πεποιθότας ἐπὶ χρημασιν rather than simply ἐστιν. France comments, "The shorter reading has the effect of universalising the difficulty of entering the kingdom of God, though the specification of οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες in v. 23 and πλουσιος in v. 25 restricts it contextually. It is possible that τοὺς πεποιθότας ἐπὶ χρημασιν was a later addition from the context to avoid this universal sense, but the fact that the wording is different from that in vv. 23 and 25 is in its favour, and the shorter reading might then be attributed to a scribal desire to avoid redundancy. But the substitution of *trust* in wealth for wealth itself looks suspiciously like a convenient softening of Jesus' harsh verdict on the affluent, hence the preference for the shorter reading."

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

France comments, "Here, then, as in vv 2-12, Mark leaves us with a totally uncompromising ethic which seems impossible to apply in the real world, where some degree of 'wealth' seems essential to survival and indeed to effective discipleship and the ability to do good. 'Wealth' is relative: even those who would consider themselves poor in modern Western society live at a level which would have been unimaginable to most of Jesus' hearers, and remains so to many in other parts of the world today. The carefree life of the total dependence upon God exemplified by the birds and the flowers commended in Mt 6:25-33 can be adopted, if at all, only by a radical opting out of modern society which is hard to square with the gospel call to be the salt of the earth and light of the world. So does this mean that this present pericope is of no practical value to us, merely an interesting historical glimpse into an extreme asceticism which the Christian church quickly and necessarily left behind? As with the teaching on divorce, that is a dangerously comfortable conclusion. The nature and degree of renunciation of wealth which the gospel requires may be something which will be worked out differently in different times and circumstances, but if we lose sight of the principle that affluence is a barrier to the kingdom of God we are parting company from Jesus at a point which seems to have been fundamental to his teaching as all three synoptic writers understood it."

Verse 25

εὐκοπώτερόν ἐστιν κάμηλον διὰ τῆς τρυμαλιᾶς τῆς ραφίδος διελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν.

εὐκοπώτερος, α, ον (comparative from εὐκοπος easy) easier
καμηλος, ον m & f camel
τρυμαλια, ας f eye (of a needle)
ραφίς, ιδος f needle
διερχομαι pass through, go through
ἢ or, than
πλουσιος, α, ον rich, well-to-do

"A humorous example of the impossible. A Rabbinic reference to an elephant passing through the eye of a needle is quoted in Strack & Billerbeck 1, p.828. Cf. Mt 23:24; Lk 6:41f. Procrustean attempts to reduce the camel to a rope (reading καμιλον for καμηλον) or to enlarge the needle's eye into a postern gate need not be taken seriously." Cranfield.

Of the latter suggestion France writes, "Worse than the lack of evidence for this conjecture is its effect in actually undermining the point of the proverb. That which Jesus presented as ludicrously impossible is turned into a remote possibility: the rich person, given sufficient unloading and humility, might just possibly be able to squeeze in. That was not what Jesus' proverb meant, and it was not how the disciples understood it (v. 26)."

Verse 26

οἱ δὲ περισσῶς ἐξεπλήσσαντο λέγοντες πρὸς ἑαυτούς· Καὶ τίς δύναται σωθῆναι;

περισσῶς all the more, even more
ἐκπλησσομαι be amazed
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

Some MSS read πρὸς αὐτον which appears to be a 'correction' to preserve the interchange between the disciples and Jesus.

σωζω save, rescue

Verse 27

ἐμβλέψας αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει· Παρὰ ἀνθρώποις ἀδύνατον ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ θεῶ, πάντα γὰρ δυνατὰ παρὰ τῷ θεῶ.

ἐμβλέψας see v.21

"The saying which follows is the key to the meaning of vv. 17-27. To inherit eternal life, enter the kingdom of God, be saved – this is outside the sphere of human possibilities altogether, for the poor and the rich alike. But God can do the impossible!" Cranfield. France comments, "The salvation of the rich is always a miracle, but miracles are God's speciality."

ἀδυνατος, ον impossible

δυνατος, η, ον possible

Cf. Gen 18:14; Job 10:13 (LXX); 42:2; Zech 8:6 (LXX).

Verse 28

Ἦρξατο λέγειν ὁ Πέτρος αὐτῷ· Ἴδου ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν πάντα καὶ ἠκολουθήκαμέν σοι.

ἄρχω midd begin

ἀφήκαμεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl ἀφιημι
leave, forsake, let go

ἠκολουθήκαμέν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl
ἠκολουθεω see v.21

On the distinction between the aorist ἀθηκαμεν and the perfect ἠκολουθηκαμεν Taylor comments: "the decisive renunciation in Peter's mind stood out against the permanent following."

France comments, "There is perhaps a touch of smugness in his observation that where the rich man has fallen short they have come up to Jesus' stringent expectations."

Verse 29f.

"Jesus does not at once rebuke the spirit of Peter's utterance. Instead he makes a quite general threefold promise. Everyone who forsakes house or kinsfolk or lands for his sake and the gospel's

- i) shall in the present age receive back a hundredfold what he has given up;
 - ii) shall at the same time have to endure persecution;
 - iii) shall in the age to come inherit eternal life."
- Cranfield.

Verse 29

ἔφη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐδεὶς ἐστὶν ὃς ἀφήκεν οἰκίαν ἢ ἀδελφοὺς ἢ ἀδελφάς ἢ μητέρα ἢ πατέρα ἢ τέκνα ἢ ἀγροὺς ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ ἕνεκεν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου,

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say
οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing
ἀφήκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφιημι
ἄγρος, ου m field, farm

ἐνεκα (ἐνεκεν and εἵνεκεν) prep with gen
because of, for the sake of

εὐαγγέλιον, ου n good news, gospel

"The degree of renunciation should not be overstated: after Peter and his colleagues had left their nets to follow Jesus (1:16-20) the home of Peter and Andrew remained available to them (1:29), and is generally assumed to have been the house used by Jesus as his base in Capernaum. It was not for the time being so private as it might have been, but it remained theirs. And in that house lived Peter's mother-in-law, and presumably other members of the family. The boat of 3:9; 4:1, 36, etc. may well have belonged to Peter or one of the other fishermen-disciples. We should then understand ἀφιημι here not of a disposal of property (such as Jesus had asked of the rich man, v. 21) and of a total renunciation of family ties, but of the leaving behind of both family and possessions for the period of their itinerant ministry. This is not monastic poverty so much as pragmatically sitting light to possessions and family ἐνεκεν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου." France.

Verse 30

ἐὰν μὴ λάβῃ ἑκατονταπλασίονα νῦν ἐν τῷ
 καιρῷ τούτῳ οἰκίας καὶ ἀδελφοὺς καὶ ἀδελφὰς
 καὶ μητέρας καὶ τέκνα καὶ ἀγροὺς μετὰ
 διωγμῶν, καὶ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ ζωὴν
 αἰώνιον.

"The list of losses in v. 29 is linked by ἢ, but the list of gains in v.30 by καὶ. This is probably no more than stylistic variation, so that it is over-exegesis to conclude that the abandonment of any *one* of the items in the list will be rewarded by the gain of *all* of them (though of course it is true that not everyone will have every item in the list to begin with). Certainly 'what is gained will far outweigh what is lost' (Cranfield), but this is conveyed more by ἑκατονταπλασίονα than by the change of conjunction." France.

ἐὰν μὴ **except**
 ἑκατοναπλασιων, ον **a hundred-fold**
 καιρος, ου **m time, age**
 διωγμος, ου **m persecution**
 αἰων, αἰωνος **m age, world order, eternity**
 ζωη, ης **f life**
 αιωνιος, ον **eternal, everlasting**

"The very goal which the rich man sought but failed to find (v. 17)." France.

Verse 31

πολλοὶ δὲ ἔσονται πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι καὶ οἱ
 ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι.

ἔσονται **Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι**
 πρωτος, η, ον **first, leading, foremost,**
prominent
 εσχατος, η, ον **adj last, final**

Cf. Mt 20:16; Lk 13:30 as well as the Mt parallel.
 The saying may here include "a warning to Peter and the rest of the Twelve called forth by Peter's outburst in v.28." Cranfield.
 "Such a gentle rebuke to Peter implied in these words would give a suitable launching pad to the attempt of James and John to establish their own rival claim to primacy in v. 37." France.