

Introduction to Mark

Authorship

The earliest traditions concerning this 'Gospel' come from Papias who is quoted by Eusebius and other writers in the early church. Papias, writing at the beginning of the second century, quotes 'the Elder' (whom Gundry considers to have been the apostle John). In introducing the quotation from Papias, France comments, "it is not clear at what point in the quotation, if at all, Papias moves on from the Elder's report to his own comment." The quotation runs as follows:

"This is what the Elder used to say: Mark became Peter's interpreter and wrote accurately, though not in order, all that he remembered of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had not himself heard the Lord or been his follower, but later, as I said, he followed Peter. Peter delivered teachings as occasion required, rather than compiling a sort of orderly presentation of the traditions about the Lord. So Mark was not wrong in recording in this way the individual items as he remembered them. His one concern was to leave out nothing of what he had heard and to make no false statements in reporting them."

France comments further, "If Papias's information is correct, Peter, even if not 'systematic' enough for some tastes, must have been a lively preacher. The vivid narrative style and content of the Marcan stories may well derive as much from the way Peter used to tell them as from Mark's own skill as a raconteur. The events are told and the teaching heard mainly from within the experience of the disciple group. This means that Mark's book reflects not the distant evaluation of a scholarly admirer of Jesus but the subjective experience of one of those who shared most closely in the stirring and yet profoundly disturbing events of Jesus' public ministry and his confrontation with the Jerusalem establishment. And it reflects those experiences as they were passed on in the day-to-day teaching ministry, 'as occasion required', of a living community of followers of Jesus (within which Mark no doubt himself also followed Peter as a recognised teller of the stories of Jesus). It is, perhaps, this grounding in the active life of the church which gives much of the special flavour (and 'feeling of otherness') to the 'good news' as told by Mark."

France makes the further point that Mark's Gospel was written to be read out loud, quoting C Bryan, "Mark was designed for oral transmission – and for transmission as a continuous whole – rather than for private study or silent reading." It has the character of storytelling and of drama. France comments, "Whether by exploiting Peter's memory or by exercising his own imagination, Mark has contrived to give his readers the feeling of 'being there', and that is in large part what makes his story so easy and rewarding to read."

There is really no reason to doubt that the Mark who appears in Acts as an assistant to Barnabas and Paul was the author this Gospel. It was probably written in Rome in the latter half of the 60s of the first century – after the Neronian persecution that followed the great fire in Rome in AD 64 and after the death of Peter, but before the other Synoptic Gospels¹ and before the Jewish war of 70 AD.

¹ The relationship between the Synoptic Gospels is beyond the scope of this introduction. France, while accepting the priority of Mark, follows JAT Robinson in resisting a 'linear' solution to the relationship between the Synoptics. France writes, "This concept of 'cross-fertilisation' rather than a purely 'linear dependence' seems to me to take more realistic account of the likely growth of gospel traditions in the first century churches, which were not sealed units but remained in contact with

Structure

France characterises Mark's Gospel as a 'drama in three acts.' His analysis of the structure is as follows:

1:1	The Heading
1:2-13	The Prologue: Setting the Scene – The Dramatis Personae
1:14-8:21	Act One: Galilee
8:22-10:52	Act Two: On the Way to Jerusalem (Learning about the Cross)
11:1-16:8	Act Three: Jerusalem

France adds that, "The two discourses of chapters 4 and 13 thus allow the reader a pause in the otherwise rapid pace of the narrative to think through the implications of the story so far, and provide a theological framework for understanding the new thing that is happening with the coming of Jesus of Nazareth. The fact that each occurs roughly halfway through what I have termed Acts One and Three of the drama suggests that there may be a literary as well as a theological purpose in the discourses, to provide a narrative pause which gives the reader time to reflect on the events as they unfold."

Mark's Style

Cranfield highlights the following elements of Mark's Greek style, many of which are integral to the fast moving narrative style of Mark:

- i) The use of periphrastic tenses (e.g. 2:6,18; 4:38).
- ii) The use of the historic present (J.C.Hawkins lists 151 instances, of which nearly half are *λεγει* or *λεγουσι*).
- iii) The use of the indefinite plural (e.g. 1:22,30,32,45).
- iv) The use of the aorist of *αρχομαι* as a redundant auxiliary verb (e.g. 1:45; 2:23; 6:7).
- v) The use of parataxis in preference to subordinate clauses.
- vi) The use of asyndeton, i.e. the placing of one sentence after another without any connecting particle or conjunction (e.g. 3:35; 4:28; 5:39b; 14:3b, 6c, 8).
- vii) The use of Latin loanwords – more numerous than any other gospel.
- viii) The frequent use of *εὐθως* (41 times).
- ix) The use of diminutives (e.g. *θυγατριον* in 5:23; 7:25, *πλοιαριον* in 3:9, *ωταριον* in 14:47).
- x) A certain diffuseness of expression.

Cranfield adds, "The Semitic flavour of the Greek of the gospel is unmistakable. Of the characteristics mentioned above (i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi), and in some cases (x) are probably due to the influence of Aramaic. In addition to these, there are a considerable number of other features which reflect Aramaic influence."

one another as Christians travelled around the eastern part of the empire – the sort of free movement of Christian leaders and teachers which is so graphically illustrated at a slightly later period in *Did.* 11-12. In such a situation it would be natural for traditions about Jesus to be shared and compared, and for collections of what later came to be known as 'gospel' material to grow up in different locations, each with its own distinctive form but with constant opportunity for influence and expansion from traditions preserved in other church centres... In the light of that situation, I do not need a solution to the Synoptic problem."

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

Mark 1:1-8

Cf. Mt 3:1-12; Lk 3:1-18.

Mark 1:1

Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ.

ἀρχη, ης f beginning, origin

"Anarthrous Greek construction may signal the function as a heading (e.g. Hos 1:2; Prov 1:1; Ecc 1:1; Cant 1:1; Matt 1:1; Rev 1:1)."

Guelich.

Cranfield lists ten possible meanings for this phrase, including:

- i) ἀρχη means origin. Mark is going to relate the historic basis for the church's message;
- ii) ἀρχη means summary;
- iii) The phrase is intended not as a title for the whole work but for the first section (vv 2-13 or 2-8).

Cranfield prefers the last of these, citing as a parallel the LXX of Hos 1:2. The sense is, 'Here's where it all began. It began with the preaching of John.'

While agreeing that v1 leads into the prologue, France says, "In its contents, however, v. 1 points far beyond the first part of chapter 1. It sets forth themes which the whole book will explore."

εὐαγγέλιον, ου n good news, gospel

Cranfield says that the NT use of εὐαγγέλιον reflects that of the Hebrew root *bsr* in the OT. The verb in the Piel is nearly always represented in the LXX by the middle of εὐαγγελίζω and means 'to announce good news' (e.g. 1 Kings 1:42; Jer 20:15), especially of victory (e.g. 1 Sam 31:9). Here the content of the good news is the breaking in of God's kingly rule, the advent of his salvation, vengeance, vindication (e.g. Is 52:7 "Your God reigns").

Jesus is both the herald of the good news and the content of the message.

Of Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου France writes, "When Mark wrote these words he was not using εὐαγγέλιον to designate a literary genre, but simply to indicate the nature of the subject matter of his work: it is a presentation in written form of the 'good news' about Jesus which was and is the subject of the church's teaching and mission... Mark did not say to himself, 'I am going to write a εὐαγγέλιον'; it was only as it became necessary for the church to find a suitable label for this category of literature, church books about Jesus, that Mark's heading provided them with one. Once the term had become established as a designation for the four canonical versions of the one εὐαγγέλιον (so that τὸ εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μάρκον is properly translated not 'the gospel [-book] by Mark' but 'the [one] gospel in Mark's version') it became available as a literary label for other works about Jesus that came to be written from the second century onwards, however different in character they may have been from the narrative 'gospels' of the first century. Hence the *Gospel of Thomas*, *Gospel of Peter*, *Gospel of Philip*, *Gospel of Truth*, *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, and the like. The term which for Mark had designated the (hitherto oral) message of the first-century churches had thus come to mean something like 'a church book about Jesus'."

Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ "The Pauline corpus demonstrates the common use of 'Jesus Christ' as a proper name in the Church prior to the writing of the Gospels. And Mark 9:41 implies that 'Christ' served as a name in Mark's community, while 8:29; 12:35; 13:21; 14:61 and 15:32 show it maintained its function as a title... One may at least say that Χριστός has not lost its messianic significance in the double name so that both Matthew and Mark deliberately choose to use the double name to introduce their Gospels about 'Jesus Messiah' (cf. Acts 10:36; Rom 1:2-4). Furthermore, the title 'Messiah' plays a pivotal role in 8:29 where Peter's confession leads to the fourth major section (1:16-3:12; 3:13-6:6; 6:7-8:26; 8:27-10:52; 11:1-16:8) of Mark's Gospel. Therefore, 'Jesus Messiah' more adequately renders Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ." Guelich.

ἰοῦ θεοῦ is omitted from many MSS (κ* Θ 28 etc) and from many Patristic references. Nestle, Metzger and Cranfield argue for the originality of these words. Cf. 15:39.

Mark 1:2

Καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ· Ἴδου ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου·

καθως links verse 2 to verse 1. "It is through the fulfilment of these scriptural passages that the good news finds its beginning." France.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω write

"The perfect, denoting a past action the results of which remain, is regularly used to introduce quotations from Scripture." Cranfield. The quotation appears to be a combination of Mal 3:1a and Ex 23:20.

προφήτης, ου m prophet

In place of the phrase ἐν (τῷ) Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ, which is in all the earlier uncials except A and W and in virtually all the primary versional evidence, Byzantine MSS follow A W in reading ἐν τοῖς προφήταις an obvious 'correction' in view of the fact that the following composite quotation begins with words from Malachi.

ἀποστέλλω send, send out
 προσωπον, ου n face, appearance, presence
 κατασκευάζω prepare, build, construct, furnish
 ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

"John's function is to prepare the way, but for whom? Mal 3:1 and Is 40:3 speak of preparing for the coming of ὁ κυριος (which in the OT context can only mean God), and John predicts the arrival of one who is ἰσχυροτερος and who will dispense the Spirit as the prophets had said that Yahweh would do in the last days. Thus vv. 2-8 appear to leave no room for a human figure in the eschatological drama other than John himself, the forerunner sent to prepare for the eschatological coming of God... When in v. 9 an obscure northerner (Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ τῆς Γαλιλαίας) appears on the scene, it is not immediately obvious what connection he has with the role either of John the forerunner or of the expected ἰσχυροτερος, and it will be the function of vv. 10-13 to begin to spell this out. The rest of the book will continue to guide the reader to an answer to this question." France.

Mark 1:3

φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ· Ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ,

βοῶ call, cry out, shout

ἐρημος, ου f uninhabited region, desert

ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ is connected in the LXX with the preceding phrase, although the Hebrew text connects it to the following verb 'prepare.'

France comments that the 'wilderness' was seen as a place of hope, of new beginnings. "It was in the wilderness that Yahweh had met with Israel and made them into his people when they came out of Egypt. That had been the honeymoon period, before the relationship became strained... Where else but ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ would you expect to see the drama of God's eschatological salvation begin?"

ἐτοιμαζω prepare, make ready

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road

εὐθους, εια, υ straight; right, upright

τρίβος, ου f path, pathway

"The second quotation (from Is 40:3) agrees with the LXX apart from one significant variation – the substitution of αὐτοῦ for τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, which has the effect of making possible, though not necessitating, the identification of the Κυριος with Jesus." Cranfield.

The comparison of the original with its use here may also be taken as a pointer to the Deity of Christ.

Mark 1:4

ἐγένετο Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.

This verse is closely connected with vv. 2,3

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι βαπτίζω baptise, wash

"John's choice of the wilderness as the scene of his preaching was probably due to the associations it had come to have in the minds of the people. Israel's sojourn in the wilderness was remembered as a time of Israel's disobedience and a time of grace, of God's mighty acts... In Hosea 2:14 there is the idea of a second wilderness period. The idea grew up that the final eschatological salvation would have its beginning in the wilderness – the Messiah would appear there. Hence, revolutionary messianic movements were attracted to the wilderness (e.g. Acts 21:38)." Cranfield.

κηρύσσω preach, proclaim

Derived from κηρῦξ, 'a herald'. The verb means to proclaim in a loud voice.

βάπτισμα μετανοίας. The background for such baptism is in the many ritual washings laid down in the OT law (e.g. Lev 15:5, 8, 13, 16), and the frequent OT use of the imagery of washing in connection with repentance (e.g. Is 1:16) and above all the practice of Jewish proselyte baptism.

"That proselyte-baptism was established by this time is now generally agreed. It is inconceivable that the Jews should have taken on the custom *after* the rise of the Christian Church, of which baptism was characteristic. If this view that John's baptism was derived from proselyte-baptism is granted, then it follows that the implication of his baptism was that Jews did not have a right to membership of the people of God by mere fact that they were Jews (cf. Mt 3:9; Lk 3:8): by their sins they had become as Gentiles and now they needed as radical a repentance as did Gentiles if they were to have any part in God's salvation." Cranfield.

μετανοια, ας f repentance, change of heart, change of way

Repentance involves a turning from self and from evil to God: it implies obedient submission to God. France says that it speaks of "a reorientation to the paradoxical values of the kingdom of God... It is to such a revolution of attitudes and values that Jesus will call people when he announces the coming of the kingdom of God, and μετανοια appropriately expresses this idea. The continuity in this respect between the ministries of John and Jesus (and his disciples) is therefore noteworthy."

ἄφεσις, εως f forgiveness, cancellation ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

"Exactly how John regarded the connection between his baptism and the forgiveness of sin it is difficult to be sure. That he did not think of baptism as effecting automatically a man's acceptance before God, but held that it needed to be accompanied by obedience, is indicated by Mt 3:8 = Lk 3:8a. But it is probable that he thought of it as having some real effectiveness towards forgiveness, and as in some measure at any rate a pledge of it." Cranfield.

Baptism, as a rite, undergoes transformation from Jewish proselyte baptism to John's baptism and again from John's baptism to Christian baptism where it finds its focus in Christ's atoning work.

Mark 1:5

καὶ ἐξεπορεύετο πρὸς αὐτὸν πᾶσα ἡ Ἰουδαία χώρα καὶ οἱ Ἱεροσολυμίται πάντες, καὶ ἐβαπτίζοντο ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ ποταμῷ ἐξομολογούμενοι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν.

ἐκπορευομαι go or come out

χώρα, ας f country, region, territory Ἱεροσολυμιτης, ου m an inhabitant of Jerusalem

"The failure to mention Galilee (or indeed Peraea) may reflect Mark's understanding that John was baptising toward the southern end of the Jordan valley. It has the effect of making the appearance of Jesus ἀπὸ Ναζαρετ τῆς Γαλιλαίας in v.9 the more striking; he is not part of the Judean crowd, but a stranger from the far north." France.

Ἰορδανης, ου m Jordan River

ποταμος, ου m river, stream

ἐξομολογεω midd confess, acknowledge

"Their submission to baptism was itself a confession of sinfulness... It is possible that a spoken confession of sin preceded the actual baptism." Cranfield.

Mark 1:6

καὶ ἦν ὁ Ἰωάννης ἐνδεδυμένος τρίχας καμήλου
καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφύν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἔσθων ἀκρίδας καὶ μέλι ἄγριον.

ἐνδεδυμένος Verb, perf midd ptc, m nom s
ἐνδύω dress; midd put on, wear

"ἦν with the perfect participle ἐνδεδυμένος and the present participle ἔσθων (ἐσθω is an older form of ἐσθίω) is a double example of the use of periphrastic tenses which is specially common in Mk." Cranfield.

τρίχας Noun, acc pl θριξ, τριχος f hair
καμήλος, ου m & f camel
ζώνη, ης f belt
δερματίνος, η, ου of leather
ὀσφυς, υος f waist

Cf. 2 Kings 1:8 for a similar description of Elijah.

ἐσθίω and ἐσθω eat, consume
ἀκρις, ιδος f locust, grasshopper
μέλι, ιτος n honey
ἄγριος, α, ου wild

"Either the honey found in rocks or possibly the sap of certain trees." Taylor.

Mark 1:7

καὶ ἐκήρυσσεν λέγων· Ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου ὀπίσω μου, οὗ οὐκ εἰμί ἱκανὸς κύψας λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ·

ἰσχυροτερος, α, ου stronger
ὀπισω prep with gen after, behind

John is apparently conscious "of standing at the beginning of the unfolding of the eschatological drama." Taylor.

ἱκανος, η, ου worthy, sufficient, fit, able
κύψας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s κυπτω
bend or stoop down
λυω loose, untie, release
ἴμας, αντος n strap
ὑπόδημα, τος n sandal

"To carry someone's shoes after them or to take them off his feet was the work of a slave. A Hebrew slave was not obliged to do it (*Mekilla* on Exodus 21:2). Rabbi Joshua b. Levi is quoted as saying: 'All services which a slave does for his master a pupil should do for his teacher, with the exception of undoing his shoes' (b Ket.96a)." Cranfield.
John is saying that, compared with Christ, he is not worthy to be considered even the most menial of slaves.

"The Christian reader has no difficulty in recognising in this ἰσχυροτερος a pointer to Jesus... But the point is worth repeating that neither the OT passages produced in vv. 2-3 as models of John's role as forerunner nor the specific role which he assigns to the ἰσχυροτερος in v.8 could be expected in themselves to suggest a *human* figure. It is Yahweh who will follow the forerunner in both Mal 3:1 and Is 40:3, and in OT thought it is Yahweh himself who will pour out his Spirit in the last days (Is 32:15; 44:3; Ezk 36:26-27; 39:29; Joel 3:1-2 [EVV 2:28-29], etc.). It says a lot for the underlying christology of Mark's gospel that he can allow the Baptist's words, which in themselves point directly to the coming of God, to be read as referring to the human Jesus. For him, apparently, the coming of Jesus *is* the eschatological coming of God." France.

Mark 1:8

ἐγὼ ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ὕδατι, αὐτὸς δὲ βαπτίσει ὑμᾶς ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.

ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

Many MSS read ἐν ὕδατι, "probably due to a scribal desire to produce a parallel syntax for the two clauses." France.

ἅγιος, α, ου holy, consecrated

"The contrast is primarily between the persons of John and Jesus, not between John's baptism and Christian baptism. Theologically, it is important here not to make the mistake of turning this into a simple contrast between John's and Christian baptism, as though the meaning was that the former is merely a matter of water, while the latter is both water-baptism and also a baptism with the Spirit; for, on the one hand, the Christian minister needs to make precisely the same confession with regard to the baptism he administers (all that *he* does is to baptize with water; the gift of the Spirit is the gift ... of Christ), and, on the other hand, there is a real continuity between John's baptism and Christian baptism, to overlook which is to rob the Baptism of our Lord of a great part of its significance." Cranfield.

France argues that verses 1-13 form an introduction to Mark's gospel and include terms which occur rarely elsewhere in the gospel. In particular, concerning πνεῦμα he writes, "In the whole of the gospel after 1:13 there are only three references to the (Holy) Spirit (3:29; 12:36; 13:11), only one of which (3:29) relates (indirectly) to the role of the Spirit in the ministry of Jesus. Yet in these opening verses the Spirit is mentioned three times (1:8, 10, 12) and appears as a central figure in the launching of Jesus' ministry. The remarkable difference in focus suggests that Mark has something of importance to which he wishes to draw his readers' attention at the outset.

"The eschatological outpouring of God's Spirit was a significant feature in OT expectation, as seen in Is 32:15; Ezk 36:26-27; 39:29; Jo 3:1-5 (EVV 2:29-32), and the quotation of the latter in Peter's Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:17-21) shows the importance of this expectation for early Christian understanding of the significance of Jesus' ministry...

"By this emphasis on the role of the Spirit in 1:2-13, therefore, Mark alerts the reader at the outset of the gospel, in a way which will not be open to him in the narrative situation after 1:14, to the messianic significance of Jesus, both as the one who is himself empowered and directed by the Spirit in the fulfilment of his eschatological role, and also, remarkably, as the one who 'dispenses' the Spirit, a role which in the OT passages mentioned above was exclusively that of Yahweh himself... In the subsequent narrative we shall hear little of the Spirit, but the reader who has listened well to the prologue will be able to interpret the scenes in Galilee and Jerusalem in the light of this more ultimate wilderness perspective."

Mark 1:9-11

Cf Mt 3:13-17; Lk 3:21f.

Mark 1:9

Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἐβαπτίσθη εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην ὑπὸ Ἰωάννου.

ἐγένετο see v.4

"Καὶ ἐγένετο followed by a main verb (ἦλθεν) is a Semitic construction, unknown outside biblical Greek, derived from the Hebrew way^hi. (ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις) has an equally formal, 'biblical' ring. Mark stands in the tradition of the great chroniclers of the acts of God in the OT." France.

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those
ἐβαπτίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s βαπτίζω

To the question 'Why was Jesus baptised?' Cranfield offers the following: "The true answer ... is suggested by the fact that verse 11 contains an echo of Isaiah 42:1, which speaks of the Servant of the Lord whose mission is further described in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. Jesus' submission to John's baptism of repentance was his mature self-dedication to his mission of self-identification with sinners which in due course would involve the Cross. In his baptism he became for men's sake and in their place 'the one great Sinner who repents' – to use Barth's daring phrase. That Jesus later in his ministry associated baptism with death seems to be indicated by Mk 10:38, Lk 12:50, and it is by no means unlikely that already at the Jordan he was aware that his baptism by John foreshadowed another baptism, more bitter, without which his Mission could not be completed."

Mark 1:10

καὶ εὐθὺς ἀναβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος εἶδεν σχιζομένους τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ὡς περιστερὰν καταβαῖνον εἰς αὐτόν·

εὐθὺς adv. straightway, immediately

A favourite adverb of Mark. It occurs 11 times in the first chapter alone and 37 times in the narrative of the gospel as a whole.

ἀναβαινω go up, come up, ascend

ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n see v.8

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὄραω see

σχιζω split, tear, separate

Cf. Is 64:1; Ezek 1:1. "This imagery, though it also occurs in pagan sources, is thoroughly Jewish. Here the opening of the heavens is the natural prelude ... to a divine communication." Cranfield. France comments, "Ezekiel's vision, also beside a river (and, according to one interpretation of the book's opening sentence, at the age of thirty; cf. Lk 3:23), provides a suggestive OT parallel, where a vision of God and a divine voice commissioned him for his prophetic role."

περιστερα, ας f dove, pigeon

καταβαῖνον Verb, pres act ptc, n nom/acc s

καταβαινω come or go down, descend

"The combination of this gift of the Spirit with the concept of anointing in Is 61:1 (as in 1 Sa 16:13) makes it a particularly appropriate mark of the mission of Jesus as Χριστός (v 1)." France.

"The comparison of the Spirit to a dove seems to go back to Gen 1:2, where the Hebrew *m'rahepet* suggests the brooding of a bird." Cranfield. The picture is that of the beginnings of the work of new creation.

The use of εἰς rather than ἐπι suggests permanent residence.

Mark 1:11

καὶ φωνὴ ἐγένετο ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν· Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα.

Cranfield argues that, in accordance with κ* D Θ and a few Old Latin MSS, the ἐγένετο should be omitted – though Metzger includes it with a {C} rating. Its absence may be an assimilation to Mt 3:17.

ἀγαπητός, η, ον beloved
εὐδοκεῶ be pleased, take delight in

Cf. Ps 2:7; Is 42:1. "The servant of Yahweh portrayed in Is 42:1-4 is a nonviolent figure who achieves justice (*mispat*) for the nations by patient faithfulness, under the direction of the Spirit of Yahweh. Cf Mt 12:17-21 for the quotation of this passage at length to justify Jesus' non-confrontational style of ministry. The combination of this text with Ps 2:7 thus offers a suggestive basis for Mark's presentation of the paradox of a suffering, unrecognised Messiah." France.

"In response to his self-dedication to the mission of the Servant, made in his submission to baptism, he is given a confirmation of his own consciousness of being the Son of God, that is at the same time a confirmation of his Servant vocation." Cranfield.
εὐδοκησα Cranfield says is best considered a timeless aorist.

France comments, "Within the scope of Mark's prologue, it is these disclosures which are of primary importance, and they form the high point of the prologue's presentation of the true identity of Jesus the Messiah. The only passage in the rest of the gospel which will offer a similarly exalted view of Jesus is the transfiguration story, where the voice of God will again be heard declaring the identity of Jesus in words almost the same as in 1:11, with the significant difference that then they will be addressed to three of Jesus' disciples, not, as here, to Jesus himself alone... In the narrative that follows there will be secrecy and paradox, but here in the prologue there is open declaration. The reader need be in no doubt, whatever the reactions of the actors in the story."

Mark 1:12-13

Cf Mt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13

"On the whole, it seems more likely that we have two independent accounts – that represented by Mt and Lk and that given by Mk – than that Mark is here giving an abbreviated version of the account given more fully by the other two." Cranfield.
"Just as the revelation by the Jordan enabled us to see beyond the everyday scene and to gain an impression of the supernatural dimension of Jesus' mission, so the scene in the wilderness (away from ordinary human contact) displays the *dramatis personae* of the coming conflict, not in terms of Jesus' human supporters and opponents, but in the superhuman dimension." France.

Mark 1:12

Καὶ εὐθὺς τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτὸν ἐκβάλλει εἰς τὴν ἔρημον.

ἐκβάλλω throw out, expel

"In view of Mark's usage ἐκβάλλει probably does have the sense of strong compulsion, though often in Hellenistic Greek it has quite a weak sense." Cranfield.

ἐρημος, ου f see v.3

Mark 1:13

καὶ ἦν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ Σατανᾶ, καὶ ἦν μετὰ τῶν θηρίων, καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι διηκόνουν αὐτῷ.

τεσσαράκοντα forty

"It is quite likely that Mark would be conscious of the parallel with the forty days' and forty nights' fasts of Moses, the type of the Messiah (Ex. 34:28; Deut 9:18), and Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah (1 Kings 19:8)." Cranfield. France, on the other hand, writes, "The other most prominent biblical use of forty is also in connection with the wilderness, the forty years of wandering experienced by the Israelites after the Exodus. In the Q narrative, with its clear echoes of Dt 6-8, the number 40 strongly suggests the latter symbolism. In Mark this is less obvious, but the close collocation with πειραζόμενος and the specific mention of the animals ... together with the strong focus on the ἐρημος throughout the prologue, indicate that he, too, saw the τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέραι as an echo of the period of Israel's wilderness experience. Echoes of Moses and Elijah, whose experiences were specifically of forty *days*, are not so clearly relevant to Mark's context here."

πειραζῶ test, put to the test, tempt

Being tempted to turn away from his appointed path.

Σατανᾶς, α the Adversary, Satan
θηριον, ου n animal, beast, wild animal

διακονεω serve, wait on, care for

Cranfield thinks this is best understood as "a special assurance of the divine presence granted to Jesus after the temptation had been overcome." France, however, writes, "It is through the protection of angels (as in Ps 91:11-13) that Jesus is able to survive μετὰ τῶν θηρίων."

Mark 1:14-15

Cf Mt 4:12-17; Lk 4:14f.

Mark 1:14

Καὶ μετὰ τὸ παραδοθῆναι τὸν Ἰωάννην ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ

παραδοθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin

παραδιδωμι hand over, deliver up

The verb may anticipate the fate of Jesus, cf. 9:31; 10:33; 14:41.

κηρύσσω see v.4

"There is an important element of continuity between John and Jesus. The same participle κηρύσσων which described John's ministry (v 4) now describes that of his successor, and at least one of the elements in that proclamation is the same (see below on μετανοεῖτε; Mt 3:2; 4:17 go further in assimilating their message)." France.

εὐαγγέλιον, ου n see v.1

"The bulk of the Western and Byzantine witnesses include της βασιλειας after εὐαγγελιον. The considerable weight of MSS and versions in favour of this reading is, however, outweighed by its obvious character as an 'improvement' by avoiding the unusual phrase το εὐαγγελιον του θεου, and substituting a phrase which not only picks up ἡ βασιλεια του θεου from the next verse but also echoes the familiar Matthean idiom, το εὐαγγελιον της βασιλειας (Mt 4:23; 9:35; 24:14)." France.

The phrase το εὐαγγελιον του θεου appears occasionally in Paul (Rom 1:1; 15:16; 2 Cor 11:7; 1 Thess 2:2, 8, 9; cf. 1 Peter 4:17), but is unique here in the gospels. του θεου is either a subjective or objective genitive (i.e. 'from God' or 'about God'). "The former is probably to be preferred." Cranfield. France says, "there seems no more reason here than in v 1 to insist that either sense is exclusively intended."

Mark 1:15

καὶ λέγων ὅτι Πεπλήρωται ὁ καιρὸς καὶ ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ· μετανοεῖτε καὶ πιστεύετε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ.

πληρωω fill, make full, fulfill

καιρος, ου m time

"It is God's decision that makes a particular moment or period of time into a καιρος, a time filled with significance. So here the meaning of the sentence is that the time appointed by God for the fulfilment of his promise, the time to which the OT was pointing, the eschatological time, has come." Cranfield. "The decisive moment ... has now come." France.

ἤγγικεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s ἐγγιζω approach, draw near

In the OT the **Kingdom of God** is both:

- i) A present reality – God *is* King of his people and over all the earth (Ps 96:10-13);
- ii) A future hope – the full manifestation of his Kingship is yet to be realised (Is 24:21-23; Habakkuk 2:14).

Cranfield says that Jesus affirms the present Kingly reign of God (Mt 5:35; 11:25; 10:29), but when he speaks of the Kingdom of God it is to the eschatological reign of God that he refers. He makes the following points concerning the Kingdom in Jesus' teaching:

- i) It has come near. That which for the OT was in the future is now present;
- ii) Yet it is still future (Mt 6:10; Lk 22:18);
- iii) It is intimately connected with his own person – it is in him and his activity that it has come; he *is* the Kingdom. "He is himself the fulfilment of God's promises, God's royal intervention in judgement and mercy." This is how (i) and (ii) can be reconciled – He has come, but is yet to come in the glory of his Kingdom.

France comments, "God's kingship is both eternal and eschatological, both fulfilled and awaited, both present and imminent (as indeed NT scholarship now almost universally recognises, after long and futile attempts to confine the breadth of NT language within a single time reference). The purely eschatological understanding of the phrase has led to unnecessary polarisation in the exegesis of this verse. To declare that God's kingship has come near is to say that God is now fulfilling his agelong purpose, rather than to point to a specific time or event which can be defined as either already present or still future, but not both."

μετανοεω repent, turn from one's sins
πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)

"The only clear example of πιστευειν εν in the NT ... Probably a Semitism." Cranfield.

Mark 1:16-20

Cf Mt 4:18-20; Lk 5:1-11.

"After the ringing announcement of vv 14-15 we are prepared for stirring events of at least national, if not cosmic, importance. What we find is very different: '... Jesus wandering by the sea, bidding some common labourers to accompany him on a mission. The world seems very much intact!' (Myers...)... Just as Jesus' followers will have to learn a value scale different from that of 'those who are reckoned as rulers of the nations' (10:42-45), so the Messiah himself refuses to assert his authority by an impressive show of the divine (still less of worldly) pomp and pageantry. The kingdom of God comes not with fanfare but through the gradual gathering of a group of socially insignificant people in an unnoticed corner of provincial Galilee. The parable of the mustard seed (4:30-32) will merely put into words what has been happening in practice from the first days of Jesus' ministry, the launching of a movement of ultimately huge dimensions which yet in its beginnings is so unimpressive as to be barely noticed on the world stage." France.

The details in the stories here suggest Petrine origin.

Mark 1:16

Και παράγων παρά την θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας εἶδεν Σίμωνα καὶ Ἀνδρέαν τὸν ἀδελφὸν Σίμωνος ἀμφιβάλοντας ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ, ἦσαν γὰρ ἀλιεῖς·

παράγω pass by, pass on
 παρά preposition with acc beside, by
 θαλάσσα, ης f sea

The use of θαλάσσα in the sense of λιμνη (lake – used by Luke) is thoroughly Semitic.

εἶδεν see v.10

ἀμφιβάλλω cast a fishnet

Occurs here only in the NT.

ἀλιεὺς, εὼς m fisherman

Mark 1:17

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου, καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς γενέσθαι ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων.

δεῦτε adv. COME (of command or exhortation)

ὀπίσω prep with gen after, behind, follow

"It is interesting to compare the narrative in 1 Kings 19:19-21." Cranfield. France likewise says that the model here is not that of the rabbi and his pupils but of a 'charismatic leader' after the model of Elijah's call of Elisha. "Jesus' peremptory summons, with its expectation of radical renunciation even of family ties, goes far beyond anything that would be familiar within normal society. It marks him as a prophet rather than a rabbi."

Mark 1:18

καὶ εὐθὺς ἀφέντες τὰ δίκτυα ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ.

ἀφίημι leave, forsake, let go

"... symbolises the renunciation involved in following Jesus." France.

δίκτυον, οὐ n fishing net

ἀκολουθεῖω follow, accompany, be a disciple

Mark 1:19

καὶ προβάς ὀλίγον εἶδεν Ἰάκωβον τὸν τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου καὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ καταρτίζοντας τὰ δίκτυα,

προβάς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s προβαίνω
 go on

ὀλίγον adv. a little, only a little

"From Lk 5:10 we learn that James and John were 'partners to Simon'." Cranfield.

πλοῖον, οὐ n boat, ship

καταρτίζω mend, restore

"The verb means 'put in order', 'render ἄρτιος'. Used with reference to nets it would include not only mending, but also cleaning and folding – making ready for another night's fishing." Cranfield.

Mark 1:20

καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκάλεσεν αὐτούς. καὶ ἀφέντες τὸν πατέρα αὐτῶν Ζεβεδαῖον ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ μετὰ τῶν μισθωτῶν ἀπῆλθον ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ.

"Discipleship comes into being through the call of Jesus." Cranfield.

πατήρ, πατρός m father

μισθωτός, οὐ m hired man, labourer

ἀπῆλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl

ἀπερχομαι

Mark 1:21-28

Cf Lk 4:31-7; Mt 7:28f. "This 'day in Capernaum' combines within it all the main features of Jesus' Galilean ministry, teaching (vv 21-22,27), exorcism (vv 23-26, 32, 34, 39), healing (vv 30-31, 32-34), and proclamation (vv 38-39). It thus forms a graphic overview of the general character of that ministry." France.

Mark 1:21

Καὶ εἰσπορεύονται εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ. καὶ εὐθὺς τοῖς σάββασιν ἐδίδασκεν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν.

σαββατον, ον n (often in pl) the seventh day, Sabbath

"σαββατον regularly has this third declension form in the dative plural in the N.T. The plural is used with a singular meaning, as is the case with festivals (e.g. τα ἄζυμα, τα ἔνκαινια), though occasionally σαββατα is a true plural, as in Acts 17:2." Cranfield.

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

Cranfield thinks that εἰσελθων should be omitted and ἐδίδασκεν placed before εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν as in 8, C, L, f¹³ etc. France similarly writes, "In view of Mark's use of εἰς for ἐν elsewhere ... ἐδίδασκεν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν may well be original (Origen twice quotes it in this form). The awkward idiom would naturally lead to correction by the addition of εἰσελθων, leaving ἐδίδασκεν to move to the end of the clause, where it was felt by some to need an object. This seems a marginally more likely explanation of the variants than the accidental omission of εἰσελθων before εἰς, creating an awkward idiom which then remained uncorrected in a wide range of MSS and versions."

συναγωγή, ης f synagogue, meeting

On Capernaum, France writes, "It was a significant lakeside settlement, sufficiently important to have a detachment of Roman troops (Mt 8:5-13), a custom post (2:14), and a resident official described as βασιλικός (Jn 4:46). Its population at the time may have been as high as 10,000; its συναγωγὴν, a predecessor of the imposing fourth century building now visible, would therefore have held a considerable sabbath congregation."

διδασκω teach

"The right to teach in the synagogue was controlled by its leaders (Acts 13:15), and the fact that Jesus was invited or allowed to do so suggests that, despite the role of this pericope in Mark's narrative as Jesus' first public appearance, he had already been active in the area long enough to be known and respected." France.

Cranfield says that the imperfect here is *inceptive*: 'He began to teach'. Mark lays great stress on Jesus' teaching ministry, though he does not include a record of much of the content. Jesus' teaching was Rabbinic in style but was marked by *personal* authority. Cranfield remarks that his ability as a teacher was recognised by the common people and even by those Jewish teachers who were his opponents: "His unquestionable competence compelled their serious consideration, in spite of the fact that he did not possess the conventional qualifications."

Mark 1:22

καὶ ἐξεπλήσσαντο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ, ἦν γὰρ διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων καὶ οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς.

ἐκπλησσομαι be amazed

"The amazement or wonder which these words denote is something which may prove to be the first step towards faith, or may turn into a σκανδαλιζεσθαι – a 'being offended'." Cranfield.

διδάχη, ης f teaching, what is taught

Includes both content and manner.

ἐξουσία, ας f authority, power
γραμματεὺς, εως m scribe, expert in Jewish law

"... authority as the prophets had had, the authority of a direct commission from God... The people sensed in the way Jesus taught the implicit claim to an authority superior to that of Rabbinic ordination." Cranfield.
"They represent the old regime, challenged by the fresh new teaching of Jesus." France.

Mark 1:23

καὶ εὐθὺς ἦν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτῶν ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ καὶ ἀνέκραξεν

ἐν πνεύματι is a Semitism. "The use of ἐν to denote 'being under the special influence of the spirit' (BAGD...) offers a macabre counterpart to the idiom ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ (12:36; cf. Lk 2:27; 1 Cor 12:3; Rev 1:10)." France.

ἀκαθαρτός, ον unclean
ἀνακράζω cry out, shout

Indicates strong emotion.

Mark 1:24

λέγων· Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ.

τι ἡμιν και σοι "Similar expressions occur in the O.T. (e.g. Josh 22:24; Jud 11:12; 2 Sam 16:10; 1 Kings 17:18) and also in classical Greek... The meaning is: 'What have we and you in common?', so 'Why do you interfere with us?'" Cranfield. France says, "When addressed to an actual or potential aggressor it has the force of 'Go away and leave me alone' (Jdg 11:12; 1 Ki 17:18)."

ἀπολλυμι destroy, kill
οἶδα know, understand

οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ. "Note the hyperbaton. The pronoun which should be the subject of the subordinate clause is brought forward into the main clause, where it becomes the object. This is much more common in Aramaic than in Greek." Cranfield.

σε Pronoun, acc s συ
ἅγιος, α, ον holy, consecrated

"These 'confessions' (here and in 3:11; 5:7) can hardly be explained as testimonies wrested from the demons against their will. More probably they are to be understood as desperate attempts to get control of Jesus and to make him harmless, in accordance with the common idea of the time that by using the exactly correct name of a spirit one can gain mastery of him." Cranfield. "The title used in 3:11 and 5:7 will be that already declared in 1:1, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ; the use of ἅγιος here is therefore surprising. It has an obvious appropriateness as contrasting Jesus' holy character with that of his opponent (ἀκαθάρτων), and it links Jesus with the πνεῦμα ἅγιον whose presence is to mark his messianic ministry (1:8), and is the basis of his power over demons (3:22-30)." France.

Mark 1:25

καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· Φιμώθητι καὶ ἐξέλθε ἐξ αὐτοῦ.

ἐπιτιμαω command, order

Carries "an overtone of divine authority" Cranfield.

φιμωθητι Aor pass imperat, 2 s φιμωω
silence; pass. be silent

"There is a notable lack of 'technique' about this as about all the exorcism stories in the gospels when compared with the few extrabiblical exorcism accounts. Only in 5:9 does Jesus ask the demon's name, and even there he is not recorded as using it. There is no incantation, no ritual, no 'props' of any kind, simply an authoritative word of command. That seems to settle the matter." France.

Mark 1:26

καὶ σπαράξαν αὐτὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκάθαρτον καὶ φωνήσαν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ ἐξῆλθεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ.

σπαράξαν Verb, aor act ptc, m acc & n
nom/acc s σπαρασσω throw into
convulsions
φωνεω call, call out
μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

"For Jesus himself and for the early Church these exorcisms were signs of the in-breaking of the kingdom of God (Mt 12:28 = Lk 11:20): the strong one had been bound and those who had been held in bondage were being set free. The exorcisms were an integral and important part of the works of him, the purpose of whose coming was 'that he might destroy the works of the devil' (1 Jn 3:8)." Cranfield.

Mark 1:27

καὶ ἐθαμβήθησαν ἅπαντες, ὥστε συζητεῖν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς λέγοντας· Τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο; διδαχὴ καινὴ· κατ' ἐξουσίαν καὶ τοῖς πνεύμασι τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις ἐπιτάσσει, καὶ ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ.

ἐθαμβήθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
θαμβεομαι be amazed or shocked

"It indicates perhaps that exorcisms as such were not as commonplace as is often suggested, but also that Jesus' style of exorcism was strikingly different from any they were familiar with." France.

ἅπας, ασα, αν (alternative form of πας) all; pl
everyone

ὥστε so that, with the result that
συζητεω argue, discuss, question
ἑαυτος, εαυτη, εαυτον reflexive pronoun,
himself, herself, itself

"The rich variety of readings for the direct speech beginning τι ἐστιν probably represents attempts to give a smoother flow to Mark's vivid but unconventional syntax." France.

διδαχη, ης f see v.22
καινος, η, ον new

"New' in respect of quality, as distinct from νεος, 'new' as regards time." Taylor.

"Thus the issue, 'Who is Jesus?' which will increasingly dominate Mark's narrative, is already raised acutely in his first public appearance." France.

ἐξουσία, ας f see v.22

ἐπιτασσω command, order

ὕπακουω obey, be subject to

ὕπακουουσιν "Attic Greek strictly adheres to the rule of singular verb with neuter plural subject. In the N.T., as also in the LXX, there is much wavering on the matter." Cranfield.

Oliver O'Donovan comments, "The paradox consists in the *non sequitur* between the display of miraculous power and the authority of teaching... What Jesus had to say about the reign of God was authoritative because it was confirmed by an exercise of power that demonstrated it... Jesus' teaching ministry, then, is taken by the evangelists to be something more than instruction. It is a disclosure of the reign of God, through which the authority of God asserts itself. Jesus' authority consists in his capacity to bring us directly into contact with God's authority." *The Desire of the Nations*, pp 88,89.

Mark 1:28

καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἡ ἀκοὴ αὐτοῦ εὐθὺς πανταχοῦ εἰς ὅλην τὴν περίχωρον τῆς Γαλιλαίας.

Cf. 1:33, 37, 45; 2:1-2; 3:7-9.

ἀκοη, ης f report, news

Here means 'report', 'rumour' while in 7:35 it means 'ear'.

πανταχου everywhere

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

περιχωρος, ου f surrounding region, neighbourhood

Taylor understands this phrase to mean 'all that part of Galilee which is around (Capernaum)'.

Mark 1:29-31

Cf. Mt 8:14f; Lk 4:38f.

Mark 1:29

Καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς ἐξελθόντες ἦλθον εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Σίμωνος καὶ Ἀνδρέου μετὰ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου.

If εὐθὺς is given its proper sense here (so Cranfield) then it would seem to imply that this healing took place on the sabbath, cf. 3:1-6.

ἐξελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m pl nom
ἐξερχομαι

Cranfield thinks that the singular ἐξελθὼν ἦλθεν ought to be read here – in line with B W Θ f¹ f¹³ it. Metzger prefers to read the plural. France comments that though the singular verbs are well attested they are "more likely to be a correction of originally plural verbs (picking up from εἰσπορευονται in v 21) in view of the fact that Jesus alone is in focus in the preceding and following scenes."

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι
οἰκία, ας f house, home

"Apparently the two brothers shared a house in Capernaum. It appears to have been the rendezvous of Jesus and his disciples during the period of the ministry in Capernaum." Cranfield.

Mark 1:30

ἡ δὲ πενθερὰ Σίμωνος κατέκειτο πυρέσσουσα, καὶ εὐθὺς λέγουσιν αὐτῷ περὶ αὐτῆς.

πενθερα, ας f mother-in-law

Peter's wife is mentioned in 1 Cor 9:5.

κατακειμαι lie (in bed), be sick

πυρεσσω be sick with fever

καὶ εὐθὺς... provides us with an example concerning prayer.

Mark 1:31

καὶ προσελθὼν ἤγειρεν αὐτὴν κρατήσας τῆς χειρός· καὶ ἀφῆκεν αὐτὴν ὁ πυρετός, καὶ διηκόνει αὐτοῖς.

προσερχομαι come or go to, approach

ἐγειρω raise

κρατεω hold, hold fast, sieze

χειρ, χειρος f hand

τῆς χειρος "Partitive genitive, as is normal after a verb of touching (see 5:41; 9:27)." Cranfield.

ἀφῆκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφιημι leave, forsake

πυρετος, ου m fever

διακονεω serve, wait on, care for

Cranfield states that 47% of the verses of the first ten chapters of Mark deal directly or indirectly with miracles. Jesus' miracles fall into four classes: exorcisms, healing miracles, raisings of the dead and nature miracles. They are characteristically referred to in the Synoptics as δυναμεις. "These 'mighty works' reflect the might of him who is 'mightier' (ἰσχυροτερος) than John the Baptist (1:7). His exorcisms are evidence that he is 'stronger' (ἰσχυροτερος, Lk 11:22) than the strong one, Satan (3:27 = Mt 12:29 = Lk 11:21f)..."

"According to Jesus himself his miracles are the activity of God wrought by God's Spirit or 'finger' and the manifestation of God's Kingdom (Mt 12:28 = Lk 11:20). They are inspired by God's Spirit (Lk 4:18f.), the fulfilment of O.T. eschatological prophecies (Lk 4:18; Mt 11:4f = Lk 7:22, cf. Is 29:18f; 35:5f; 41:1) and evidence that Jesus is the promised Coming One (Mt 11:2-6; Lk 7:18-23). They signify that Satan has been bound (3:27): those whom Satan has been kept bound are being loosed (Lk 13:16)...

"At the same time the miracles are not compelling proofs. The cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum do not repent (Mt 11:20-24 = Lk 10:13-15) and even the disciples misunderstand them (6:52). Their true significance is recognisable only by faith. They are, as it were, chinks in the curtain of the Son of God's hiddenness. The light let through the chinks is real light ... but the light is not so direct as to be compelling."

Mark 1:32-34

Cf Mt 8:16f; Lk 4:40f.

Mark 1:32

Ὁψίας δὲ γενομένης, ὅτε ἔδυν ὁ ἥλιος, ἔφερον πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας καὶ τοὺς δαιμονιζομένους·

ὄψια, ας f evening

"The feminine of the adjective ὄψιος (= 'late') is used in the N.T. as a noun, the noun ὥρα being omitted ... It denotes later afternoon and evening." Cranfield.

ὅτε conj when, at which time
ἔδυν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s (irreg) δυνω set
(of the sun)

Aland prefers the more Hellenistic form, ἔδυσεν, found in B D and a few minuscules.

ἥλιος, ου m the sun

When the sabbath was over.

φέρω bring, carry, bear, lead
κακῶς badly; κακῶς ἔχω be sick
δαιμονίζομαι be possessed by demons

France comments, "Mark (unlike Luke, 4:40-41) distinguishes those who are ill (οἱ κακῶς ἔχοντες) from the possessed (οἱ δαιμονιζόμενοι). This distinction is to be seen also in the terms used for Jesus' action in v 34: θεραπεύω for the ill, and δαιμονία ἐκβαλλω for the possessed. This distinction is maintained throughout Mark's gospel, both in the description of the problem and in the words used for Jesus' act of deliverance... There is thus no indication in Mark of any confusion between the two conditions, still less of the idea that people in the ancient world naturally attributed all physical afflictions to demonic action."

France also comments, "It is perhaps worth noting that here, and throughout the gospel, we have no indication that Jesus himself went out looking for patients. The language is always of their either being brought to him or taking the initiative in approaching him themselves. He was not engaged in a 'healing campaign'; healing and exorcism, important as they were in his total ministry, arose not so much by design as from a natural response to need as he encountered it, boosted by people's desire to benefit from his unique ἐξουσία."

Mark 1:33

καὶ ἦν ὅλη ἡ πόλις ἐπισυνηγμένη πρὸς τὴν θύραν.

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

πόλις, εως f city, town

ἐπισυνηγμένη Verb, perf pass ptc, f nom s

ἐπισυναγω gather, gather together

θύρα, ας f door

"There is no doubt an element of exaggeration in the phrase ὅλη ἡ πόλις, as in the παντας of the previous verse... Mark is talking in general terms; Jesus is the talk of the town." France.

Mark 1:34

καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν πολλοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ποικίλαις νόσοις, καὶ δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλεν, καὶ οὐκ ἤφιεν λαλεῖν τὰ δαιμόνια, ὅτι ἤδεισαν αὐτόν.

θεραπεύω heal, cure

πολύς, πολλή, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου
much, many

ποικίλος, η, ον various/all kinds of, diverse
νοσος, ου f disease, illness

Emphasises that Jesus had power over all manner of diseases.

δαιμόνιον, ου n demon, evil spirit
ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out
ἤφιεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἀφιημι here
= allow, tolerate
λαλεω speak, talk

ἤδεισαν Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 pl οἶδα
know

Cf. v.24. The addition of Χριστον εἶναι or the like at the end of the verse has wide attestation, but such an addition to the rather bald ἤδεισαν αὐτόν would be a natural correction derived from the Lucan parallel, whereas it is improbable that the more explicit Χριστον εἶναι would be omitted from a wide variety of text-types if it were original.

Mark 1:35-39

Cf Lk 4:42-44.

Mark 1:35

Καὶ πρῶτ' ἔννυχα λίαν ἀναστὰς ἐξῆλθεν καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κάκει προσήχετο.

πρῶτ' adv (in the) early morning, morning
ἐννυχα in the night; ἐ. λιαν long before
daylight

ἐννυχα is the neuter plural of the rare adjective ἐννυχος, 'at night', used as an adverb.

λιαν adv exceedingly, greatly
ἀνιστημι (in 2 aor & all midd) rise
ἐρημος, ου f deserted place

"As the country round Capernaum was cultivated at this time, it is better to translate 'lonely' or 'quiet'." Cranfield.

τοπος, ου m place, opportunity
κάκει (καὶ ἐκεῖ) and there
προσευχομαι pray

"Only here at the beginning, in the middle (6:46) and again at the end, in Gethsemane, is Jesus' praying mentioned; and each time it is in the dead of night." Lohmeyer. Luke records more of Jesus at prayer.

Mark 1:36

καὶ κατεδίωξεν αὐτὸν Σίμων καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ,
καταδιωκω search for diligently

There is the suggestion here that Peter is the leader of the group.

Mark 1:37

καὶ εὗρον αὐτὸν καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ ὅτι Πάντες
ζητοῦσιν σε.

εὗρον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl εὕρισκω
ζητεω seek, search for, look for
σε Pronoun, acc s συ

"Testifies to the considerable impression Jesus had made in Capernaum." Cranfield.

Mark 1:38

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς Ἄγωμεν ἀλλαχοῦ εἰς τὰς
ἐχομένας κωμοπόλεις, ἵνα καὶ ἐκεῖ κηρύξω, εἰς
τοῦτο γὰρ ἐξῆλθον.

ἀλλαχου elsewhere

Here only in the Greek Bible.
ἐχομενας "present participle middle of ἐχω
used in the sense of 'next', 'neighbouring', as
often in the LXX and also in classical Greek."
Cranfield.

κωμοπολις, εως f country town, town

Small town having only the status of a village.
This is the only occurrence of this noun in the
New Testament.

ἐκεῖ there, in that place, to that place
κηρύξω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s κηρυσσω
preach, proclaim

Cf. 1:14-15. Jesus viewed his preaching as
more central to his work than his miracles.
"We are thus introduced to the dominant
pattern of Jesus' Galilean ministry as one of
itinerant preaching." France.

Mark 1:39

καὶ ἦλθεν κηρύσσων εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς αὐτῶν
εἰς ὅλην τὴν Γαλιλαίαν καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια
ἐκβάλλον.

Cf. Mt 4:23.

Cranfield prefers the reading ἦν (A C D W and
most MSS) rather than ἦλθεν. The periphrastic
imperfect is characteristic of Mark. Cranfield
considers ἦλθεν (preferred by UBS committee)
a grammatical improvement. France also
thinks that ἦν "should probably be seen as the
original reading here."

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire
δαιμονιον, ου n see v.34

Mark 1:40-45

Cf. Mt 8:1-4; Lk 5:12-16.

Mark 1:40

Καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὸν λεπρὸς παρακαλῶν
αὐτὸν καὶ γονυπετῶν λέγων αὐτῷ ὅτι Ἐὰν
θέλης δύνασαί με καθαρίσαι.

λεπρος "The Hebrew word which is translated
'leprosy' in Lev 13-14 (*sara'at*) covered
various skin diseases, and it is quite likely that
the man was suffering from one of these other
diseases. But persons suffering from any of the
diseases covered by the term *sara'at* had to
keep away from their fellows: they were
forbidden by the law to enter a dwelling, and,
if anyone approached, they were to cry
'Unclean, unclean!' as a warning (Lev 13:45f)."
Cranfield.

παρακαλεω exhort, urge
γονυπετεω kneel

"καὶ γονυπετῶν (αὐτον) may have been omitted in D B W, some OL, and the Sahidic, either by accident (homoioteleuton) or because it was felt to be redundant after παρακαλῶν αὐτον (a redundancy which would be typical of Markan style) or because the parallel in Mt 8:2 does not use the rather rare verb γονυπετεω, but rather προσκυνεω. The presence of the idea of kneeling, but in different words, in both Matthew and Luke, suggests that γονυπετων was used in Mark." France.

θελω wish, will
δυναμαι can, be able to
καθαριζω cleanse, make clean

"The stress no doubt is more on δυνασαι than on θελης: this is more an expression of confidence in Jesus' ability than of doubt about his willingness. But nevertheless it is an entreaty (perhaps approaching 'Do cleanse me, for thou canst!') and the section directs attention here and in the next verse to Jesus' will to heal." Cranfield. France similarly comments, "What is noticeable is ... his unquestioning assumption of Jesus' ability to cure his condition. Jesus' reputation (v 28) has reached even to this man cut off from society, and it is such that even leprosy, normally assumed to be incurable, comes under his ἐξουσια."

Mark 1:41

καὶ ὀργισθεὶς ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἥψατο
καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Θέλω, καθάρισθητι·

ὀργισθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s -
ὀργίζω / ὀργίζομαι be furious, be angry

Cranfield thinks ὀργισθεὶς (the reading of D a d ff² r1* Tatian) to be original, arguing that it is easy to see why ὀργισθεὶς should have been replaced by σπλαγχνισθεὶς rather than vice versa. He suggests that Jesus was angry at Satan's disfigurement of God's creature. The majority of the UBS committee prefer σπλαγχνισθεὶς on the basis of its large and diverse MSS support. France similarly thinks that ὀργισθεὶς, though not widely attested, "is so striking and 'improbable' that a correction to the 'safer' σπλαγχνισθεὶς would be very natural, whereas it is hard to see why anyone would introduce ὀργισθεὶς... The lack of either participle in Matthew and Luke (and in two OL MSS of Mark) also suggests that they found ὀργισθεὶς rather than the more congenial σπλαγχνισθεὶς in the tradition." Of the cause of Jesus' anger, France comments, "The most likely explanation is, perhaps, that the suffering caused by the disease, both physically and socially, moved Jesus not only to compassion but to anger at the presence of such evil in the world; perhaps also over the insensitivity of the social taboo. That the anger was not directed against the man himself is implied by the immediate compassionate response."

ἐκτεινω stretch out, extend
χειρ, χειρος f hand
ἅπτω light; midd. take hold of, touch

"According to the law, to touch a leper was to incur defilement... His action expresses compassion." Cranfield.

"By his word alone he might have healed the leper, but he applied ... the touch of his hand, to express the feeling of compassion." Calvin. France comments, "The touch which should have made Jesus unclean in fact worked in the opposite direction."

Mark 1:42

καὶ εὐθὺς ἀπῆλθεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα, καὶ ἐκαθάρισθη.

εὐθὺς adv. straightway, immediately

Indicates the instantaneous nature of the cure. "Jesus' healings (except in 8:22-26) are immediate, and even the disfigurement of leprosy is no exception." France.

λεπρα, ας f leprosy, skin disease

Cf 2 Kings 5:13,14.

Mark 1:43

καὶ ἐμβριμησάμενος αὐτῷ εὐθὺς ἐξέβαλεν αὐτόν,

ἐμβριμησάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m
nom s ἐμβριμαομαι speak harshly to

Probably connected with Jesus' command that the man be silent. "The word would refer to the stern and urgent admonition with which Jesus drove home the seriousness of his request for secrecy." Cranfield. France comments, "Since both here and in Mt 9:30 the verb precedes a command to silence which is then promptly disobeyed, it is possible that it reflects Jesus' knowledge of and displeasure at that still future response."

ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel

Here simply 'send away,' 'dismiss' cf. Jas 2:25.

Mark 1:44

καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Ὅρα μηδενὶ μηδὲν εἶπης, ἀλλὰ ὑπάγε σεαυτὸν δεῖξον τῷ ἱερεῖ καὶ προσένεγκε περὶ τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ σου ἃ προσέταξεν Μωϋσῆς εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς.

ὄραω see; intrans make sure, see to

"For this use of the present imperative of ὄραν followed asyndetically by a command or prohibition, cf. 8:15; Mt 8:4; 9:30; 18:10; 19:6; 1 Thess 5:15." Cranfield.

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing

"The pragmatic reason for this secrecy is clearly spelled out in v 45; publicity of this sort resulted in excessive and probably misdirected, popular enthusiasm which was a serious hindrance to Jesus' mission." France.

εἶπης Verb, aor act subj, 3 s λεγω
 ὑπάγω go, go one's way, depart
 σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself
 δεῖξον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s δεικνυμι
 show

ἱερεῖ Noun, dat s ἱερευς, εως m priest

Note Jesus' attitude of respect for the law.

προσένεγκε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s
 προσφερω offer, present
 καθαρισμος, ου m cleansing, purification
 προστασσω command, order
 μαρτυριον, ου n testimony, witness,
 evidence

Probably means evidence for the priests and people generally of the fact of the cure.

Mark 1:45

ὁ δὲ ἐξελθὼν ἤρξατο κηρύσσειν πολλὰ καὶ διαφημίζειν τὸν λόγον, ὥστε μηκέτι αὐτὸν δύνασθαι φανερωῶς εἰς πόλιν εἰσελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ ἔξω ἐπ' ἐρήμοις τόποις ἦν· καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντοθεν.

ἐξελθων Verb, aor act ptc, nom m s
 ἐξερχομαι

Who is the subject of this sentence? Some suggest that it is Jesus, but it is surely better to understand it of the leper.

ἄρχω rule, govern; midd begin
 πολλα Here used adverbially much,
 frequently, continually
 διαφημιζω spread around
 ὥστε so that, with the result that
 μηκετι no longer
 φανερωσ openly, publicly
 πολις, εως f city, town
 εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in
 ἔξω out, outside, away
 ἐρημος, ου f deserted place, uninhabited
 region
 τοπος, ου m place

"ἔξω ἐπ' ἐρήμοις τόποις represents, ironically, the area where the leper, before his cure, had been forced to live (Lev 13:46)." France.

παντοθεν adv on all sides

"Thus in a few quick strokes Mark has painted a powerful picture of Jesus' 'success' and of the problems it is already beginning to cause. It will be important to bear this popular response to Jesus in mind as the opposition develops in succeeding scenes; his opponents do not represent the majority opinion." France.

Mark 2:1-12

Cf Mt 9:1-8; Lk 5:17-26

Mark 2:1

Καὶ εἰσελθὼν πάλιν εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ δι' ἡμερῶν ἠκούσθη ὅτι ἐν οἴκῳ ἐστὶν εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in
 παλιν again, once more

δι' ἡμερῶν 'after some days.' "The tension between this notice of Jesus' return to Capernaum and the previous verse which said he could not openly enter any town is eased both by the phrase δι' ἡμερῶν ('sometime later'), implying a sufficient time lapse for the immediate excitement to die down, and also by the fact that he apparently succeeded in returning unnoticed (not φανερωῶς, 1:45); with the discovery of his arrival the earlier enthusiasm revived." France.

οικος, ου m house, home

"presumably in Peter's and Andrew's house." Cranfield.

Mark 2:2

καὶ συνήχθησαν πολλοὶ ὥστε μηκέτι χωρεῖν μηδὲ τὰ πρὸς τὴν θύραν, καὶ ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον.

συνήχθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
 συναγω gather, gather together
 ὥστε μηκετι see 1:45
 χωρεω trans make room for; intrans be room

μηδε nor, and not, not even
θυρα, ας f door

"Either 'so that there was no longer room for them even about the door' (χωρειν, impersonal; τα προς την θυραν = accusative of respect), or 'so that not even the space about the door could any longer contain them' (τα προς την θυραν = subject of χωρειν, in accusative after ωστε). Of these the former is perhaps the more natural." Cranfield.

λαλεω speak, talk

Mark 2:3

καὶ ἔρχονται φέροντες πρὸς αὐτὸν
παραλυτικὸν αἰρόμενον ὑπὸ τεσσάρων.

φερω bring, carry, bear
παραλυτικός, ου m paralytic, cripple
αἶρω take up, raise
τεσσαρες neut τεσσαρα gen τεσσαρων four

Mark 2:4

καὶ μὴ δυνάμενοι προσενέγκαι αὐτῷ διὰ τὸν
ὄχλον ἀπεστέγασαν τὴν στέγην ὅπου ἦν, καὶ
ἐξορύξαντες χαλῶσι τὸν κρᾶβαττον ὅπου ὁ
παραλυτικὸς κατέκειτο.

προσενέγκαι Verb, aor act infin προσφερω
present, bring before

"προσενέγκαι and προσεγγίσει are both well attested, and either is appropriate in context. προσεγγίσει might have been substituted for the transitive προσενέγκαι, since no object is expressed; on the other hand, προσενέγκαι might be due to partial assimilation to the Lucan parallel εἰσενέγκωσιν αὐτόν." France.

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude
ἀποστεγαζω unroof
στεγη, ης f roof
ὅπου adv. where
ἐξορύξαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
ἐξορυσσω dig out, gouge out

"The roof was probably formed by beams and rafters across which matting, branches and twigs, covered by earth trodden down hard, were laid." Taylor.
"Most probably the house was only one story. The ascent to the roof would be by means of an outside staircase." Cranfield.

France comments, "The modern reader naturally wonders whether Jesus continued teaching, and the crowd listening, while this noisy and dangerous activity went on over their heads (and what the owner of the house [Simon?] thought about it), but Mark does not satisfy our curiosity. His interest is rather, as a storyteller, to enable his readers to enjoy one of the more memorable incidents of Jesus' Galilean ministry, and to provide the basis for the response of Jesus in v 5 ἰδὼν τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν. Their desperate desire to get their friend to the one person who could help him is more important than either the awkwardness of the narrative situation or the damage to property."

χαλαω lower, let down
κρᾶβαττος, ου m bed, stretcher
κατακειμαι lie (in bed)

Mark 2:5

καὶ ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν λέγει τῷ
παραλυτικῷ· Τέκνον, ἀφίενταί σου αἱ
ἁμαρτίαι.

ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὁραω see,
observe, perceive
πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief
τεκνον, ου n child

An affectionate form of address

ἀφίενται Verb, pres pass indic, 3 pl ἀφιημι
cancel, forgive

ἀφίενται "is an 'aoristic' or punctiliar present (see Moule, p.7): 'are at this moment forgiven' (Taylor). The perfect ἀφεωνται is widely attested here [as in v 9], but the present should be read." Cranfield. The verb has performative force.

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

"We should not assume that this man's illness was specially a punishment, that it was of the hysterical or nervous sort or that he was specially oppressed by a sense of guilt or had a particularly sensitive conscience. The explanation is rather that Jesus recognises an organic connection between disease and sin – though not in the sense that a man suffers in exact proportion to his sinfulness (Job and Ps 73, and above all Jesus' own words in Lk 13:1ff; Jn 9:2f. deny this). Because there is this organic connection between sin and disease and Jesus makes war on both, the healing of disease is a sign and token of the forgiveness of sins. Jesus' healing miracles are sacraments of forgiveness. The declaration of forgiveness here is therefore not surprising after all." Cranfield.

France comments, "That suffering is the result of sin in the general sense that the world's evils are traced to the Fall would have been generally agreed, but the Book of Job testifies to a strong reaction against the view that the suffering of an individual must necessarily be the result of his or her own sin. A similar balance is maintained in the NT, with some suffering and death being attributed to the specific sins of those concerned (Jn 5:14; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor 11:30; 1 Jn 5:16), while in other places such a direct connection is denied (Lk 13:1-5; Jn 9:2-3; 2 Cor 12:7; Gal 4:13-14)."

Mark 2:6

ἦσαν δὲ τινες τῶν γραμματέων ἐκεῖ καθήμενοι καὶ διαλογιζόμενοι ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν·

γραμματεὺς see 1:22

ἐκεῖ there, in that place

καθῆμαι sit, sit down

διαλογίζομαι discuss, consider, reason

Mark 2:7

Τί οὕτως οὕτως λαλεῖ; βλασφημεῖ· τίς δύναται ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας εἰ μὴ εἶς ὁ θεός;

οὕτως and οὕτω adv. thus, in this way

λαλεῶ see v.2

βλασφημεῶ speak against (God),

blaspheme

"Whereas in classical Greek they [verb and noun] can refer to slandering a man, in the LXX they always refer to something directed against God. In the N.T. 'blasphemy' generally denotes, as in the O.T., an affront to the majesty of God. As the punishment prescribed in Lev 24:15f for blasphemy was death by stoning, the implication is that the scribes were already contemplating Jesus' destruction." Cranfield.

ἀφιέναι Verb, pres act infin ἀφῆμι

εἷς, μί, ἐν gen ἑνός, μίας, ἑνός one

"For Mark and his Christian readers the scribes' unspoken thought that none but God himself could forgive sins, expressed the truth of which those who thought it were unaware – namely, that he who did forgive men with divine authority must be God." Cranfield.

Mark 2:8

καὶ εὐθὺς ἐπιγνούς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ ὅτι οὕτως διαλογίζονται ἐν ἑαυτοῖς λέγει αὐτοῖς, Τί ταῦτα διαλογίζεσθε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν;

ἐπιγνούς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

ἐπιγινώσκω perceive, recognise

For Jesus' discernment of men's thoughts cf. 12:15; Jn 2:24f.

ἑαυτός, ἑαυτή, ἑαυτόν him/her/itself

Mark 2:9

τί ἐστὶν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν τῷ παραλυτικῷ· Ἀφιένταί σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, ἢ εἰπεῖν· Ἔγειρε καὶ ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ περιπάτει;

εὐκοπώτερος, α, ον (comparative from

εὐκοπος easy) easier

ἀφιένταί see v.5

ἢ or

ἐγειρω raise; intrans rise, get up

ἄρον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s αἶρω take,

take up

κράβαττος, ου m see v.4

περιπατεῶ walk

Mark 2:10

ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας – λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ·

Cranfield thinks that the words ἵνα ... γῆς are not words spoken by Jesus but comment by Mark to his readers highlighting the significance of the miracle. That ignores the use of ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου as a distinctive *self designation* of Jesus (see below).

εἰδῆτε Verb, perf/pres act subj, 2 pl οἶδα

know, understand

ἐξουσία, ας f authority, capability, power

Of the phrase ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου France writes, "I shall assume a view which is well represented among recent scholarship (though no point is uncontroversial); (1) that Jesus used this term to refer to himself, and that it was recognised and reproduced by the evangelists as his distinctive self-designation; (2) that it derives at least in part from Dn 7:13-14, and that that text is often relevant to exegesis of passages in the gospels which use the term, even though it is used much more widely than merely in conscious allusion to that passage; (3) that the term 'Son of Man' as such was not in current use in Judaism as a messianic title, even though the messianic significance of Dn 7 was recognised and developed in later Jewish literature; and (4) that therefore the distinctive use of 'the Son of Man' by Jesus derives from his own choice of a term with clear messianic overtones but without a ready-made nationalistic content such as was carried by 'Messiah' or 'Son of David'."

γῆ, γῆς f earth

Cranfield lists four possible meanings for ἐπι τῆς γῆς:

- i) It contrasts authority to forgive on earth with the divine prerogative exercised in heaven (so Taylor);

ii) It emphasises that Jesus has this authority in his earthly life – before his death and resurrection;
 iii) It emphasises that he who can forgive sins has appeared on earth (Calvin);
 iv) It has the effect of qualifying ἁμαρτίας – 'sin committed on earth'.
 Cranfield prefers the last as the simplest. France comments, "This phrase is added not so much to limit ἐξουσία asserted (on earth but not in heaven), but rather to underline the boldness of the claim: forgiveness, hitherto thought to be an exclusively heavenly function, can now be exercised ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς because of the presence of ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (who according to Dn 7:13-14 was to receive from God an authority to be exercised over all the earth)."

Of λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ France says that this is "Mark's inserted 'stage direction'."

Mark 2:11

Σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ ὑπάγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου.

ὑπαγω go, go one's way, depart

Mark 2:12

καὶ ἠγέρθη καὶ εὐθὺς ἄρας τὸν κράβαττον ἐξῆλθεν ἔμπροσθεν πάντων, ὥστε ἐξίστασθαι πάντας καὶ δοξάζειν τὸν θεὸν λέγοντας ὅτι Οὕτως οὐδέποτε εἶδομεν.

ἠγέρθη Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω ἄρας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s αἰρω ἔμπροσθεν prep with gen before, in front of

I.e. all have been given visible proof of Jesus' authority to forgive sin.

ὥστε so that, with the result that
 ἐξίστασθαι Verb, pres midd infin ἐξιστημι
 be amazed, be surprised

Cf. 1:22.

δοξαζω praise, glorify

οὐδέποτε never

εἶδομεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl ὄραω see

Mark 2:13-17

Cf. Mt 9:9-13; Lk 5:27-32.

Mark 2:13

Καὶ ἐξῆλθεν πάλιν παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν· καὶ πᾶς ὁ ὄχλος ἤρχετο πρὸς αὐτόν, καὶ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτούς.

παλιν again, once more

παρα τὴν θάλασσαν see 1:16

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

διδασκω teach

The imperfects ἤρχετο and ἐδίδασκεν "indicate the coming and going of successive groups of hearers." Taylor.

Mark 2:14

καὶ παράγων εἶδεν Λεὺν τὸν τοῦ Ἀλφαίου καθήμενον ἐπὶ τὸ τελώνιον, καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Ἀκολούθει μοι. καὶ ἀναστὰς ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ.

παραγω pass by, pass on

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὄραω see

καθῆμαι sit, sit down

Mk and Lk have 'Levi' while the parallel passage in Mt has 'Matthew. These would appear to be alternative names for the same person. Some MSS here read Ἰακώβον (D Θ and some Old Latin MSS), which appears to be a harmonisation with 3:18.

τελώνιον, ου n tax office, tax collector's booth

"Capernaum was the first important place in Herod Antipas' territory that travellers from Herod Philip's territory of Decapolis would pass through, coming round the north end of the lake. Levi was presumably in the service of Herod Antipas." Cranfield. Levi would have been collecting customs charged on goods in transit.

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a disciple

ἀνίστημι 2 aor rise, stand up

Mark 2:15

Καὶ γίνεται κατακεῖσθαι αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ, καὶ πολλοὶ τελῶνα καὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ συνανέκειντο τῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ, ἦσαν γὰρ πολλοὶ καὶ ἠκολούθουν αὐτῷ.

"This construction, γινεσθαι used impersonally with following accusative and infinitive, is found fairly often in the N.T. (e.g. 2:23; Lk 3:21; 16:22; Acts 4:5; 9:3 etc.)." Cranfield.

κατακειμαι lie, recline at table, dine

"To whom do αὐτόν and αὐτοῦ refer? Most commentators take both to refer to Levi; others take both to refer to Jesus and understand that it was he who was the host and that the meal was either in his own house or in that of Simon and Andrew. Another possibility is that αὐτόν refers to Jesus and αὐτοῦ to Levi, and this in spite of its clumsiness is perhaps to be preferred. Lk 5:29 states explicitly that Levi was the host.

"κατακεισθαι. It is often assumed that reclining was the normal posture at meals among the Jews in Jesus' time, but this does not seem to have been the case as far as simple people and ordinary meals were concerned, though at solemn festival meals and when guests were being entertained in style reclining was the rule. The meal described here was such an entertainment." Cranfield.

τελωνης, ου m tax collector

"Contempt for tax-collectors was general on account of their rapacity and can be illustrated from Greek and Latin authors, as well as from Jewish sources. The Jews had additional patriotic and religious reasons for despising those whose work brought them into frequent contact with Gentiles." Cranfield.

ἀμαρτωλος, ου sinful, sinner

"Ἀμαρτωλος is an adjective (so used in 8:38), but is often, as here, used as a noun. In this context the term probably denotes not simply all those who did not live according to Pharisaic principles... but rather those who on account of their way of life were shunned not only by the Pharisees but also by ordinary respectable people (cf. Lk 7:37,39)." Cranfield.

συνανακειμαι sit at table with, eat with
μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower

Used here for the first time in Mark.

"It is likely that Mark saw in this very special meal ... a symbol of the messianic banquet; if so, the guest list is not at all what most Jews would have expected." France.

Cranfield thinks that ἦσαν γαρ πολλοι, και ἠκολουθουν αὐτω "is best understood as a parenthesis explaining τοις μαθηταις αὐτου." France disagrees and argues that it refers to the τελωναι και ἀμαρτωλοι.

Mark 2:16

και οι γραμματεις των Φαρισαϊων ιδοντες οτι εσθιει μετα των αμαρτωλων και τελωνων ελεγον τοις μαθηταις αουτου· οτι μετα των τελωνων και αμαρτωλων εσθιει;

γραμματευς, εως m scribe

οι γραμματεις των Φαρισαιων "i.e. scribes who belonged to the Pharisaic party." Cranfield.

Pharisees. "The name 'Pharisee' is commonly thought to be derived from the Hebrew and Aramaic root *prs* ('divide', 'separate') ... they were 'Separatists' in the sense that they separated themselves from all that was impure in God's sight... The Pharisees were the spiritual heirs of the *hasidim* or 'pious ones' of Maccabaeian times. They observed the oral tradition as equally binding with the written Law. Though they were only a small minority of the population, probably for the most part concentrated in Jerusalem, their community organisation gave them an influence in social and political life out of all proportion to their numbers. Only a minority of them were 'scribes' (see on 1:22). In the N.T. the Pharisees appear in the worst possible light, the faults resulting from their legalism standing out with striking clarity. But it is important to recognise their real relative goodness. In the time of Jesus they were the real spiritual leaders of the nation, and their ideals were to prove decisive for the future character of Judaism. Jesus sides with them against the Sadducees in 12:18ff and certainly had more in common with them than with the Sadducees; and much of their theology is taken for granted in the N.T." Cranfield.

ιδοντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὄρω

see, observe

εσθιω and εσθω eat, consume

"The second οτι may be either *recitativum* or more probably (c.f. δια τι in parallels) used in the sense of τι (c.f. 9:11, 28 and perhaps 2:7)." Cranfield.

Several MSS add ο διδασκαλος υμων either before or after εσθιει. This is an assimilation to Matthew 9:11.

Mark 2:17

και ακουσας ο Ιησους λεγει αυτοις οτι ου χρεϊαν εχουσιν οι ισχυοντες ιατρου αλλ' οι κακως εχοντες· ουκ ηλθον καλεσαι δικαιους αλλα αμαρτωλους.

χρεια, ας f need, want

ισχω be strong, be able, be sufficient

ιατρος, ου m physician, doctor

κακως badly; κακως εχω be sick

ηλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ερχομαι

"The verb ερχεσθαι is often used of Jesus, particularly by himself, and expresses his consciousness of his mission." Cranfield.

δικαιος, α, ου righteous, just

δικαιος "To discuss whether δικαιος is an 'ironical admission' (cf. Lk 15:7; 18:9) or whether it denotes non-ironically the relatively righteous, the respectable, is really beside the point. In v.17a the real point is that it is not surprising to find a doctor among the sick; the negative statement merely supports the positive. Similarly in the application it is the positive statement that has the emphasis. Jesus is not at the moment concerned either to affirm that some people are relatively righteous or to deny that any are so righteous as not to need to repent; he is simply concerned to defend his right to associate with the disreputable... For Jesus to refuse to have dealings with the disreputable would be as absurd as for a doctor to refuse to have to do with the sick; he has come on purpose to call sinners, and the disreputable people he is associating with are obvious members of that class." Cranfield.

ἀμαρτωλος Luke adds εις μετανοιαν – which is also included here in the *Textus Receptus*.

Mark 2:18-22

C.f. Mt 9:14-17; Lk 5:33-9. "This is a new story, not explicitly linked in time or place with the preceding incident, but there is nonetheless a significant continuity in Mark's placing of it here. The preceding story was about feasting; this is about fasting. A religious movement which was not prepared to allow scribal convention to get in the way of the welcoming of τελωναι και ἀμαρτωλοι is not likely to accept a discipline of fasting which went far beyond what normal Jews found necessary, and which would therefore further serve to exclude those for whose sake Jesus 'came'. The issue is addressed by a further reference to joyful feasting, in the parable of the bridegroom. The Jesus movement was characterised by celebration rather than solemnity, and it was this which some observers found hard to accept." France.

Mark 2:18

Και ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ Ἰωάννου καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι νηστεύοντες, καὶ ἔρχονται καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Διὰ τί οἱ μαθηταὶ Ἰωάννου καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ τῶν Φαρισαίων νηστεύουσιν, οἱ δὲ σοὶ μαθηταὶ οὐ νηστεύουσιν;

μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower
νηστευω fast, go without food

John's disciples may have been in mourning for their master. The fast of the Pharisees would have had a different significance. "That the Pharisees fasted frequently we know (cf. Lk 18:12); but these fasts were not enjoined by the Law (the only fast commanded by the Law was the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29))." Cranfield. France adds, "This is, then, a question of the relative merits of different (and competing?) renewal movements within Judaism, and the challenge conveys a covert claim to superior religious fervour on the part of these other groups. The Jesus movement is not taking its religious observance seriously enough."

Mark 2:19

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Μὴ δύνανται οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος ἐν ᾧ ὁ νυμφίος μετ' αὐτῶν ἐστὶν νηστεύειν; ὅσον χρόνον ἔχουσιν τὸν νυμφίον μετ' αὐτῶν οὐ δύνανται νηστεύειν·
δυναμαι can, be able to
νυμφων, ωνος m wedding hall; υἱος του v. bridegroom's attendant, wedding guest

"Entry into the kingdom of God is compared to admission to a wedding feast in Mt 22:1-14; 25:1-13 (cf. Rev. 19:7-9), and the Fourth Gospel uses the imagery of the bridegroom and his friend to express John's joy at the coming of Jesus (Jn 3:29). The wedding imagery suggests a sense of new beginnings, and of a new relationship established with the people of God, and it especially conveys the joy and exhilaration of this new situation." France.

νυμφιος, ου m bridegroom
ὅσος, η, ον how much, how far
χρονος, ου m time, period of time

"It was appropriate for John's disciples to fast, for their master had been taken from them (whether or not that was actually the motive of their fast); for his own disciples it was inappropriate, for he was still with them." Cranfield.

Mark 2:20

ἐλεύσονται δὲ ἡμέραι ὅταν ἀπαρθῇ ἀπ' αὐτῶν ὁ νυμφίος, καὶ τότε νηστεύσουσιν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ.

ἐλεύσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl
ἐρχομαι
ὅταν when
ἀπαρθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s ἀπαιρω
take away

"the simple verb αἶρω is twice used in Is 53:8 (LXX), for *lakah* (RV: 'take away') and *gazar* (RV: 'cut off'). It seems likely that this verse is echoed here and that Jesus is applying ... something said of the Servant in Isa 53 to himself. Certainly if that is so, and most probably even if it is not, there is here a reference to a violent death." Cranfield.

τοτε then, at that time

ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that

Mark 2:21-22

"The two 'parables' of vv 21 and 22 are closely parallel in structure (except for the slight expansion in v 22c), and serve equally to illustrate the folly of trying to contain the new within the confines of the old. Placed here in Mark's gospel, they apply to the newness of Jesus' radical message of the kingdom of God, and its incompatibility with the existing forms of religion and society, as is already being shown in Mark's story by the conflicts with representatives of the status quo into which Jesus' ministry is increasingly leading him. Both parables speak not only of incompatibility, but of the destructive results of attempting to compromise with the old." France.

Mark 2:21

Οὐδεις ἐπιβλημα ῥάκος ἀγνάφου ἐπιράπτει ἐπὶ ἱμάτιον παλαιόν· εἰ δὲ μή, αἶρει τὸ πλήρωμα ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὸ καινὸν τοῦ παλαιοῦ, καὶ χειρὸν σχίσμα γίνεται.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing

ἐπιβλημα, τος n piece, patch

ῥακος, ους n piece of cloth

ἀγναφος, ον new, unshrunk

ἐπιραπτω sew on

ἱματιον, ου n garment, robe, cloak

παλαιος, α, ον old, former

εἰ δε μη otherwise

πληρωμα, τος n fulness, completeness

καινος, η, ον new

"τὸ καινὸν τοῦ παλαιοῦ follows awkwardly after αἶρει τὸ πλήρωμα ἀπ' αὐτοῦ; it is best seen as an explanatory addition, still dependent on the verb αἶρει, indicating the application of the parable by specifying the meaning of τὸ πλήρωμα and of αὐτοῦ (ἱμάτιον παλαιόν). The whole clause thus runs, 'The patch takes something away from it, the new from the old', a rather clumsy way of saying that the shrinking patch pulls away from the old garment, leaving a worse tear than was there originally. The unusual use of πλήρωμα for 'patch', rather than to repeat ἐπιβλημα, may just possibly be intended to convey the sense of the 'fulness' of the gospel as compared with the preceding situation (so Belo), but is more likely merely a stylistic variation." France.

χειρων, ον gen ονος worse, more severe
σχισμα, τος n division, split

Mark 2:22

καὶ οὐδεις βάλλει οἶνον νέον εἰς ἀσκοῦς παλαιούς· εἰ δὲ μή, ῥήξει ὁ οἶνος τοὺς ἀσκοῦς, καὶ ὁ οἶνος ἀπόλλυται καὶ οἱ ἀσκοί. ἀλλὰ οἶνον νέον εἰς ἀσκοῦς καινούς.

βάλλω throw, place, pour

οἶνος, ου m wine

νεος, α, ον new, fresh, young

For the distinction between νεος and καινος see 1:27

ἄσκος, ου m wine-skin

"An ἄσκος was made of leather, which was at first soft and pliable, but which perished and became brittle with constant use. They were then liable to burst under the pressure of fermentation if used for οἶνος νέος (the first stage of fermentation was carried out in a vat, but after straining out the lees the wine was placed in jars or skins to complete the process)." France.

ῥήξει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ῥηγνυμι and

ῥησσω burst, tear in pieces

ἀπολλυμι destroy; midd be lost, perish

There are a variety of readings here which all express the idea of the loss of both wine and wineskin. The majority reading, καὶ ὁ οἶνος ἐκχειται καὶ οἱ ἀσκοὶ ἀπολούνται looks like a stylistic improvement on the reading of B 892 cop^{bo} as contained in the UBS text above. It is also a harmonisation with Mt 9:17; Lk 5:37.

καινος, η, ον see v.21

"The absence of a verb in the final clause naturally led to corrective additions, harmonising either with Matthew (βάλλουσιν) or Luke (βλητέον). The omission of the whole clause in D OL is a more drastic form of correction, which serves also to produce a more symmetrical balance with the structure of v 21. The unharmonised reading of $\aleph^* B$ is unlikely to have been added once the other Synoptic texts were in circulation." France.

The Gospel message that has come with Christ is not patched up Pharisaism, nor even a new patch on what John had taught. Something radically new has arrived demanding a radical response. "It would be a mistake, however, to confine the relevance of these parables only to Jesus' confrontations with the scribes and to the specific issues raised in these chapters. The principle is a broader one, as applicable to the constricting influence of Christian traditions as it is to the context of first-century Judaism." France.

Mark 2:23-28

Cf. Mt. 12:1-8; Lk 6:1-5. Linking 2:23-28 with 3:1-6, France writes, "The observance of the sabbath was one of the principle distinguishing marks of the Jews as the people of God (sabbath and circumcision were the two most obvious such 'badges'), and as such was promoted and defended with more than merely pietistic zeal. It was a matter of national pride. The pious Jews who resisted the demands of Antiochus Epiphanes had at first been prepared to die rather than desecrate the sabbath by fighting in self-defence, though more pragmatic counsels soon prevailed (1 Macc 2:29-41). The *Book of Jubilees*, written about the same period, enthusiastically promotes the sabbath (which even God and the angels observed in heaven before it was known on earth: *Jub* 50:8, 13; cf. Ex 31:14-15)." He goes on to say that "While the principle of sabbath observance was agreed upon by all Jews, problems arose over what this meant in practice... The process of definition [of what could and could not be done on the sabbath] continued within mainstream Judaism, and the Pharisees developed it into a luxuriant growth of halakhic case law, ultimately codified in the Mishnah... The intention is to leave nothing to chance, but by legislating for every circumstance to protect the faithful from ever breaking the prohibitions on sabbath work..."

"It is against this background that we must understand the conflicts which arose between Jesus and the Pharisees over the sabbath. It is not that there was no room for debate and for development of the sabbath halakhah... The problem appears to be that Jesus did not debate, but simply brushed aside the whole complex of sabbath prohibitions with sweeping generalisations which seemed to make the whole discussion unnecessary. There is no indication that Jesus either rejected the sabbath law as such, or questioned that the sabbath was intended as a day of cessation from work. But his understanding of what was and was not permissible did not coincide with the current interpretation, and it was asserted with a sovereign assurance which raised sharply the issue of halakhic authority."

Mark 2:23

Καὶ ἐγένετο αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς σάββασιν παραπορεύεσθαι διὰ τῶν σπορίμων, καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἤρξαντο ὁδοὺ ποιεῖν τίλλοντες τοὺς στάχυας.

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

For this construction, see 2:15.

σαββατον, ου n see 1:21

παραπορευομαι pass by, go through

σποριμα, ων n (only in pl) grainfields

μαθητης, ου m see v.15

ἤρξαντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl ἀρχω
midd begin

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

"ὁδοὺ ποιεῖν, which properly means 'to make a road', is here used in the sense of the middle ὁδοὺ ποιεῖσθαι, which is used in classical Greek in the sense of 'to journey'." Cranfield.

τίλλω pluck, pick

σταχυς, υος m head of grain, head of
wheat

"A Jew was allowed to pluck corn that did not belong to him, so long as he used only his hands (Deut 23:25)." Cranfield.

Mark 2:24

καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι ἔλεγον αὐτῷ· Ἴδε τί ποιοῦσιν τοῖς σάββασιν ὃ οὐκ ἔξεστιν;

ἔξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is
lawful

"The Pharisees regarded what the disciples were doing as work, which was not permissible on the Sabbath." Cranfield.

Mark 2:25

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε τί ἐποίησεν Δαυὶδ ὅτε χρεῖαν ἔσχεν καὶ ἐπείνασεν αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ;

οὐδέποτε never

ἀναγινωσκω read, read in public worship

The reference is to 1 Sam 21:1-6.

ὅτε conj when, at which time

χρεῖα, ας f need, want

ἔσχεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἔχω

πειναῶ be hungry

"The drift of the argument is that the fact that scripture does not condemn David for his action shows that the rigidity with which the Pharisees interpreted the ritual law was not in accordance with scripture, and so was not a proper understanding of the Law itself." Cranfield.

France comments, "The question is not in any case whether the specific action could or could not be declared legitimate; it was rather, as vv. 27-28 will make clear, whether Jesus had the right to override the agreed conventions, in his capacity as κύριος τοῦ σαββάτου. The focus of the scriptural allusion is not therefore so much on what David did, as on the fact that it was David who did it, and that Scripture records his act, illegal as it was, with apparent approval. The logic of Jesus' argument therefore implies a covert claim to a personal authority at least as great as that of David. Matthew has clearly understood the pericope in this way, and includes a parallel argument from the 'defilement of the sabbath' by the priests in pursuing their temple duties, on the grounds that τοῦ ἱεροῦ μείζον ἐστὶν ὧδε (Mt 12:6; cf. the similar formula in 12:41, 42). The logic of the argument from David implies a parallel τοῦ Δαυὶδ μείζον ἐστὶν ὧδε, and the argument in Mark, with its climax in v 28, is best understood along the same lines."

Mark 2:26

πῶς εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ Ἀβιαθάρ ἀρχιερέως καὶ τοὺς ἄρτους τῆς προθέσεως ἔφαγεν, οὓς οὐκ ἔξεστιν φαγεῖν εἰ μὴ τοὺς ἱερεῖς, καὶ ἔδωκεν καὶ τοῖς σὺν αὐτῷ οὖσιν;

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

ἀρχιερεως, εως m high priest

ἐπὶ Ἀβιαθάρ ἀρχιερέως means 'when Abiathar was High Priest'. But according to 1 Sam 21 the high priest was Ahimelech. A C Θ and a good many other MSS insert του before ἀρχιερέως (so Textus Receptus), "in order to permit the interpretation that the event happened in the time of (but not necessarily during the high priesthood of) Abiathar (who was afterward) the high priest." Metzger. Some MSS omit the phrase altogether (D W it sy^s) as do Mt and Lk. This evidence is interpreted in a variety of ways:

- i) Mark mistook who was high priest at the time.
- ii) The reading above represents a primitive error which later MSS seek to correct.
- iii) The words are a misguided gloss and should be omitted.
- iv) The two names, Ahimelech and Abiathar, were borne by both father and son – cf. 1 Sam 22:20; 2 Sam 8:17 (AB Bruce, AT Robinson).
- v) The Hebrew text is confused – note the contrast between 1 Sam 22:20 and 1 Chron 24:6 (JAC Van Leeuwen, EP Groenewald).
- vi) The father, Ahimelech, and the son, Abiathar, were both present when David came to Nob, and both gave the bread to David. Soon afterward the father was killed; the son became high priest and recorded this incident (Lanski, Hendriksen).
- vii) ἐπὶ Ἀβιαθάρ is a reference to the section of the Samuel scroll in which the incident is recorded – a similar construction to 12:26 which refers to "the book of Moses *in the passage concerning the bush*." (JW Wenham).

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food

προθεσις, εως f setting forth, plan; ἄρτοι της π. bread offered to God

Cf. Lev 24:5-9; Ex 25:23-30; Heb 9:2.

ἔφαγεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἔσθω and

ἔσθω eat

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s διδωμι

οὖσιν Verb, pres ptc, m & n dat pl εἶμι

Mark 2:27

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Τὸ σάββατον διὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐγένετο καὶ οὐχ ὁ ἄνθρωπος διὰ τὸ σάββατον·

ἐγένετο see v.21

The Sabbath law was not intended as a restrictive constraint but as a blessing – providing rest.

France comments, "The absence of this verse from Matthew and Luke is intriguing. Did they find it too sweeping and radical in its implications for halakhic authority... Or did Matthew and Luke disapprove of its anthropocentric tone, in the light of the OT view of the sabbath as deriving from the pattern of God's own activity (Ex 20:11) and the later elaboration which made it an antecedent heavenly ordinance (*Jub* 2:18, 30)? But if ἐγένετο is read not so much as a statement of historical origin as of purpose, v. 27a has good OT support, in that sabbath rest is for the benefit of workers (Dt 5:14-15), and is presented not as a burden but as a blessing, a 'delight' (Is 58:13), an emphasis which later Judaism preserved... When the negative element overwhelms the positive, as it has done so repeatedly in the observance of the Christian Sunday as well as of the Jewish sabbath, something important has been lost. It is this sense of priority which Jesus' epigram as a whole is designed to promote."

Mark 2:28

ὥστε κύριός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ τοῦ σαββάτου.

ὥστε so that, with the result that

"Since the Sabbath was made for man, He who is man's Lord and Representative has authority to determine its laws and use." Taylor. Cranfield thinks that this verse is not a record of Jesus' words but a comment by Mark on Jesus' words recorded in the previous verse. He thinks it unlikely that Jesus would have used a recognisable messianic title openly at this stage of his ministry and in conversation with his opponents. But see also the note on 2:10 concerning this title.

France comments that Jesus' assertion here, "represents yet another escalation in the unique ἐξουσία exercised by Jesus: he is being progressively revealed as κύριος in his teaching and action, in relation to spiritual powers and physical illness, in the declaration of the forgiveness of sins, and now even (καὶ) in relation to that most sacred of divine institutions, the sabbath. The christological stakes could hardly be pitched higher than this. Once again, the 'messianic secret' is strained to the limits."

Oliver O'Donovan comments "Jesus' use of the title 'Son of Man' must be taken seriously. In fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel ('obviously pregnant with the meaning of Genesis 2' (N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, p. 292)), God has conferred his authority upon *mankind*, represented in the triumphant Israel. In the exercise of this authority mankind is now free to interpret God's law in a way that realises God's purposes for mankind's welfare. The legal tradition which had prepared God's people for this moment could transform itself to accommodate its own fulfilment." *The Desire of the Nations*, p.104.

Mark 3:1-6

Cf. Mt 12:9-14; Lk 6:6-11.

Mark 3:1

Καὶ εἰσῆλθεν πάλιν εἰς συναγωγὴν, καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ ἄνθρωπος ἐξηραμμένην ἔχων τὴν χεῖρα.

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in
πάλιν again, once more

Cf. 1:21. Suggests that this is the synagogue at Capernaum.

ἐκεῖ there, in that place
ἐξηραμμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s
ξηραίνω dry up, scorch; pass wither
χεῖρ, χεῖρος f hand

Suggests a form of paralysis.

Mark 3:2

καὶ παρετήρουν αὐτὸν εἰ τοῖς σάββασιν θεραπεύσει αὐτόν, ἵνα κατηγορήσωσιν αὐτοῦ.

παρατηρεω (act & midd) watch, watch
closely, observe

The subject of the verb is not made explicit until verse 6. If this is on the same day as the previous incident, "and assuming that the same Pharisees who had objected to the disciples' action are now also in the synagogue, the atmosphere is already charged, and the 'watching' of Jesus ... is not out of neutral interest, but, as the sequel shows clearly, marks a hostile search for further evidence of Jesus' unorthodox stance with regard to the sabbath." France.

θεραπευω heal, cure
κατηγορήσωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl
κατηγορεω accuse, bring charges
against

"According to the Rabbis the sick or injured were to be treated on the Sabbath day if life was actually in danger... but if there was no danger to life, the treatment was not permissible." Cranfield.

Mark 3:3

καὶ λέγει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τῷ τὴν χεῖρα ἔχοντι
ξηράν· Ἐγειρε εἰς τὸ μέσον.

ξηρός, α, ον dry, withered, paralyzed
ἐγειρω raise; intrans rise
μεσος, η, ον middle; ἐν μ., εἰς μ. in the
middle, among

Mark 3:4

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ἐξεστὶν τοῖς σάββασι
ἀγαθοποιῆσαι ἢ κακοποιῆσαι, ψυχὴν σῶσαι ἢ
ἀποκτεῖναι; οἱ δὲ ἐσιώπων.

ἐξεστὶν see 2:24

In 2:24 this is used as an accusation against
Jesus.

ἀγαθος, η, ον good, useful, fitting
ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω

Rather than ἀγαθὸν ποιῆσαι read by x W D,
Cranfield argues that it is better to read
ἀγαθοποιῆσαι with B and the great majority of
MSS.

ἢ οἱ

κακοποιεω do evil, do wrong, harm, injure

A reference either to:

- i) doing evil by neglecting to do good –
"There is little difference between
manslaughter and the conduct of him who
does not concern himself about relieving a
person in distress." Calvin. Or
- ii) to the action of the Pharisees who are using
the Sabbath to look for an opportunity to
destroy Jesus (so Taylor).

France, while arguing that κακοποιῆσαι and
ἀποκτεῖναι "function as a foil to highlight the
positive claim: the sabbath is a time for doing
good, particularly for the relief of suffering"
goes on to say, "It is ironical that the pericope
will in fact finish with these same objectors
plotting, presumably still on the sabbath, to
take life, v. 6."

ψυχη, ης f self, life, 'soul', living being

σωζω save, rescue, heal

ἀποκτεῖναι Verb, aor act infin ἀποκτενω kill,
put to death

ἐσιώπων Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl

σιωπαω be silent, be quiet

Mark 3:5

καὶ περιβλεψάμενος αὐτοὺς μετ' ὀργῆς,
συλλυπούμενος ἐπὶ τῇ παρώσει τῆς καρδίας
αὐτῶν, λέγει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ· Ἐκτείνον τὴν
χεῖρα· καὶ ἐξέτεινεν, καὶ ἀπεκατεστάθη ἡ χεὶρ
αὐτοῦ.

περιβλεπομαι look around

The verb occurs seven times in the NT, six
times with Jesus as the subject. The detail
suggests reminiscence and supports the view
that much of Mark's material is Petrine.

ὀργη, ης f wrath, anger

Not merely an aspect of Jesus' humanity (as
Calvin) but a display of the character and heart
of God when confronted with human sin and
rebellion.

συλλυπεομαι be deeply grieved

παρωσις, εως f stubbornness, lack of
feeling

καρδια, ας f heart

"This phrase is almost a stock expression in the
NT for those who cannot or will not perceive
the truth, used most commonly with reference
to Israel's failure to recognise Jesus as their
Messiah (Rom 11:7, 25; 2 Cor 3:14; Jn 12:40,
citing Is 6:10), but on two other occasions by
Mark to describe the disciples' failure to
appreciate the significance of Jesus' miracles
(6:52; 8:17)." France.

ἐκτείνον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s ἐκτενω
stretch out, extend

ἀπεκατεστάθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s

ἀποκαθιστημι restore, make well

Mark 3:6

καὶ ἐξελθόντες οἱ Φαρισαῖοι εὐθὺς μετὰ τῶν
Ἡρωδιανῶν συμβούλιον ἐδίδουν κατ' αὐτοῦ
ὅπως αὐτὸν ἀπολέσωσιν.

ἐξελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m pl nom

ἐξερχομαι

εὐθὺς adv. immediately, at once

Ἡρωδιανοί, ον m Herodians (partisans of
the Herodian family)

"The friends and supporters of Herod
Antipas... As Jesus was Herod's subject, it was
important to get Herod turned against him.
The Herodians would care little or nothing for
Pharisaic ideals. So the Pharisees in seeking
their help were acting somewhat
unscrupulously." Cranfield.

συμβουλιον, ον n plan, plot; council

Cranfield says that "its use in the sense
'counsel' (rather than 'council') is perhaps a
Latinism."

ἐδίδουν Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl

διδωμι

"The use of δίδουσι with it is strange. Mt
substitutes λαμβανειν." Cranfield.

ὅπως that, in order that

ἀπολλυμι destroy, kill

"The first *explicit* reference to the intention of
Jesus' adversaries to compass his death: there
have been hints before (see on 2:7, 24)."
Cranfield.

France writes, "Here we have an agreement in principle that Jesus is to be opposed and when the time is ripe, silenced. If the agreement is that he is wilfully breaking the sabbath, capital punishment properly follows (Ex 31:14-15...). The reader is thus able to put more substance into Jesus' enigmatic hint about the 'removal' of the bridegroom (2:20), and to envisage more concretely the two contrasting reactions to Jesus which will form the framework for the narrative and discourse of chapters 3-4, the rejoicing of the wedding guests and the plotting of those determined to 'destroy' the bridegroom."

Mark 3:7-12

Cf. Mt 12:15-21; Lk 6:17-19. "This is the longest of Mark's summary accounts of the impact of Jesus' ministry. It does not arise directly out of its immediate context (unlike 1:32-34, 39) but is a relatively self-contained overview which could have been inserted at almost any point in the Galilean narrative. In this position it serves (1) to provide a contrast to the growing sense of opposition and conflict by reminding us that Jesus remains overwhelmingly popular; (2) to fill out the impression of the range of different reactions to Jesus' ministry which Mark is building up in preparation for the discussion of the issue in chapter 4; (3) to provide the context for the selection of twelve followers as Jesus' special companions in distinction from the larger crowd of enthusiasts." France.

Mark 3:7

Καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ἀνεχώρησεν πρὸς τὴν θάλασσαν· καὶ πολὺ πλῆθος ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἠκολούθησεν, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας

ἀναχωρεῶ withdraw, go away

θάλασσα, ἡς f sea

πλῆθος, οὗς n crowd, multitude

ἀκολουθεῶ follow, accompany

The long and complex sentence of vv 7-8 caused problems for copyists and led to a number of textual variants. Metzger comments that "The [UBS] Committee regarded the reading of B L 565 as the least unsatisfactory text, and the one that accounts best for the origin of most of the other readings."

Mark 3:8

καὶ ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰδουμαίας καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου καὶ περὶ Τύρον καὶ Σιδῶνα, πλῆθος πολὺ, ἀκούοντες ὅσα ἐποίει ἦλθον πρὸς αὐτόν.

πέραν prep with gen beyond, across

ὅσος, ἡ, οὖν correlative pronoun, as much as, how much; pl. as many as, all
ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι

France writes, "The geographical area indicated is surprisingly wide, since Mark has not hitherto given any indication of any impact outside Galilee (1:28). Judaea and Jerusalem would be a natural extension, especially in view of the interest aroused in those areas already by the preaching of John the Baptist (1:5), but the other regions are more surprising." Commenting on the oddity of both the areas named and on those omitted, France concludes, "It indicates how far Jesus' reputation was spreading, but probably does not offer a firm basis for a demographic analysis of the early phases of the Jesus movement."

Mark 3:9

καὶ εἶπεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ἵνα πλοῖαριον προσκαρτερῇ αὐτῷ διὰ τὸν ὄχλον ἵνα μὴ θλιβῶσιν αὐτόν·

"ἵνα is here used to introduce the substance of a command. Cf. 3:12; 6:8,12; 8:30; 9:18. This usage is common only in later Greek; normal classical Greek would be the infinitive after the verb of command." Cranfield.

πλοῖαριον, οὖν n boat, small boat

"Mark often uses diminutives – a colloquial tendency" Cranfield. France comments, "While it is not stated that it is the disciples' own boat which is used, this would seem a natural assumption, and in that case we are offered an interesting insight into the call of Simon and the other fishermen: their 'abandonment' of their means of livelihood (1:18, 20) has not apparently left them without access to a boat, and the frequent mentions of the disciple group travelling by boat hereafter underline the point."

προσκαρτερεῶ be in attendance, be ready (of a boat)

ὄχλος, οὖν m crowd, multitude

θλιβῶ press hard, crush

Mark 3:10

πολλοὺς γὰρ ἐθεράπευσεν, ὥστε ἐπιπίπτειν αὐτῷ ἵνα αὐτοῦ ἄψωνται ὅσοι εἶχον μᾶστιγας.

θεραπεύω heal, cure

ὥστε so that, with the result that

ἐπιπίπτω fall upon, come upon

ἄψωνται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 pl ἅπτω

light; midd. take hold of, touch

μαστιξ, ἡς f whip, beating with a whip,

illness, disease

"The word is used in classical Greek as well as in the N.T. for diseases. The use originated of course in the idea that disease was a divine chastisement." Cranfield.

Mark 3:11

καὶ τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἀκάθαρτα, ὅταν αὐτὸν ἐθεώρουν, προσέπιπτον αὐτῷ καὶ ἔκραζον λέγοντα ὅτι Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

ἀκαθαρός, ον unclean

ὅταν when, whenever

θεωρεῶ see, watch, observe, notice

προσπιπῶ fall at someone's feet, fall

down before someone

κραζῶ cry out, call out

"What the possessed do is attributed to the spirits possessing them." Cranfield. France comments on the affirmation Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ "This ultimate truth about Jesus, the highest christological confession of Mark's gospel, has already been declared by God himself in 1:11, and will be repeated to three chosen disciples in 9:7, but it remains hidden from people in general until it comes to the surface in the trial of Jesus (14:61-62), and is perceived by the centurion at the cross (15:39). But while human insight is not yet ready for this revelation, the demons are only too well aware of the status and identity of the one whom they instinctively recognise as their superior."

Mark 3:12

καὶ πολλὰ ἐπέτιμα αὐτοῖς ἵνα μὴ αὐτὸν φανερὸν ποιήσωσιν.

ἐπέτιμα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἐπιτιμᾶω
command, order, rebuke

φανερὸς, α, ον known, evident, plain

Cf. 1:25.

Mark 3:13

Καὶ ἀναβαίνει εἰς τὸ ὄρος καὶ προσκαλεῖται οὓς ἠθέληεν αὐτός, καὶ ἀπήλθον πρὸς αὐτόν.

ἀναβαίνω go up, ascend

ὄρος, ος n mountain, hill

To escape the crowds.

προσκαλεομαι call to oneself, summon

ἠθέληεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s θελω

wish, will

"Stresses the initiative of Jesus." Cranfield.

ἀπήλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl

ἀπερχομαι

Mark 3:14

καὶ ἐποίησεν δώδεκα, ἵνα ὄσιν μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἵνα ἀποστέλλῃ αὐτοὺς κηρύσσειν

ἐποίησεν is here used in the sense 'appointed', "not a classical meaning of the verb, but one that it sometimes has in the LXX." Cranfield.

δώδεκα twelve

"It seems likely that the number Twelve was deliberately chosen with the tribes of Israel in mind. If it was, then it would seem evidence that Jesus thought of himself as beginning to gather together an obedient people of God (of which the Twelve were to be the nucleus)." Cranfield.

ὀνομαζῶ name, call

Cranfield thinks that the phrase οὓς καὶ ἀποστολοὺς ὀνομασεν "is probably an assimilation to Lk 6:13 and should almost certainly not be read. It is omitted by A C^c D L f¹ [and many versions]." France similarly argues that the clause is probably not original to Mark saying that Mark does not use the term ἀποστολὸς as a title for the Twelve.

ἀποστελλῶ send, send out

They have first to be with him and to learn of him before they can be sent out to minister for him.

κηρυσσῶ preach, proclaim

Mark 3:15

καὶ ἔχειν ἐξουσίαν ἐκβάλλειν τὰ δαιμόνια·

ἐξουσία, ας f authority, power

ἐκβαλλῶ throw out, expel, cast out

δαιμονιον, ον n demon, evil spirit

"The summary in 6:13 indicates that the exorcistic ministry of the Twelve was broadly successful, but 9:14-29 offers a note of caution: there is nothing automatic about the ἐξουσία, and their 'success rate' cannot match that of Jesus himself, from whom their ἐξουσία is necessarily derived. The absence of healing (the most prominent activity of Jesus so far in the gospel) from their terms of reference is surprising (and is therefore remedied by many later MSS and versions, which add θεραπευειν τας νοσους και after ἐξουσιαν, under the influence of Mt 10:1). The fact that in 6:12-13 healing will take its place along with preaching and exorcism as part of the normal mission of the Twelve suggests that its absence here is more a matter of summary reporting than of deliberate exclusion." France.

Mark 3:16

καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς δώδεκα, καὶ ἐπέθηκεν ὄνομα τῷ Σίμωνι Πέτρον,

"The words καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς δώδεκα, though read by κ B C* Δ 565 579, should probably be omitted with A C^c D L W Θ and other uncials, all minuscules other than those mentioned ... They are probably to be explained either as dittography of καὶ ἐποίησεν δώδεκα in v.14, or as added in order to make a smoother text, as they pick up the thread of the ἵνα-clauses." Cranfield.

ἐπέθηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐπιτιθημι
place on, add

ὄνομα, τος n name, title

"Generally πετρος means boulder or stone, while πετρα means rather the living rock; but in Greek usage the distinction is not always observed, and in Aramaic *kepa*, which has only the one form (the final s of the transliterated form being added to give it a Greek ending), does for both meanings, and it is of course *kepa* that lies behind Πέτρος here ... The attempt to explain the name psychologically as describing Peter's character is mistaken; for rock-like firmness is not a feature of the N.T. picture of Simon Peter ... The name rather denotes the part which was to be played by him, during the lifetime of Jesus, as spokesman and representative of the chosen twelve, and then for a short period after the Resurrection and Pentecost, as the acknowledged leader of the Primitive Church." Cranfield.

Mark 3:17

καὶ Ἰάκωβον τὸν τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου καὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ Ἰακώβου (καὶ ἐπέθηκεν αὐτοῖς ὀνόματα Βοανηργές, ὃ ἐστὶν Υἱοὶ Βροντῆς),

France writes, "Most witnesses read the plural ὀνόματα. Since only one name is mentioned this is the more difficult reading and should be preferred to the singular ὄνομα (B D etc.), an obvious correction."

βροντη, ης f thunder

"The reason for the name is most probably to be found in such outbursts as are related in 9:38; Lk 9:54." Cranfield.

Mark 3:18

καὶ Ἀνδρέαν καὶ Φίλιππον καὶ Βαρθολομαῖον καὶ Μαθθαῖον καὶ Θωμᾶν καὶ Ἰάκωβον τὸν τοῦ Ἀλφαίου καὶ Θαδδαῖον καὶ Σίμωνα τὸν Καναναῖον

"The problem of the identity of the obscure twelfth member of the group ... has led to the Western reading Λεββαιοῦ (more widely represented in Matthew, where some MSS give Θαδδαιος as a second name of Λεββαιος, or vice versa), probably representing an alternative way of getting the Λευι of 2:14 into the apostolic list, if he was not identified with Μαθθαιος." France.

Mark 3:19

καὶ Ἰούδαν Ἰσκαριώθ, ὃς καὶ παρέδωκεν αὐτόν.

παραδίδωμι hand over, deliver up

Mark 3:20

Καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς οἶκον· καὶ συνέρχεται πάλιν ὁ ὄχλος, ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι αὐτοὺς μηδὲ ἄρτον φαγεῖν.

Verses 20 & 21 are peculiar to Mark.

συνερχομαι come together, assemble

Perhaps at the house of Simon and Andrew in Capernaum, cf. 1:29; 2:1. Some, however, think that the anarthrous εἰς οἶκον could be read as 'home' and imply that Jesus had his own home in Capernaum.

παλιν see v.1

ὄχλος, ου m see v.9

ὥστε see v.10

δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of
μηδε nor, and not, not even

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food

φαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐσθιω eat

ἄρτος φαγεῖν "A Semitic expression for taking food of any sort (cf. e.g. Gen 3:19)." Cranfield.

Mark 3:21

καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐξῆλθον κρατῆσαι αὐτόν, ἔλεγον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξέστη.

οἱ παρ αὐτοῦ An idiomatic expression in Koine Greek meaning those closely connected with someone. Here meaning his family. This original reading appears to have proved so embarrassing that it prompted several scribal alterations, replacing the family with οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ, anticipating the following verse.

κρατεω hold, hold fast, sieze

ἐξίστημι be amazed, be out of one's mind

Cf. Jn 7:5.

"Jesus' people back home have heard reports of the rowdy scenes in Capernaum, and decide that it is time to take Jesus in hand for his own sake and the family's reputation, on the assumption that, to use a modern idiom, he has 'flipped'. But before they can arrive to make their (unsuccessful) attempt to get hold of him, an even more damaging accusation comes from a different quarter, illustrating precisely the sort of unfavourable official notice which the family had perhaps been planning to avert." France. The arrival of the family is taken up in v 31.

Mark 3:22-30

Cf. Mt 12:22-32; Lk 11:14-23; 12:10.
"Exorcism has been so far, and will remain throughout the Galilean period, one of the most prominent aspects of Jesus' public activity... At this point, more than anywhere in the gospel, exorcism becomes the subject of theological consideration. No new incident of exorcism is here narrated (in contrast to Matthew and Luke), but the significance of the whole exorcistic enterprise (in which Jesus' disciples as well as he himself are now involved, v 15; cf. 6:7, 13) is opened up for discussion. Exorcism not only exhibits the power of Jesus (and of those who derive their ἐξουσία from him, 3:14-15). It also reveals something of what is happening at the level of the supernatural power struggle which underlies the earthly ministry of Jesus, of which 1:12-13 has already given notice.

"Jesus' control over demonic powers speaks of the collapse of the βασιλεια του Σατανα (vv 24-26) in the face of the incoming of the βασιλεια του θεου. The power of Satan, hitherto a real (though not unlimited) force in the world, has entered terminal decline (cf. τελος εχει, v 26). The strong man is now bound, and his possessions left vulnerable to the stronger one who now confronts him (v. 27). The ministry of Jesus thus represents the decisive turning point in the contest between good and evil for the control of the world and its people. All this is so clearly manifest to any unprejudiced observer that to attempt to explain it away by interpreting the ministry of Jesus as exercised in support of Satan's power rather than for its subversion is to commit the unforgivable sin of calling good evil and evil good, of confusing the Spirit of God with the spirit of darkness (vv. 28-30). Jesus is thus declared to be the one in and through whom the Spirit of God is now dramatically at work (as 1:8, 10, 12-13 have led us to expect). In Jesus and his ministry the lines are clearly drawn, and the question turns out to be not simply one of rival interpretations of miracles, but of who Jesus really is. The ultimate significance of the exorcisms is christological." France.

Mark 3:22

και οι γραμματεις οι απο Ιεροσολυμων καταβαντες ελεγον οτι Βεελζεβουλ εχει και οτι εν τω αρχοντι των δαιμονιων εκβαλλει τα δαιμονια.

καταβαινω come or go down

"The inclusion of καταβαντες indicates that these are not just scribes who happen to live in Galilee, but rather a newly arrived delegation from the capital. Their immediately hostile accusation does not suggest a neutral fact-finding visit; they have come looking for a fight. The imperfect ελεγον here and in v. 30 suggests not a passing comment but a sustained campaign of vilification." France.

Βεελζεβουλ may mean 'lord of the dwelling' (cf. Mt 10:25 and the reference to οικια in vv. 25 & 27). By the Scribes it seems to have been used simply as the name of a prince of demons.

"It is the charge of being possessed, rather than simply of drawing on demonic power as in Matthew and Luke, which Mark regards as making the scribes' allegation unforgivable." France.

αρχων, οντος m ruler

δαιμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit

εκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out

Mark 3:23

καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτοὺς ἐν παραβολαῖς ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Πῶς δύναται Σατανᾶς Σατανᾶν ἐκβάλλειν;

προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m
nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself,
summon

"Mark quite often uses προσκαλεσάμενος as a narrative device to introduce a significant statement or act of Jesus (7:14; 8:1, 34; 10:42; 12:43; cf. 6:7). Here it implies that while the scribes were speaking about Jesus rather than directly to him, he now initiates a direct confrontation." France.

Παραβολή is here used with reference to "the picturesque and allusive maxims which follow and by which the charge of acting under the power of the ruler of the demons is rebutted." Taylor.

Mark 3:24-26

"These parabolic sayings all develop the same basic theme, that since strength depends on unity, an attack on any part of Satan's domain is a sign not of collusion with him but of threat to his power. Jesus thus ridicules the strange notion expressed in v 22b that the ruler of demons might allow his power to be used against his own forces." France.

Mark 3:24

καὶ ἐὰν βασιλεία ἐφ' ἑαυτὴν μερισθῇ, οὐ δύναται σταθῆναι ἢ βασιλεία ἐκείνη·

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself
μερισθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s μερίζω
divide

σταθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ἰστημι stand,
stop, stand firm, hold ground.

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that

Mark 3:25

καὶ ἐὰν οἰκία ἐφ' ἑαυτὴν μερισθῇ, οὐ δυνήσεται ἢ οἰκία ἐκείνη σταθῆναι·

Mark 3:26

καὶ εἰ ὁ Σατανᾶς ἀνέστη ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἐμερίσθη, οὐ δύναται στήναι ἀλλὰ τέλος ἔχει.

ἀνέστη Verb, 2 aor act indic, 3 s ἀνίστημι 2
aor rise, stand up

στήναι Verb, 2 aor act infin ἰστημι

"No distinction of meaning is intended between σταθῆναι and στήναι" Cranfield.

τελος, ους n end, conclusion, termination

"The exorcisms show that Satan's kingdom *is* in fact under attack: if this is not from the inside, then he is facing an external enemy, and the successes of that enemy point to his downfall, not through civil strife but through conquest by a stronger power. While τέλος ἔχει is formally hypothetical, the wider context reveals that it in fact expresses the reality of the new situation introduced by Jesus' exorcistic ministry, which v. 27 will vividly, though still parabolically describe... It is not a matter of a kingdom divided, but of two rival kingdoms in conflict. As proclaimer of the kingdom of God Jesus is necessarily engaged in the destruction of the kingdom of Satan. It is from that quarter, not from within, that Satan's τέλος is coming." France.

Mark 3:27

ἀλλ' οὐδεὶς δύναται εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ εἰσελθὼν τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ διαρπάσαι ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον τὸν ἰσχυρὸν δῆσῃ, καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει.

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing
ἰσχυρος, α, ον strong, mighty, powerful
σκευος, ους n object, thing
διαρπαζω plunder, steal, take away
ἐὰν μὴ except, unless
πρῶτον adv. first, first of all

δήσῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s δεω bind, tie

"The implication of ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον τον ἰσχυρον δῆσῃ is, since Jesus is freeing Satan's thralls, that Jesus has already bound Satan. But there is a tension between vv. 27 and 23b-26. Jesus has already won a decisive victory (most notably in the Temptation). But this does not mean that Satan's power is finished; on the contrary, the point of vv. 23b-26 is precisely that it is still strong. Even after the Cross and Resurrection and Ascension have completed the victory, the power of Satan, though broken, will still be strong. It is the tension between ἐφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμας ἡ βασιλεια του Θεου (Mt 12:28) and ἐλθατω ἡ βασιλεια σου (Mt 6:10), the paradox of Heb 2:8. Not till the Parousia will it be resolved." Cranfield.

France refers to the "argument of E Best that 3:27 assumes that Satan is already subdued, and that therefore we should understand 1:12-13 as portraying his decisive defeat." France comments, "The logic of 3:27 is not necessarily as tight as that. Nothing may be seized from the strong man until he is bound, but this does not require that he be bound once for all, after which there is no further contest. Rather, each individual confrontation with Satan (in the person of one of the possessing demons who are under his control) will involve a 'power encounter', in which Jesus must assert his superior authority. There is no suggestion that the outcome will ever be in doubt (except in one case where Jesus' disciples attempt to draw on his authority without adequate spiritual preparation, 9:14-29) since the proclamation of God's kingship has brought about a new situation of eschatological victory over Satan; but, as in NT eschatology generally, that victory in principle must still be implemented in reality through real conflict. That is how Jesus' exorcisms are to be understood."

τοτε then, at that time

Cf. Is 49:24f & 53:12. "If reminiscence of Is 53:12 is reflected here, then it would be a trace of Jesus' consciousness of being the Servant of the Lord." Cranfield.

Mark 3:28

Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πάντα ἀφεθήσεται τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, τὰ ἁμαρτήματα καὶ αἱ βλασφημίαι ὅσα ἐὰν βλασφημήσωσιν·

"In the gospels ἀμην occurs only on the lips of Jesus (apart from Mk 16:20); Mt., thirty times; Mk, thirteen; Lk, six (Luke occasionally translates Jesus *amen* by ἀληθως, ἐπ ἀληθειας); Jn, twenty five (always doubled). So it is a highly significant characteristic of Jesus' speech. It is always followed by λεγω ὑμιν (σοι). By its use he solemnly guarantees the truth of what he is about to say." Cranfield. Schlier says, "in the ἀμην before the λεγω ὑμιν of Jesus all Christology is contained in a nutshell: He who sets up His word as something true (that is permanent), is at the same time the One who acknowledges it and confirms it in His life, and so in turn, makes it, once he has fulfilled it, a demand upon others."

"There is no parallel to Jesus' introductory use of ἀμην in pre-Christian Jewish literature. Still less is there any instance of a Jewish teacher using the phrase ἀμην λεγω ὑμιν. The one nonresponsorial use of *amen* in the OT adds a further and remarkable dimension to Jesus' usage; Is 65:16 uses *elohe-amen* 'God of the Amen' as a divine title. A saying thus introduced is not to be taken lightly." France.

ἀφεθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s ἀφιημι
cancel, forgive

ἁμαρτημα, τος η sin, sinful deed
βλασφημια, ας f slander, blasphemy
ὅσος ἀν, ὅσος ἐάν whoever, whatever
βλασφημew slander, blaspheme

Mark 3:29

ὃς δ' ἂν βλασφημήσῃ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, οὐκ ἔχει ἄφεσιν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἀλλὰ ἔνοχος ἐστὶν αἰωνίου ἁμαρτήματος.

ὃς ἀν whoever
πνευμα, ατος η wind, breath, spirit
ἅγιος, α, ον holy

"the scribes are blaspheming against the Holy Spirit in that they are attributing to the agency of Satan exorcisms wrought by Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit." Cranfield.

ἀφεσις, εως f forgiveness, cancellation (of sins)

αἰων, αἰωνος m age, eternity
ἐνοχος, ον liable, answerable, guilty
αἰωνιος, ον eternal, everlasting

Cranfield points out that Jesus does not necessarily imply that the scribes *have* committed such a sin; he warns them of the danger of committing it. He adds, "It is a matter of great importance pastorally that we can say with absolute certainty to anyone who is overwhelmed by fear that he has committed this sin, that the fact that he is so troubled is itself sure proof that he has not committed it." Such a sin is not merely a matter of words but consists in a fixed attitude of mind. Cranfield suggests that "those who most particularly should heed the warning of this verse today are the theological teachers and the official leaders of the churches."

"It is a warning to those who adopt a position of deliberate rejection and antagonism, not an attempt to frighten those of a tender conscience." France.

Mark 3:30

ὅτι ἔλεγον· Πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον ἔχει.

ἀκαθαρτος, ον unclean

Cf. v.22.

Mark 3:31-35

Cf. Mt. 12:46-50; Lk 8:19-21.

In Mark these verses complete the account begun in vv 20-21. "These verses also, however, bring back into view the 'Jesus circle' (literally κυκλω v. 34), whose chosen representatives have been introduced in vv 13-19, and who now surround Jesus in the house while the family stand outside... It is not so much a narrative as a tableau, enabling us to see graphically the contrast between insiders and outsiders. The focus is on Jesus' words in vv. 33-35, in which the element of dismissal of his natural family is balanced by the positive affirmation of a new 'family' of the true people of God... The contrast between insiders and outsiders is vividly depicted by the spacial imagery of the scene. The members of Jesus' family are ἔξω στήκοντες (v. 31), and are again described as ἔξω in v. 32, while the crowd of supporters ἐκάθητο περι αὐτον (v. 32) and are again depicted as περι αὐτον κυκλω καθημενους in v. 34. Each of these phrases will be picked up in the subsequent pericope in which the insider/outsider contrast is brought to the centre of attention, οἱ περι αὐτον to denote the privileged recipients of revelation, and οἱ ἔξω those to whom it is not given (4:10-11)." France.

Mark 3:31

Καὶ ἔρχονται ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔξω στήκοντες ἀπέστειλαν πρὸς αὐτὸν καλοῦντες αὐτόν.

ἔξω adv. out, outside, away

στήκοντες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl
ἵστημι stand, stop

ἀποστελλω send, send out

Cranfield says that the absence of mention of Joseph suggests that he was probably dead.

Mark 3:32

καὶ ἐκάθητο περὶ αὐτὸν ὄχλος, καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Ἴδου ἡ μήτηρ σου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί σου ἔξω ζητοῦσίν σε.

καθημαι sit, sit down, live

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

ἀδελφη, ης f sister, female believer

Cranfield suggests that "καὶ ἀδελφαι σου should probably be omitted with κ B C W Θ f¹³ vg ... Perhaps as an assimilation to v.35 or 6:3." Metzger also agrees, stating, "From a historical point of view, it is extremely unlikely that Jesus' sisters would have joined in publicly seeking to check him in his ministry."

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

σε Pronoun, acc s συ

Mark 3:33

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτοῖς λέγει· Τίς ἐστὶν ἡ μήτηρ μου ἢ οἱ ἀδελφοί μου;

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s

ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply, say

"This construction [ἀποκρθεὶς λέγει] occurs for the first time in Mk here. It is due to Semitic usage either directly or as reflected in the LXX." Cranfield.

The words of Jesus in this verse seem an implied criticism of his own family – an awareness of their unbelief. Taylor uses this to cast doubt on the historicity of the Virgin Birth. Cranfield responds by saying that the Virgin Birth is "a pointer to *his* uniqueness, but does not mean that she [Mary] was not a sinner. We have no grounds for expecting it to have made her for the rest of her life exempt from the possibility of unbelief."

Mark 3:34

καὶ περιβλεψάμενος τοὺς περὶ αὐτὸν κύκλω καθημένους λέγει· Ἴδε ἡ μήτηρ μου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί μου·

περιβλεπομαι look around

κύκλω adv in a circle, round about

Mark 3:35

ὃς γὰρ ἂν ποιήσῃ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, οὗτος ἀδελφός μου καὶ ἀδελφὴ καὶ μήτηρ ἐστίν.

ὃς ἂν see v.29

θελημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

"Obedience to God rather than physical relationship binds men close to Jesus."

Cranfield. The 'will of God' spoken of here is linked by France to "Jesus' proclamation of the coming of the kingdom of God, with its consequent call to repentance and belief of the εὐαγγελιον (1:14-15), which is the only general injunction of Jesus which Mark has so far recorded. It is that call which both scribes and family have, in their different ways, rejected, and in so doing have put themselves outside το θελημα του θεου."

Calvin says that Christ "admits all His disciples and all believers to the same honourable rank, as if they were His nearest relatives, or rather He places them in the room of His mother and brethren."

Mark 4:1-9

Cf Mt 13:1-9; Lk 8:4-8.

France writes concerning this section of Jesus' teaching in 4:1-34, "The βασιλεια του θεου, which was announced with such fanfare in 1:14-15 but has not been mentioned directly since, now comes back into focus... This is, therefore, a discourse about God's kingship, and it aims to explain the paradoxical fact that a proclamation of such ultimate importance can be ignored or even opposed by some who hear it. It reveals a fundamental clash between divine and human values, and the necessity of a more-than-human insight if the purpose of God is to be understood and welcomed."

Mark 4:1

Καὶ πάλιν ἤρξατο διδάσκειν παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν. καὶ συναγεται πρὸς αὐτὸν ὄχλος πλείστος, ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς πλοῖον ἐμβάντα καθῆσθαι ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ὄχλος πρὸς τὴν θάλασσαν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἦσαν.

παλιν again, once more

Cf. 2:13.

ἀρχω midd begin

συναγω gather, assemble

πλειστος, η, ον (superl. of πολυς) large

ὥστε so that, with the result that

πλοιον, ου η boat, ship

ἐμβάντα Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s ἐμβαينو

get into, embark

Sitting was the normal posture for teaching.

Mark 4:2

καὶ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς ἐν παραβολαῖς πολλά, καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ·

Cranfield says that "The key to an understanding of παραβολη in the Synoptic Gospels is the use of the Hebrew word *masal* in the OT (together with its Aramaic equivalent *m'tal, matla*) in Rabbinic literature... The *masal* covers a wide range of meanings including the ethical maxim, the short sentence of popular wisdom, proverbs generally, by-word, taunt-song, oracle, riddle, comparison, allegory, fable, in addition to what is meant by 'parable' in the strict sense." France comments, "παραβολη is perhaps best defined negatively as the opposite of prosaic, propositional speech. It is speech whose meaning does not lie on the surface, but demands enquiry and insight, so that the degree of communication which it achieves will depend on the extent to which the hearer shares the background of thought and the values of the speaker."

France quotes with commendation the following from C. F. D. Moule, "A parable is like a modern political cartoon. A good cartoon presents an interpretative analogy, and it is for the viewer to work out its meaning, first by understanding it, then by reacting to it critically and, finally, by taking action accordingly. If the viewer is half-witted or stupid or so shallow as to be virtually incapable of being educated, no doubt he will see nothing but the mere picture, and he will not get further than saying that he likes it or dislikes it. But anyone with a grain of intelligence will respond in one way or another. He will say 'Yes, of course that is exactly what is happening. I hadn't seen it so clearly before, but now I know I mustn't vote Conservative [or whatever it may be] again'. Or perhaps he will say, 'Yes, I see what the cartoonist is getting at, but I don't think his interpretation is fair. He is being cruel to X, who isn't really doing what the hog in the picture is doing.' The moment the viewer is responding in one way or another, he and the cartoonist have entered into a partnership in creating something; education is proceeding."

διδαχη, ης f teaching, what is taught

Mark 4:3

Ἀκούετε. ἰδοὺ ἐξῆλθεν ὁ σπείρων σπείραι.

"The fact that the following parable is both introduced and concluded by an appeal to hear marks it out as specially important." Cranfield. France points out that 'hearing' is a key theme in this discourse (cf. vv 9, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 23, 24).

σπειρω sow

Mark 4:4

καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ σπείρειν ὃ μὲν ἔπεσεν παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν, καὶ ἦλθεν τὰ πετεινὰ καὶ κατέφαγεν αὐτό.

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

ἔπεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s πιπτω fall

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

πετεινον, ου η bird

κατέφαγεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s κατεσθω

eat up, devour

Seed was normally ploughed in after sowing. Seed which fell at the edge of the field would not have been ploughed in and would be vulnerable.

Mark 4:5

καὶ ἄλλο ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὸ πετρῶδες ὅπου οὐκ εἶχεν γῆν πολλήν, καὶ εὐθὺς ἐξανέτειλεν διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν βάθος γῆς·

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

πετρώδες, οὐς n rocky ground
 όπου adv. where
 εἶχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἔχω
 γῆ, γῆς f earth
 ἐξανέτειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
 ἐξανατελλω sprout, spring up
 βάθος, οὐς n depth, greatness

"Verse 5b appears to suggest that the lack of soil actually causes seed sown in such a place to grow up more quickly, but this makes little agricultural sense. The focus is rather on the contrast between impressive upward growth and inadequate roots, resulting in initial success and subsequent failure." France.

Mark 4:6

καὶ ὅτε ἀνέτειλεν ὁ ἥλιος ἐκαυματίσθη καὶ διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν ρίζαν ἐξηράνθη.

ὅτε conj when, at which time
 ἀνέτειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀνατελλω
 rise, dawn, shine
 ἥλιος, οὐς m the sun
 ἐκαυματίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s
 καυματιζω scorch, burn
 ρίζα, ἡς f root
 ἐξηράνθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ξηραίνω
 dry up; pass wither

Mark 4:7

καὶ ἄλλο ἔπεσεν εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας, καὶ ἀνέβησαν αἱ ἄκανθαι καὶ συνέπιζαν αὐτό, καὶ καρπὸν οὐκ ἔδωκεν.

ἀκανθα, ἡς f thorn-plant
 ἀναβαίνω go up, come up
 συμπιγῶ choke
 καρπός, οὐς m fruit, grain, harvest
 ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

καρπὸν οὐκ ἔδωκεν A Semitism.
 "There has ... been a progression in the three failed seeds, which is probably intended to be noticed in drawing out the symbolism: the first never started, the second started but died, the third survived but could not produce grain. But in the end none is of any value to the farmer, since he is looking for grain, not mere survival." France.

Mark 4:8

καὶ ἄλλα ἔπεσεν εἰς τὴν γῆν τὴν καλήν, καὶ ἐδίδου καρπὸν ἀναβαίνοντα καὶ αὐξανόμενα, καὶ ἔφερον ἐν τριάκοντα καὶ ἐν ἐξήκοντα καὶ ἐν ἑκατόν.

The plural ἄλλα now directs attention to individual seeds.

καλός, ἡ, ον good, proper, fine
 ἐδίδου Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s δίδωμι
 αὐξανώ and αὐξώ grow, spread, increase,
 reach full growth

φέρω bring, carry, bear, lead
 εἰς, μί, ἐν gen ἑνός, μίας, ἑνός one
 τριάκοντα thirty
 ἐξήκοντα sixty
 ἑκατόν one hundred

"By carefully depicting the state of six seeds Mark has effectively ruled out any notion that those who fail are in a majority. Rather here, by contrast with the three types of failure, are three further seeds which represent what should be the norm. The contrast is marked even by the way the sentence is constructed: the fate of each of the preceding seeds was described in the aorist, and in terms of what was done to it (eaten by birds, scorched by sun, choked by weeds) or what it failed to achieve (καρπὸν οὐκ ἔδωκεν); but the seeds which fell in the good ground are the subject of an active sentence, with imperfect verbs (ἐδίδου, ἔφερον) filled out by two present participles denoting continuous growth (ἀναβαίνοντα καὶ αὐξανόμενα ...)... The yield of the seeds in good ground represents what a farmer might reasonably hope for in a very good year." France.

Mark 4:9

καὶ ἔλεγεν· Ὅς ἔχει ὅτα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω. οὐς, ὅτος n ear, hearing

Cf. v.3. "The feature which is emphasised is the fact of differences of soil. This is the point at which the hearers are challenged to take action: they are summoned to ask themselves which sort of ground they are. The parable indicates the situation of the hearers in the face of the message of the kingdom of God and challenges them to hear the message aright. It is a parable about the hearing of the Word of God." Cranfield.

Mark 4:10-12

Cf. Mt 13:10-15; Lk 8:9f.
 "The sandwiching of these verses (which deal with parables in general) between the parable of the sower and its interpretation undoubtedly indicates Mark's belief that each throws light on the other." France.

Mark 4:10

Καὶ ὅτε ἐγένετο κατὰ μόνας, ἠρώτων αὐτὸν οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν σὺν τοῖς δώδεκα τὰς παραβολάς. ὅτε conj when, at which time
 μόνος, ἡ, ον adj only, alone; κατα μόνας alone
 ἐρωτάω ask, request, beg, urge

France suggests that the imperfect may imply "not simply a single enquiry, but a regular pattern of response to Jesus' parables on the part of οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν συν τοῖς δώδεκα. The related general summary in vv. 33-34 will also use imperfect tenses throughout."

δώδεκα twelve

"The neat distinction between those in the boat and those on the shore is ... deliberately blurred, and the circle of privileged revelation (v. 11) is drawn more widely than the now closed group of the Twelve... Among the large crowd there were some, and only some, who were sufficiently interested in what they had heard to join the Twelve in demanding further elucidation, while others went away having heard nothing but παραβολαί. On the principle to be enunciated in v. 25, to those who had this degree of curiosity, more would be given, but those who lacked it would lose any benefit they might have gained from hearing the παραβολαί. The gift of special revelation (v. 11) is thus not restricted to a predetermined circle of favoured followers into which no one else is allowed access, but is offered to those who ask for it. The group of those περὶ αὐτὸν is self-selected rather than predestined." France.

Mark 4:11

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ· ἐκεῖνοις δὲ τοῖς ἔξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γίνεται,

μυστήριον, ου n secret, mystery

"In the Pauline Epistles the word is used to denote, not something that must not be divulged to the uninitiated, but something that could not be known by men except by divine revelation but that, though once hidden, has now been revealed in Christ and is to be proclaimed so that all who have ears may hear it; and behind Paul's use of it and also its use here we may recognise the O.T. idea of God's *sof* or 'secret' (e.g. Amos 3:7; Ps 25:14; Prov 3:32; Job 15:8)... Here ... it is the secret that the kingdom of God has come in the person and words and works of Jesus. That is a secret because God has chosen to reveal himself indirectly and in a veiled way. The incarnate Word is not obvious. Only faith could recognise the Son of God in the lowly figure of Jesus of Nazareth. The secret of the Kingdom of God is the secret of the person of Jesus." Cranfield.

France argues that "the true sense of μυστήριον is better captured by the English 'secret', which denotes not incomprehensibility but hiddenness. A secret is that which is not divulged – but when known it need not be hard to grasp. It is privileged information rather than a puzzle."

δέδοται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s δίδωμι

by God.

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those
ἐξω adv. outside; ὁ ἐξω outsider,
unbeliever

The sense is that to those 'outside' (the kingdom) all things are obscure. France comments, "It is probably misleading to pose the exegetical question of this verse in terms of the intention of parables either to reveal or to conceal, to attract or to repel potential adherents. The parable of the sower, which surrounds this brief pericope, suggests a different understanding. The intention of the sower is to produce a crop, but whether or not this is achieved depends not on a change in his intention, but on the condition of the soil into which the seed falls. The same seed produces contrasting results. So it is with parables. The same parable produces enlightenment in one and no response in another; the result is appropriate to the condition of the hearer (and that is why 'how you hear' is so central to the theme of the chapter... Thus the same parable which to some brings an understanding of the secret of God's kingship will leave others cold. They are the ones who remain ἐξω, and for them there is nothing but parable."

Mark 4:12

ἵνα βλέποντες βλέπωσι καὶ μὴ ἴδωσιν, καὶ ἀκούοντες ἀκούωσι καὶ μὴ συνιῶσιν, μήποτε ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἀφεθῆ ἑαυτοῖς.

Cf. Isa 6:9f. "If ... the ἵνα is given its proper final force, its significance is that the fact that the secret of the kingdom of God, in accordance with O.T. prophecy, remains hidden from many is something that is within the purpose of God." Cranfield.

France suggests that one of the ways of viewing ἰνα is "that while the lexical meaning indicates purpose, this is to be understood within the context of Semitic thought which tends to suppress second causes, so that human decisions are attributed to the overriding providence of God. This ... observation, while in no way removing the normal force of the conjunction, does help us to set it in the appropriate theological context. The ultimate outcome falls within the overall purpose of God, and, as Is 6:9-10 reminds us, this can embrace the rejection as well as the acceptance of the prophet's message."

France adds, "A sensitive discussion of this passage for Bible translators by B. Hollenbach concludes that both Is 6:9-10 and, derivatively, Mk 4:12 are to be understood as ironical, and proposes the following translation for the latter: '... so that they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand; because the last thing they want is to turn and have their sins forgiven!' In this rendering the exclamation mark is the crucial element; without it, the irony remains invisible on the printed page." Peterson's *The Message* has a similar translation.

Linking this with the parable of the sower, France comments, "Whereas the Isaiah passage gives no clear indication that there will be *any* response, the parable of the sower balances bad soil with good, and v. 11 envisages responsive 'insiders' as well as 'outsiders'. The difference depends on how they hear (or, in the terms of the parable, what sort of soil they are), and parables are a uniquely effective way to bring out that difference."

βλεπω see, look

ἴδωσι Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ὄραω see,

observe, perceive, recognise

συνημι and συνιω understand,

comprehend

μηποτε i) conj. lest, otherwise; ii) interrog.

particle whether perhaps, perhaps

ἐπιστρεφω turn back, return, turn round

ἀφεθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s ἀφημι

cancel, forgive

It is worth including here an extensive quotation from Cranfield, who says, "God's kingly intervention in the person, works and words of Jesus is a secret (μυστηριον) in the sense that it can only be recognised by God-given faith (δεδοται). This secret of the kingdom of God is the secret of Jesus' Messiahship and the secret of his divine Sonship. God's self-revelation is indirect and veiled. (While the eye of faith sees through the veil and grasps the secret, for the unbeliever, so long as he remains an unbeliever, the veil is

unpenetrated, and everything is still simply ἐν παραβολαις.) No outwardly compelling evidence of divine glory illumines the ministry of Jesus. It is a necessary part of the gracious self-abasement of the Incarnation that the Son of God should submit to conditions under which his claim to authority cannot but appear altogether problematic and paradoxical. In the last hours of his life his incognito deepens until in the helplessness, nakedness and agony of the Cross, abandoned by God and man, he becomes the absolute antithesis of everything the world understands by divinity and by kingship. But this veiledness is not simply designed to prevent men from recognising the truth. God's self-revelation is truly revelation; it is precisely *veiled revelation*. Throughout the ministry we can see these two motives (revealing and veiling) at work. On the one hand, Jesus gathers the crowds around him and teaches them, sends out the Twelve to preach, and reveals the power and compassion of God by his miracles. God's self-revelation is not to be accomplished in a corner. On the other hand, Jesus teaches the crowd indirectly by means of parables, seeks to conceal his miracles, and forbids the demoniacs to declare his identity. The two motives, both of which are necessary to the divine purpose, are constantly in tension – a fact which explains some apparent inconsistencies (e.g. between the command ἐγειρε εἰς το μεσον in 3:3 and the frequent injunctions to silence).

"By this veiled revelation men are placed in a situation of crisis, a separation between faith and unbelief is brought about, and the blindness and sinfulness of men are shown up for what they are. That this judgement (cf. Jn 9:39) is part of the divine purpose is indicated by the ἰνα in v.12; but it is not the whole purpose of God. His ultimate purpose is salvation, and the latter part of v.12 (μηποτε ἐπιστρεψωσι και ἀφεθη αυτοις) is perhaps to be interpreted, as was suggested above, as hinting at this. God's self-revelation is veiled, in order that men may be left sufficient room in which to make a personal decision. A real turning to God or repentance (ἐπιστρεφειν) is made possible by the inward divine enabling of the Holy Spirit (δεδοται), but would be rendered impossible by the external compulsion of a manifestation of the unveiled divine majesty."

Mark 4:13-20

Cf. Mt 13:18-23; Lk 8:11-15.

Mark 4:13

Καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Οὐκ οἶδατε τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην, καὶ πῶς πάσας τὰς παραβολὰς γνῶσεσθε;

οἶδα know, understand

γνῶσεσθε Verb, fut midd dep indic, 2 pl
γινωσκω

This parable "is the key to all the rest, the parable about parables." France.

Mark 4:14

ὁ σπείρων τὸν λόγον σπείρει.

σπειρω SOW

"In its historical context ὁ λογος refers to the teaching which Jesus has been giving in Galilee (in the proclamation of which his disciples are themselves soon to share, 3:14), beginning with the εὐαγγελιον of 1:15 and climaxing in the ἐν παραβολαῖς πολλὰ of v. 2. It is the varying response to this proclamation which has been the focus of interest in chapters 2-3, and of which this discourse offers an explanation." France.

Mark 4:15

οὗτοι δὲ εἰσὶν οἱ παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν ὅπου σπείρεται ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν εὐθὺς ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς καὶ αἶρει τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐσπαρμένον εἰς αὐτούς.

Cf. v.4

ὅπου adv. where

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as

Σατανᾶς, α the Adversary, Satan

αἶρω take, take up, take away

ἐσπαρμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n
nom/acc s σπειρω

"We would say, 'In one ear and out the other,' or, 'like water off a duck's back.' Some people politely listen to the gospel but as hearers only. The gospel is not precious to them, for their hearts are as hard as the footpath along the grainfield." Kistemaker, *The Parables of Jesus*.

Mark 4:16

καὶ οὗτοι εἰσὶν ὁμοίως οἱ ἐπὶ τὰ πετρώδη σπειρόμενοι, οἱ ὅταν ἀκούσωσιν τὸν λόγον εὐθὺς μετὰ χαρᾶς λαμβάνουσιν αὐτόν,

Cf. v.5

χαρᾶ, ας f joy, gladness

Mark 4:17

καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ρίζαν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀλλὰ πρόσκαιροί εἰσιν, εἶτα γενομένης θλίψεως ἢ διωγμοῦ διὰ τὸν λόγον εὐθὺς σκανδαλίζονται.

ρίζα, ης f see v.6

πρόσκαιρος, ον temporary, not lasting

Not found elsewhere in the Synoptic Gospels (apart from the parallel in Matt 13:21 it occurs elsewhere in the NT only in 2 Cor 4:18 and Heb 11:25).

εἶτα adv. then, and then

θλίψις, εως f trouble, suffering

ἢ or

διωγμος, ου m persecution

σκανδαλίζω cause (someone) to sin, cause (someone) to give up the faith

"σκανδαλίζω which will occur prominently in 9:42-47, is often translated as 'cause to sin', but is in fact used more generally for anything which 'catches people out' or 'trips' them so as to render their discipleship ineffective. Here the focus is not on sin but on apostasy under pressure." France.

Mark 4:18

καὶ ἄλλοι εἰσὶν οἱ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας σπειρόμενοι· οὗτοι εἰσὶν οἱ τὸν λόγον ἀκούσαντες,

Cf. v.7

Mark 4:19

καὶ αἱ μέριμναι τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου καὶ αἱ περὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ἐπιθυμίαι εἰσπορευόμεναι συμπνίγουσιν τὸν λόγον, καὶ ἄκαρπος γίνεται.

μεριμνα, ης f care, concern, anxiety

αἰων, αἰωνος m age, world order

ἀπατη, ης f deception

πλοῦτος, ου m & n riches, wealth

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other

ἐπιθυμία, ας f desire, longing, passion

"In this scene ... the threat to effective discipleship comes not from external pressure but from the disciple's own divided loyalty." France.

σμπνίγω see v.7

ἀκαρπος, ον barren, unfruitful

"Neither here nor in v. 20 is there any attempt to spell out what sort of καρπος is expected, or how it is to be recognised. Since, however, fruitful discipleship is contrasted with the material concerns listed at the beginning of v. 19, it may reasonably be assumed that fruitfulness involves conformity to the principles of the kingdom of God, with its opposition to such 'worldly' values." France.

Mark 4:20

καὶ ἐκεῖνοί εἰσιν οἱ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν
σπαρέντες, οἵτινες ἀκούουσιν τὸν λόγον καὶ
παραδέχονται καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν
τριάκοντα καὶ ἐν ἐξήκοντα καὶ ἐν ἑκατόν.

Cf. v.8

σπαρέντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
σπειρω
οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὁ τι
who, which
παραδεχομαι accept, receive, welcome

"Perhaps rather stronger than λαμβανειν, used
in v.16. Those who are good soil welcome the
message and, instead of keeping it on the
surface, allow it right into their hearts and
lives." Cranfield.

καρποφορεω bear fruit, be productive

Mark 4:21-25

Cf. Lk 8:16-18; Mt 5:15.

Mark 4:21

Καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Μῆτι ἔρχεται ὁ λύχνος ἵνα
ὑπὸ τὸν μόδιον τεθῆ ἢ ὑπὸ τὴν κλίνην, οὐχ ἵνα
ἐπὶ τὴν λυχνίαν τεθῆ;

μητι Negative particle, used in questions to
indicate expectation of a negative answer

This verse "neatly illustrates the idiomatic use
of μη(τι) and οὐ to introduce questions
expecting the answers 'no' and 'yes'
respectively." France.

λυχνος, ου m lamp
μοδιος, ου m basket, bucket
τεθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s τιθημι place,
set

ἢ or

κλινη, ης f bed, couch

λυχνια, ας f lampstand, stand

This saying here (in contrast with Mt 5:15)
seems to have reference to the ministry of
Jesus. "No one in his senses would carry a
lighted lamp into a house simply in order to
hide it; the intention would rather be to set it
on a lampstand. No more must it be supposed
that God's whole purpose in sending Jesus is
that he should be concealed." Cranfield.

Mark 4:22

οὐ γάρ ἐστιν κρυπτόν ἐὰν μὴ ἵνα φανερωθῆ,
οὐδὲ ἐγένετο ἀπόκρυφον ἀλλ' ἵνα ἔλθῃ εἰς
φανερόν.

The γαρ provides a close link between vv.
21,22.

κρυπτος, η, ον hidden, secret, private
ἐὰν μη except

φανερωθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s φανερωω
make known, reveal, make evident
ἀποκρυφος, ον secret, stored away
φανερος, α, ον known, evident, visible

"For a while the kingdom of God is a mystery,
concealed under apparent weakness, and this
hiddenness (or indirectness of revelation) must
not be laid aside before the time. But the
present costly hiddenness [costly because it
leads to Jesus' death – cf. the notes on v.12] is
for the express purpose of the kingdom's future
glorious manifestation." Cranfield.

"Verses 21-22 therefore stand in tension with
the implication usually read in vv. 11-12 that
God does not want 'outsiders' to understand
and be forgiven. Hidden things are to be made
known, though we are not told when or by
whom this is to be accomplished. (Perhaps
there is a clue in 9:9, which introduces the idea
of secrecy *until*; with regard to the disciples'
own message, the resurrection will mark the
turning point between hiddenness and open
declaration.)" France.

Mark 4:23

εἴ τις ἔχει ὄτα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω.

οὐς, ὄτος n see v.9

The hearing ear is a divine gift – cf. v.11.

Mark 4:24

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Βλέπετε τί ἀκούετε. ἐν ᾧ
μέτρῳ μετρεῖτε μετρηθήσεται ὑμῖν καὶ
προσθήσεται ὑμῖν.

βλεπω see, look, beware of

"The warning Βλέπετε τί ἀκούετε stands apart
from the rest of the verse; it is not linked with
the 'measure' saying in its other synoptic
occurrences, but it does occur without the
'measure' saying at the parallel point in Luke
8:18a. These words pick up the recurrent
theme of the discourse that it is not hearing
alone that is important, but *how* you hear.
They thus repeat the call of v. 23 to listen
attentively, but whereas v. 23 rounded off the
preceding teaching, the formula Καὶ ἔλεγεν
αὐτοῖς introducing this clause ensures that it
relates rather to the teaching that follows. And
that teaching is itself about effective hearing,
in that it reinforces the message of the parable
of the sower that there will be different degrees
of response to what is heard, depending on
what the hearer brings to the encounter."
France.

μετρον, ου n measure, degree, quantity
μετρεω measure, deal out
προστιθημι add, add to, increase

Of the textual variants here France writes, "The omission of *καὶ προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν* in D W and some OL is perhaps due to assimilation to Mt 7:2, but may be simply a mechanical error after a similar preceding phrase. *τοὺς ἀκουοῦσιν* (A Θ and most later MSS and Syriac and Coptic versions) is probably an early moralising addition: only those who listen will receive the bonus."

In context here in Mk this saying is linked with hearing. "So perhaps: According to the measure of your response to the Word, so will be the blessing which you will receive from God – or rather God in his generosity will give you a blessing disproportionately large (cf. Lk 6:38, and *καὶ περισσευθήσεται* in Mt 13:12; 25:29)." Cranfield.

France comments on this saying, "It serves here to encourage careful hearing, because the care expended in understanding and responding to Jesus' parables will be proportionately rewarded. What you get out of them depends on what you put in."

Mark 4:25

ὃς γὰρ ἔχει, δοθήσεται αὐτῷ· καὶ ὃς οὐκ ἔχει, καὶ ὃ ἔχει ἀρθήσεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.

Cf. Mt 13:12

δοθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s *διδωμι*
ἀρθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s *αἶρω*
take, take up, take away

"Here in Mk its meaning seems to be that to the man who hears the Word, and lets it into his heart and life, an ever increasing knowledge of the secret of the Kingdom will be given; but the man who fails thus to lay hold on the Word will one day lose it altogether." Cranfield.

Mark 4:21-25 Postscript

"There is a notable tension between the two parts of this complex of sayings. The 'optimism' of vv. 21-22, that all that is now secret will in due time be revealed, is balanced by the 'realism' of vv. 24b-25, that there will still be those who fail to benefit from divine revelation. These two insights together constitute the framework within which a coherent exegesis of this discourse as a whole, and therefore an understanding of Mark's 'theory of parables', must be found." France.

Mark 4:26

Καὶ ἔλεγεν· Οὕτως ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς ἄνθρωπος βάλη τὸν σπόρον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

Verses 26-29 are peculiar to Mark.

Cranfield sees this parable chiefly as a parable of contrast. "As seedtime is followed in due time by harvest, so will the present hiddenness and ambiguousness of the kingdom of God be succeeded by its glorious manifestation."

οὕτως and *οὕτω* adv. thus, in this way
βάλη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s *βαλλω*
σπορος, ου m seed, supply of seed

France comments that this "'story' is introduced awkwardly, in that the *βασιλεία του θεου*, which in vv. 30-31 will be compared to a seed, is here apparently compared to a man who sows it. In fact, of course, the comparison is not to any one component in the story, but to the scene as a whole, as is indicated also in the frequent changes of subject (man, seed, ground, grain, man). But the opening focus on the man fits the fact that the story is told with a special eye to how he experiences the results of this sowing."

Verse 27

καὶ καθεύδῃ καὶ ἐγείρηται νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν, καὶ ὁ σπόρος βλαστᾷ καὶ μηκύνηται ὡς οὐκ οἶδεν αὐτός.

καθευδω sleep, be dead
ἐγείρηται Verb, pres pass subj, 3 s *ἐγειρω*
raise
νυξ, νυκτος f night

The order may be Semitic.

βλαστᾷ Verb, pres act subj, 3 s *βλαστανω*
and *βλασταω* sprout
μηκύνηται Verb, pres pass subj, 3 s
μηκνομαι grow

ὡς here in the sense 'how'

οἶδα know, understand

"Any farmer knows, of course, that this laid-back approach on the part of the farmer is not a true piece of agriculture in real life: a crop left to fend for itself after sowing in this way would probably be barely worth harvesting. So is the farmer's inaction and incomprehension a pointer to how this story illustrates the *βασιλεία του θεου*?"

"One of the issues we have assumed to underlie the parable of the sower is the problem of limited response to the initial preaching of the kingdom of God, and this parable may also be read in the light of that issue. At first there may be little to show for the sowing of the seed, and a sceptical observer might think that nothing is happening. But there is an inner dynamic in the message which will in due time produce its effect, even if human insight cannot fathom how the process works (ὡς οὐκ οἶδεν αὐτός). In the meantime the wise disciple will wait in confidence for God's work to be accomplished in God's way.

"The kingdom of God, then, does not depend on human effort to achieve it, and human insight will not be able to explain it." France.

Mark 4:28

αὐτομάτη ἡ γῆ καρποφορεῖ, πρῶτον χόρτον, εἶτα στάχυν, εἶτα πλήρης σῖτον ἐν τῷ στάχυϊ.

αὐτοματος, η, ον by itself, on its own
 καρποφορεω bear fruit, be productive
 πρῶτον adv. first, first of all
 χορτος, ου m grass, vegetation, shoot
 εἶτα adv. then, and then
 σταχυς, υος m head of grain, head of wheat
 πλήρης, ες (sometimes not declined) full, complete, full-grown

Cranfield says, "Perhaps with Taylor we should accept the reading πλήρης σιτον as original, as it accounts for the other readings. Examples of πλήρης treated as indeclinable go back to the second century B.C."

σιτος, ου m grain, wheat
 στάχυϊ Noun, dat s σταχυς, υος m

Mark 4:29

ὅταν δὲ παραδοῖ ὁ καρπός, εὐθὺς ἀποστέλλει τὸ δρέπανον, ὅτι παρέστηκεν ὁ θερισμός.

ὅταν when
 παραδοῖ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s παραδιδωμι
 hand or give over, deliver up

"The verb παραδιδωμι is here used apparently in the sense 'permit', which it sometimes has in classical Greek." Cranfield.

καρπος, ου m fruit, grain, harvest
 ἀποστελλω send, send out
 δρεπανον, ου n sickle
 παρέστηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s
 παριστημι and παριστανω present,
 bring into one's presence

παρεστηκεν 'is here' (Cranfield).

θερισμος, ου m harvest, crop

Mark 4:30-34

Cf. Mt 13:31f; Lk 13:18f.

Cranfield says that this is another parable of contrasts, but continues, "The contrast is not, as is sometimes thought, between the Church's insignificant beginnings and the wide spread, powerful organisation it was to become: it is rather between the present veiledness of the Kingdom of God and its future glorious manifestation at the Parousia."

Mark 4:30

Καὶ ἔλεγεν· Πῶς ὁμοιώσωμεν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἢ ἐν τίνι αὐτὴν παραβολῇ θῶμεν;

ὁμοιωσωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ὁμοιοω
 make like

ἢ or

θῶμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl τιθημι place

Mark 4:31

ὡς κόκκῳ σινάπεως, ὃς ὅταν σπαρῇ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, μικρότερον ὂν πάντων τῶν σπερμάτων τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς –

κοκκος, ου m seed, grain
 σιναπι, εως n mustard

"The plant concerned is probably the black mustard, *Brassica nigra*, which was grown for oil as well as a condiment. In good conditions it may grow to a height of 3 metres or even more, but its seed is extremely small (over 700 to a gramme ...) and was proverbial for something tiny ... so that an annual growth of such a height was remarkable." France.

ὅταν when

σπαρῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s σπειρω
 μικροτερος, α, ον smallest, least

"Comparative used for superlative, as is common in Koine Greek." Cranfield.

ὂν Verb, pres ptc, n nom/acc s εἰμι
 σπερμα, τος n seed

Mark 4:32

καὶ ὅταν σπαρῇ, ἀναβαίνει καὶ γίνεται μείζον πάντων τῶν λαχάνων καὶ ποιεῖ κλάδους μεγάλους, ὥστε δύνασθαι ὑπὸ τὴν σκίαν αὐτοῦ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνοῦν.

ἀναβαινω go up, come up
 μείζων, ον and μείζοτερος, α, ον greater, greatest

λαχανον, ου n garden plant, vegetable
 κλαδος, ου m branch
 μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

"The theme is a familiar one: 'Great oaks from little acorns grow'. Those who witnessed the initial proclamation of the kingdom of God must not despise small beginnings, nor should they be impatient for the full majesty of God's kingdom to be revealed (cf. perhaps the question of John the Baptist in Mt 11:3). The message is clearly related to that of the previous parable, but presented here in a simpler form, with the focus on the contrast between beginning and end rather than on the process of growth." France.

ὥστε so that, with the result that
 δυναμαι can, be able to
 σκια, ας f shadow, shade
 πετεινον, ου n bird
 κατασκηνωω nest, live, dwell

"Cf. Ezek 17:23; 31:6; Dan 4:12,14,21. When at last he comes in his glory, who is himself the Kingdom (cf. on 1:15), he will be not only the Judge of all men, but also the one under whose shadow all who have truly trusted in him will find shelter." Cranfield.
 France, drawing attention to these same OT texts and particularly to 'all great nations' in Ezek 31:6 notes, "The allusion here may therefore be intended to indicate the future wide scope of the kingdom of God, within which many nations (not only Israel) will find their place." Of this and the parable of the growth of the kingdom in vv. 26-29 he says, "The two parables of vv. 26-32 thus both warn against underestimating the significance of the proclamation of the kingdom of God, however unimpressive its initial impact may seem. What has begun in the Galilean ministry of Jesus will, by the power of God, one day prove to be of ultimate significance. If for the time being its power is hidden, it is not for that reason any less certain, and its growth will be spectacular."

Mark 4:33

Καὶ τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς πολλαῖς ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον, καθὼς ἠδύναντο ἀκούειν·

Cf. Mt 13:34f.

τοσοῦτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative adj so much; pl so many
 λαλεω speak, talk

The use of the imperfect in this and the following verse indicates that what is being described was Jesus' normal practice.

ἠδύναντο Verb, imperf midd dep indic, 3 pl
 δυναμαι

Calvin says that Christ accommodated himself to the capacity of his hearers. France, however, comments, "Among the crowds who hear the parables there are some who δυναται ἀκουειν, and will therefore join those περι αὐτον who seek and receive further explanation, but others will go no further. καθως ἠδύναντο ἀκούειν then alerts the reader to the fact that not all have that capacity (καθως being used in the sense 'insofar as' or 'to the degree that' ...); and it is the resultant polarisation which Mark again highlights in v. 34."

Mark 4:34

χωρὶς δὲ παραβολῆς οὐκ ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς, κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς ἰδίοις μαθηταῖς ἐπέλυεν πάντα.

χωρὶς prep with gen without, apart from
 ἰδιος, α, ον one's own; κατ' ἰδιαν privately

"The pattern of explanation to his disciples κατ' ἰδιαν picks up and generalises what we have seen in vv. 10-20, a method which will be repeated in 7:17-23; 10:10-12; 13:3-37 (cf. 9:28, 33), and the repeated ἰδιαν ... ἰδιοις gives it emphasis." France.

μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower
 ἐπλυω explain

Occurs elsewhere only in Acts 19:39. The noun ἐπιλυσις occurs in 2 Peter 1:20.

Mark 4:35-41

Cf. Mt 8:23-7; Lk 8:22-5

The vivid narrative suggests recollection of an eyewitness. The narrative is probably Petrine. France comments on the section of the gospel beginning here, "There is a total of ten individual miracles recorded between 4:35 and 8:26 ... which are frequently seen as constituting two balancing groups, each of which begins with a lake miracle (4:35-41; 6:45-51) and contains a feeding miracle (6:34-44; 8:1-10). P.J. Achtemeier has suggested that Mark found these two 'catenae' already grouped in the tradition; others believe that the groupings are Mark's own construction. All five stories in Achtemeier's second 'catena' (6:45-51; 7:24-30; 7:32-37; 8:1-10; 8:22-26) take place outside of Galilee, and it has been suggested that Mark thus deliberately shows the mission of Jesus to the Jewish community of Galilee (though 5:1-20 is already set on the Gentile side of the lake) being repeated for the benefit of the surrounding Gentile population."

Of 4:35-41 he writes, "Together with 6:45-52 (the other lake miracle), this pericope places Jesus in a more starkly 'supernatural' light even than the healing miracles. Control of the elements is even more extraordinary and inexplicable than the restoration of suffering human beings, and is in the OT a frequently noted attribute of God in distinction from human beings who find themselves helpless before the forces of nature (Job 38:8-11; Pss 65:5-8; 89:8-9; 107:23-32, etc.; the last of these must surely have been on Mark's mind as he narrated this story). Here is divine power writ large, and it is appropriate that these two pericopes therefore conclude not only with the astonishment and fear of the disciple, but also with a note of their human inability to cope with the new dimension of understanding and faith which these events demanded (4:40-41; 6:52). The christological question, 'Who is this?' which has already been raised by previous miracles (1:27; 2:7-12; 3:11-12) becomes more insistent and more sharply defined in v. 41...

"The variation in tenses throughout this pericope makes an interesting study in Mark's narrative style. Historical presents form the main framework of the first part of the story (λέγει ... παραλαμβάνουσιν ... γίνεται ... ἐγείρουσιν ... λεγουσιν), but they are interspersed with imperfects to indicate the continuing features of the situation (ἦν ... ἐπεβαλλεν ... ἦν). But when the climax is reached, the narrative goes consistently into the aorist, to indicate Jesus' decisive action (ἐπετιμήσεν ... εἶπεν ... ἐκοπασεν ... ἐγενετο ... εἶπεν), after which the disciples' immediate reaction of fear is described in the aorist (ἐθοβήθησαν), followed by an imperfect to denote their continuing discussion of what it all meant (ἐλεγον). The tenses are far from haphazard; rather, they demonstrate the natural ability of the storyteller to focus his audience's attention appropriately on the different aspects of the story as it develops."

Mark 4:35

Καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ὀψίας γενομένης· Διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πέραν.

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that
ὀψια, ας f evening
διερχομαι pass through, go over

"Possibly his purpose was to escape the pressure of the crowds, or to find a new sphere of ministry." Cranfield.

περαν i) prep with gen beyond, to or on the other side; ii) το π. the other side

I.e. to the eastern side of the lake. The boat of v.1 is now pressed into service for a different purpose.

Mark 4:36

καὶ ἀφέντες τὸν ὄχλον παραλαμβάνουσιν αὐτὸν ὡς ἦν ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ, καὶ ἄλλα πλοῖα ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ.

ἀφιημι leave, forsake, let go
ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude
παραλαμβάνω take

ὡς ἦν – 'as he was' "perhaps means 'without going ashore'." Cranfield. France thinks the phrase ὡς ἦν ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ may mean 'since he was already in the boat'.

πλοῖον, ου n boat, ship

France comments on the final words of this verse, καὶ ἄλλα πλοῖα ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ, "It is hard ... to see any other reason for their inclusion beyond the circumstantial reminiscence of the part of whoever told the story (Peter?) that as a matter of fact their boat was not alone on the lake that evening."

Mark 4:37

καὶ γίνεται λαῖλαψ μεγάλη ἀνέμου, καὶ τὰ κύματα ἐπέβαλλον εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, ὥστε ἦδη γεμίζεσθαι τὸ πλοῖον.

λαίλαψ, απος f storm, squall

"The lake of Galilee is notorious for its sudden storms." Cranfield.

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great
ἀνεμος, ου m wind
κυμα, ατος n wave
ἐπιβαλλω beat against, fall (in)to
ὥστε so that, with the result that
ἦδη adv now, already
γεμίζω fill

Mark 4:38

καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν ἐν τῇ πρύμνῃ ἐπὶ τὸ προσκεφάλαιον καθεύδων· καὶ ἐγείρουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Διδάσκαλε, οὐ μέλει σοι ὅτι ἀπολλύμεθα;

πρυμνα, ης f stern
προσκεφαλαιον, ου n cushion, pillow

"Only in Mk. It suggests the vivid reminiscence of an eye-witness." Cranfield.

καθευδω sleep, be dead

"Whether the sleep was due to physical exhaustion or to the untroubled serenity of divine omnipotence Mark does not say. Like Jonah's equally remarkable sleep in the storm (Jon 1:5-6) it serves to highlight the crucial role of the key figure in the story where the other actors are helpless, though Jonah's role (as victim rather than victor) itself serves to emphasise Jesus' authority by contrast rather than by similarity ('something greater than Jonah is here', Mt 12:41)." France.

ἐγείρω raise

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

μελει impersonal verb it is of concern, it matters

ἀπολλυμι destroy; midd be lost, perish

"The Son of God subject to the rudeness of men." Cranfield.

Mark 4:39

καὶ διεγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ καὶ εἶπεν τῇ θαλάσῃ· Σιώπα, περίμωσο. καὶ ἐκόπασεν ὁ ἄνεμος, καὶ ἐγένετο γαλήνη μεγάλη.

διεγείρω awake, wake up

ἐπιτιμῶ command, rebuke

"In Ps 106:9 (cf. 104:7) Isa 50:2; Nah 1:4 the Hebrew root g'r is used of God rebuking the sea. So Jesus is said to rebuke the wind." Cranfield.

θάλασσα, ης f sea

"Not that the lake had any perception, but to show that the power of his voice reached the elements, which were devoid of feeling." Calvin.

σιωπῶ be silent, be quiet, be calm

περίμωσο Verb, perf pass imperat, 2 s φιμῶ silence, put to silence; pass. be silent

"The perfect imperative passive (which is rarer) is more emphatic than the aorist used in 1:25: so 'be silent and remain so.'" Cranfield.

κοπαῶ cease, stop

γαλήνη, ης f calm

"The aorist tenses indicate an immediate result, and γαλήνη μεγάλη (replacing the λαιλαψ μεγάλη of v. 37) emphasises the total transformation achieved by Jesus' intervention." France.

Mark 4:40

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τί δειλοί ἐστε; οὐπὼ ἔχετε πίστιν;

δειλος, η, ον cowardly, afraid

οὐπὼ not yet

"The force of οὐπὼ ... here is that they should by this time have learned something of the secret of the kingdom of God (4:11), which is the secret that the kingdom is come in the person and work of Jesus." Cranfield.

There are a number of textual variants here arising either from "a desire to soften somewhat Jesus' reproach spoken to his disciples" (Metzger) or from a misreading of οὐπὼ, replacing it with the more common οὐτῶ(ς) with various changes of word order to accommodate to the structure of the question (France).

πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

"Lack of faith makes disciples δειλοι, unable to respond to a crisis with the confidence in God (or, more pertinently, in Jesus) which is the mark of the true disciple." France.

Mark 4:41

καὶ εφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν, καὶ ἔλεγον πρὸς ἀλλήλους· Τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούει αὐτῷ;

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

φοβος, ου m fear

I.e. greater than their previous fear of the storm. Cf. Jonah 1:10.

ἄλληλων, ος, ους reciprocal pronoun one another

ὑπακούω obey, be subject to

"In addition to the miracle's significance as a pointer to the secret of Jesus' person Mark probably saw in it, and meant his readers to see, a symbolic significance (see on 1:31). The parallel between the situation of the disciples on the lake and that of the Church in the midst of persecution would naturally suggest itself. (Very early a ship was a symbol of the Church in Christian art.) In the midst of persecution and all manner of perils, if Jesus be truly with his Church, then, even though his help may not at once be felt, his own must never doubt him, and need have no fear." Cranfield.

Mark 5:1-20

Cf. Mt 8:28-34; Lk 8:26-39.

"Following Jesus' astonishing control over the wild forces of wind and water, Mark tells of his equally remarkable control over the untameable force of a man possessed not just by one demon but by a whole army of them. To the question with which the previous pericope concluded, τίς ἄρα οὗτος ἐστιν; the sequel provides a more explicit answer, as even hostile demonic forces are obliged to recognise in Jesus the υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου." France.

Mark 5:1

Καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γερασηῶν.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἔρχομαι
περαν see 4:35

χώρα, ας f country, region, territory
Γερασηος, η, ον of Gerasa

"Γερασηῶν. So κ* B D latt sa. There are two variants: κ^c L Θ f1 28 33 *al sy*^s bo, etc. have Γεργεσηῶν: A C f13 *pm ζ* have Γαδαρηῶν. In all three Synoptic Gospels the MSS and versions vary between these three readings, Γερασηῶν being the best attested in Mk and Lk., Γαδαρηῶν in Mt. Here in Mk it is clear that Γαδαρηῶν is an assimilation to Mt., while Γεργεσηῶν is apparently a Caesarean correction traceable to Origen. The most likely explanation seems to be that Mark wrote 'Gerasenes' with reference to a town by the lake (whose name may be preserved in the modern Kersa or Koursi on the eastern shore), but that early readers mistook this for a reference to the well-known Gerasa. Since this Gerasa was some thirty miles from the lake, it was natural that improvements should be attempted: hence the variants. Gadara was a not unreasonable guess, but, being six miles from the shores of the lake, is hardly likely (though it was near enough for the land between it and the lake to be called 'the country of the Gadarenes'). Origen was right in seeking a site by the lake but wrong in connecting it with the Girgashites mentioned in the O.T. At Kersa the shore is level, but about a mile further south there is a fairly steep slope within about forty yards of the shore." Cranfield.

France suggests that "Mark's Γερασηῶν ... represents probably either a loose use of the term generally for the whole area of the Decapolis (for which see further on 7:31), of which Gerasa was a leading city, or simply a confusion of similar names, the better-known city substituting for the obscure Gergesa."

Mark 5:2

καὶ ἐξεληθόντος αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου εὐθὺς ὑπήνητησεν αὐτῷ ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ,

ἐξεληθόντος Verb, aor act ptc, m & n gen s
ἐξέρχομαι

πλοιον, ου n boat, ship

ὑπανταω meet, fight

μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb

ἀκαθαρος, ον unclean

Cf. 1:23.

Mark 5:3

ὃς τὴν κατοίκησιν εἶχεν ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν, καὶ οὐδὲ ἀλύσει οὐκέτι οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο αὐτὸν δῆσαι

κατοικησις, εως f home; ἔχω κ. live
μνημα, τος f tomb, grave

"Often in Palestine tombs were caves which would afford shelter." Cranfield.

ἀλυσις, εως f chain

οὐκετι adv no longer, no more

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

δεω bind, tie

Mark 5:4

διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν πολλάκις πέδαις καὶ ἀλύσει δεδέσθαι καὶ διεσπάσθαι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τὰς ἀλύσεις καὶ τὰς πέδας συντετριφθαι, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἴσχυεν αὐτὸν δαμάσαι·

πολλάκις often, frequently

πεδη, ης f chain (for feet)

δεδέσθαι Verb, perf pass infin δεω

διεσπάσθαι Verb, perf pass infin διασπαιω
pull or tear apart

συντετριφθαι Verb, perf pass infin συντριβω
break in pieces, shatter

ἴσχυεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἴσχυω be
strong, be able, be sufficient

δαμαζω subdue, tame; control

Cf. Acts 19:16 for the "preternatural physical strength of the possessed." France.

Mark 5:5

καὶ διὰ παντὸς νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν ἦν κράζων καὶ κατακόπτων ἑαυτὸν λίθοις.

δια παντος continually

νυξ, νυκτος f night

ὄρος, ους n mountain, hill

κραζω cry out, call out

κατακοπτω beat, bruise, cut

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

λιθος, ου m stone

Mark 5:6

καὶ ἰδὼν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἔδραμεν καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτόν,

ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὁραω see

μακροθεν adv far off, at/from a distance

ἔδραμεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s τρεχω run

προσκυνεω worship, fall at another's feet

"Picks up the story that has been interrupted by vv.3-5. What was there baldly summed up ὑπήνητησεν is now related in more detail." Cranfield.

France comments that the use of προσκυνεω "is followed by an address which recognises Jesus' supernatural authority, but with reluctance rather than enthusiasm; the whole scene reminds us of the use of προσπιπτω in 3:11, where again the impression is of concession to Jesus' superior power rather than of 'worship'. Two spiritual powers are here in confrontation, and the nature of the man's approach makes it clear which one is superior."

Mark 5:7

καὶ κράξας φωνῆ μεγάλης λέγει· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου; ὀρκίζω σε τὸν θεόν, μὴ με βασανίσῃς.

κράξας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s κραζω
τι ἐμοι και σοι see on 1:24
ὑψιστος, η, ον highest, most high

"Ὑψιστος (=Hebrew 'elyon) is used in the O.T. mainly by non-Israelites to denote the God of Israel (e.g. Gen 14:18ff; Num 24:16; Isa 14:14; Dan 3:26; 4:2...)." Cranfield.

ὀρκίζω beg (someone) τον θεον in the name of God

"The use of ὀρκίζω by the *demon* is surprising, since the term is more normally associated with the *exorcist*, who binds the demon by oath to come out, as in Acts 19:13. Is this a deliberate attempt by the demons to reverse the normal encounter, and to pre-empt Jesus' expected use of such an oath formula? It is certainly an attempt to establish control over Jesus." France.

βασανίζω torment, disturb

"The punishment referred to is probably eschatological – so Mt 8:29 (προ καιρου) understands it." Cranfield.

"The expectation on the part of the demons that Jesus' purpose must be to torment them assumes that his relation to them is one not only of superiority but also of hostility." France.

Mark 5:8

ἔλεγεν γὰρ αὐτῷ· Ἐξέλθε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκάθαρτον ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

ἀκαθαρτος, ον see v.2

Mark 5:9

καὶ ἐπηρώτα αὐτόν· Τί ὄνομά σοι; καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Λεγιῶν ὄνομά μοι, ὅτι πολλοὶ ἐσμεν·

ἐπηρωτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s
ἐπερωτω ask, question
ὄνομα, τος n name

"Cf. Gen 32:27,29. In the ancient world it was considered of the utmost importance to know the correct name of an adversary. In exorcising it was thought that knowledge of the true name of the demon gave one power over it. If it is the demon's name that Jesus is asking, then this sort of idea would presumably be present. (On the other hand, it is just possible that he is asking the man's name with the purpose of recalling him to a consciousness of his own identity in distinction from that of the demon or demons inhabiting him...)" Cranfield.

λεγιων, ονος f legion (Roman military unit of 5000-6000 men; figurative of a large number)

Mark 5:10

καὶ παρεκάλει αὐτὸν πολλὰ ἵνα μὴ αὐτὰ ἀποστείλῃ ἔξω τῆς χώρας.

παρακαλεω exhort, urge

ἀποστείλῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἀποστελλω
send, send out

ἐξω prep with gen. from outside, outside
χώρα, ας f see v.1

Cranfield suggests this is connected with the widespread view that demons were associated with particular districts, but France comments that there is little clear evidence for this.

Mark 5:11

ἦν δὲ ἐκεῖ πρὸς τῷ ὄρει ἀγέλη χοίρων μεγάλη βοσκομένη·

ἐκεῖ there, in that place, to that place
ὄρος, ος n mountain, hill

προς τῷ ὄρει 'on the hill'. "προς + dative used of locality should indicate proximity, but here it can hardly mean anything but 'on'. It is very rare in the N.T." Cranfield.

ἀγελῃ, ης f herd (of pigs)

χοιρος, ου m pig

Indicates that the area was mainly Gentile.

βοσκω tend, feed; midd graze, feed

Mark 5:12

καὶ παρεκάλεσαν αὐτὸν λέγοντες· Πέμψον ἡμᾶς εἰς τοὺς χοίρους, ἵνα εἰς αὐτοὺς εἰσέλθωμεν.

παρακαλεω see v.10

πεμπω send

"The appeal πέμψον ἡμᾶς underlines further the total submission of the demons to Jesus' authority. There is no question that he will send them away; the only issue is where." France.

χοιρος, ου m pig

εἰσέλθωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

Calvin suggests tentatively that the demons' purpose may have been "to excite the inhabitants of that country to curse God on account of the loss of the swine." Cranfield.

Mark 5:13

καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν αὐτοῖς· καὶ ἐξελθόντα τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἀκάθαρτα εἰσήλθον εἰς τοὺς χοίρους, καὶ ὤρμησεν ἡ ἀγέλη κατὰ τοῦ κρημνοῦ εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, ὡς δισχίλιοι, καὶ ἐπνίγοντο ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ.

ἐπιτρέπω let, allow, permit

ἀκαθαρτος, ον unclean

ὄρμαω rush

κρημνος, ου m steep bank

θάλασσα, ης f sea

δισχίλιοι, αι, α two thousand

ἐπνίγοντο Verb, imperf pass indic, 3 pl πνιγω choke; pass drown

Cranfield comments, "It is wise with Calvin to acknowledge that we cannot know with certainty why Jesus consented; but it might well have been for the sake of reassuring the man, that he allowed the demons to enter the swine and to carry out their malicious prank (for which cf. 9:22). If Jesus judged that to grant their request was the most effective way of assuring the man of the reality of his liberation, then we may suppose that, even if he knew what would become of the swine, he would – although none of God's creatures is to be destroyed needlessly or thoughtlessly – count one man of more value than many swine." Cranfield.

Mark 5:14

Καὶ οἱ βόσκοντες αὐτοὺς ἔφυγον καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἀγρούς· καὶ ἦλθον ἰδεῖν τί ἐστὶν τὸ γεγονός.

βοσκω see v.11

ἔφυγον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl φευγω flee, run away (from)

ἀπήγγειλαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl

ἀπαγγελλω announce, proclaim

ἀγρος, ου m field, farm, countryside

Cranfield suggests here 'hamlets'.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἔρχομαι

ἰδεῖν Verb, aor act infin ὁραω see

γεγονός Verb, perf act ptc, n nom/acc s

γίνομαι

Mark 5:15

καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ θεωροῦσιν τὸν δαίμονιζόμενον καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονούντα, τὸν ἐσχηκότα τὸν λεγιῶνα, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν.

θεωρεω see, watch, observe, notice

δαίμονιζομαι be possessed by demons

καθημαι sit, sit down, live

ἱματιζω clothe, dress

σωφρονεω be in one's right mind

"The three participles, καθήμενον, ἱματισμένον, and σωφρονούντα describe features which must immediately have struck the attention of the beholders." Taylor.

"Though we are not tormented by the devil, yet he holds us as slaves, till the Son of God delivers us from his tyranny. Naked, torn, and disfigured, we wander about, till he restores us to soundness of mind." Calvin.

ἐσχηκότα Verb, pref act ptc, m acc s ἔχω

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

Mark 5:16

καὶ διηγήσαντο αὐτοῖς οἱ ἰδόντες πῶς ἐγένετο τῷ δαίμονιζομένῳ καὶ περὶ τῶν χοίρων.

διηγήσαντο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 pl

διηγεομαι tell, relate

ἰδόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὁραω

see

Mark 5:17

καὶ ἤρξαντο παρακαλεῖν αὐτὸν ἀπελθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρίων αὐτῶν.

ἤρξαντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl ἄρχω

midd begin

ὄριον, ου n territory, region,

neighbourhood, vicinity

They prefer their pigs to Jesus.

Mark 5:18

καὶ ἐμβαίνοντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον παρεκάλει αὐτὸν ὁ δαίμονισθεὶς ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾗ.

ἐμβαίνω get into, embark

δαίμονισθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s

δαίμονιζομαι

ᾗ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

"ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾗ echoes the phrase used to denote the special role of the Twelve in 3:14." France.

Mark 5:19

καὶ οὐκ ἀφήκεν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ λέγει αὐτῷ·

Ἔπαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου πρὸς τοὺς σοὺς, καὶ ἀπάγγειλον αὐτοῖς ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοι πεποίηκεν καὶ ἠλέησέν σε.

ἀφήκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφίημι allow, permit

ὑπάγω go, go one's way, depart

οἶκος, ου m house, home, family

σος, ση, σου possessive adj. your, yours

"A circle wider than the man's family is indicated." Taylor.

ἀπάγγελον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s
 ἀπαγγελλω see v.14
 ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, how much;
 pl. all

"The perfect πεποιηκεν denotes action the effects of which remain." Cranfield.

ἠλέησέν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἔλεαω and ἔλεεω be merciful, show kindness

"The reason for refusal is ... that this man has an opportunity, which is uniquely his, to spread the news of what God is doing through Jesus of Nazareth among those who have known what he was before, and who therefore cannot ignore the dramatic change which has resulted from his dramatic encounter with Jesus. In emphasising this motivation Mark no doubt expects his readers to understand that the same principle applies to others whose lives Jesus has changed, even in less dramatic circumstances...

"The contrast with Jesus' command to silence in 1:44 (and subsequently in 5:43; 7:36; 8:26) is striking, and prompts the question why Jesus is so keen to avoid publicity among Jews but has no objection to Gentiles hearing about his miracles. This is, of course, part of the whole enigma of the theme of secrecy in Mark. But if it is true that publicity among the Jews posed a risk not only of inconvenient popular enthusiasm (cf. 1:45-2:2) but also of a misguided popular assessment of his messianic role (see further on 8:30), in Gentile territory this risk did not exist, since it was far from the scene of Jesus' regular ministry, and there was no ready-made messianic expectation to contend with. Since this was not an area where Jesus himself would be preaching, it is appropriate that the news of God's new initiative in Jesus should be announced there by one of the local people who had himself experienced its power." France.

Mark 5:20

καὶ ἀπῆλθεν καὶ ἤρξατο κηρύσσειν ἐν τῇ Δεκαπόλει ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ πάντες ἐθαύμαζον.

κηρυσσω preach, proclaim

"Decapolis was the territory of a league of free Greek cities originally at any rate ten in number, under the protection of the Roman governor of Syria. According to Pliny the Elder the cities were Damascus, Raphana, Dion, Canatha, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippos, Pella, Gerasa and Philadelphia."

θαυμάζω wonder, be amazed

"The man's proclamation produces amazement, but we are not told whether it had more lasting effect. The next time Jesus appears in Decapolis, however, he will be expected to heal, and the result will be further proclamation and further astonishment (7:31-37). Already the foundation has been laid for the extension to the Gentiles of the ministry and mission of the Jewish Messiah (13:10; 14:9)." France.

Mark 5:21-29

Cf. Mt 9:18-26; Lk 8:40-56.

"The sequence of incidents around the lake (see on 4:35-5:43) reaches its climax with a narrative unit in which two miracles occur, in the second of which the revelation of Jesus ἐξουσία reaches a new height with the raising of the dead. Following his control over wind and water and over the most intimidating of demonic power, this pericope leaves the reader with the impression that nothing can be impossible for Jesus, and the question Τις ἄρα οὗτος ἐστίν; (4:41) becomes ever more insistent." France.

Mark 5:21

Καὶ διαπεράσαντος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ πάλιν εἰς τὸ πέραν συνήχθη ὄχλος πολὺς ἐπ' αὐτόν, καὶ ἦν παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν.

διαπεραω CROSS OVER

Cranfield says that ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ should probably be omitted with p⁴⁵ D Θ f1 28 it sy^s. The majority of the UBS Committee thought the omission in some MSS either accidental or an assimilation to Luke 8:40.

παλιν again, once more

περαν see 4:35

Here presumably means the west side of the lake.

συνήχθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl συναγω gather, gather together, assemble
 θαλασσα, ης f sea

Mark 5:22

καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τῶν ἀρχισυναγῶγων, ὀνόματι Ἰάϊρος, καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν πίπτει πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
 ἀρχισυναγωγος, ου m president of the
 synagogue

"The ἀρχισυναγωγος ... was the lay official responsible for the supervision of the synagogue building and the arrangements for the services, but the designation was sometimes used as an honorary title for distinguished members of the synagogue." Cranfield. France thinks that the plural indicates Jairus was one of the elders of the synagogue.

ὄνομα, τος n name

Some have suggested that ὄνοματι Ἴατρος should be omitted (so, tentatively, Cranfield). Metzger argues that the evidence for omission is small (D and a few Old Latin MSS) and that the words should be included.

ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω see
πιπτω fall, fall down, fall to one's knees
πόδας Noun, acc pl πους, ποδος m foot

"In his anxiety for his daughter he forgets his dignity and takes the position of a suppliant before Jesus." Cranfield.

Mark 5:23

καὶ παρακαλεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ λέγων ὅτι Τὸ
θυγάτριόν μου ἐσχάτως ἔχει, ἵνα ἐλθῶν ἐπιθῆς
τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῇ ἵνα σωθῆ καὶ ζήσῃ.

παρακαλεω see v.10
θυγατριον, ου n little daughter
ἐσχάτως finally; ἐ. ἐχω be dying, be very
sick

"A colloquial expression for being 'at death's door'." Cranfield.

ἐπιθῆς Verb, aor act subj, 2 s ἐπιτιθημι
place on, place, put
χειρ, χειρος f hand
σωθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s σωζω save,
rescue, heal
ζαω live, be alive

Mark 5:24

καὶ ἀπῆλθεν μετ' αὐτοῦ.
Καὶ ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ ὄχλος πολὺς, καὶ
συνέθλιβον αὐτόν.

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany
συνέθλιβω crowd, press upon

Mark 5:25

καὶ γυνὴ οὖσα ἐν ῥύσει αἵματος δώδεκα ἔτη

"This and the next two verses contain an example of something very rare in Mk, a long sentence built up by means of subordinate participial clauses." Cranfield.

γυνη, αικος f woman
ῥυσις, εως f flow
αἷμα, ατος f blood
δωδεκα twelve
ἔτη Noun, nom & acc pl ἔτος, ους n year

"See Lev 15:25-30, according to which this complaint renders a woman unclean so long as it lasts." Cranfield.

"Menstrual impurity is a prominent concern in the OT (especially Lv. 15:19-33) and was later to become the subject of the whole tractate of the Mishnah (*Niddah*; cf. also *Zabim*); defilement through contact with even a normally menstruant woman must be scrupulously avoided. This woman's long and fruitless search for a cure was therefore motivated not only by physical distress but by her social and religious isolation." France.

Mark 5:26

καὶ πολλὰ παθοῦσα ὑπὸ πολλῶν ἰατρῶν καὶ
δαπανήσασα τὰ παρ' αὐτῆς πάντα καὶ μηδὲν
ὠφεληθεῖσα ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εἰς τὸ χεῖρον
ἐλθοῦσα,

παθοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s πασχω
suffer

ὑπο here = 'at the hands of'

ἰατρος, ου m physician, doctor

δαπανήσασα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s
δαπαναω spend

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing;

μηδεν adverb not at all, in no way

ὠφεληθεῖσα Verb, aor pass ptc, f nom s
ὠφελεω gain, profit

μαλλον adv more; rather, instead

χειρων, ον gen ονος worse, more severe
(εἰς το χ. ἐρχομαι grow worse).

ἐλθοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s ἐρχομαι

Mark 5:27

ἀκούσασα περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλθοῦσα ἐν τῷ
ὄχλῳ ὀπισθεν ἤψατο τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ.

ἀκούσασα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s ἀκουω

[τα] περὶ του Ἰησου "Either 'the reports concerning Jesus' (so Taylor – and this suits ἀκουσασα well), or else 'the deeds of Jesus' or 'the events in which Jesus had been concerned'." Cranfield.

ὀπισθεν adv. behind, from behind

"Her desire for secrecy was dictated, not only by natural modesty, but by the fact that her complaint made her permanently ritually unclean so that she was generally shunned." Cranfield.

ἄπτω light; midd. take hold of, touch
ἱματιον, ου n clothing, robe, cloak

Mark 5:28

ἔλεγεν γὰρ ὅτι Ἐὰν ἄψωμαι κἂν τῶν ἱματίων
αὐτοῦ σωθήσομαι.

ἔλεγεν here = 'she said [to herself]' i.e. 'she thought'.

ἐάν if, even if

ἄψωμαι Verb, aor midd subj, 1 s ἄπτω

καὶ (καὶ ἐάν) even if, and if, even

σωθήσομαι Verb, fut pass indic, 1 s σωζω
see v.23

Mark 5:29

καὶ εὐθὺς ἐξηράνθη ἡ πηγὴ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτῆς,
καὶ ἔγνω τῷ σώματι ὅτι ἴαται ἀπὸ τῆς
μάστιγος.

ἐξηράνθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ξηραίνω
dry up

πηγῆ, ἡς f spring; flow (π. του αἵματος
hemorrhage, severe bleeding)

Cf. Lev 12:7

ἔγνω Verb, aor act indic, 3 s γινωσκω

σώμα, τος n body

ἴαται Verb, perf pass indic, 2 s ἰαομαι heal,
cure, restore

ἴαται "The perfect indicates that the
consequences remain." Cranfield.

μαστιξ, ἰγος f whip, beating with a whip,
illness, disease

Mark 5:30

καὶ εὐθὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐπιγνοὺς ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν ἐξ
αὐτοῦ δύναμιν ἐξεληθοῦσαν ἐπιστραφεὶς ἐν τῷ
ὄχλῳ ἔλεγεν· Τίς μου ἤψατο τῶν ἱματίων;

ἐπιγνοὺς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

ἐπιγινωσκω perceive, recognise

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

ἐξεληθοῦσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl

ἐξερχομαι

"The words need careful translation. ἐξ αὐτοῦ
qualifies δυναμιν, it does not go with
ἐξεληθοῦσαν. So trans. with R.V.: 'that the
power proceeding from him had gone forth.'
Cranfield.

"The sequence might suggest an almost
mechanical sense of physical 'transfer' of
δυναμις from one body to the other (cf. Lk.
6:19, where in response to a touch δυναμις παρ
αὐτοῦ ἐξηρχετο καὶ ἰατο παντας), though Mark
is careful to counter this impression both by
stressing that it was not mere physical contact
that mattered (since many others were pressing
against Jesus at this time) and that the basis of
this healing, as in other synoptic miracles, is in
fact πίστις (v. 34). Underlying the physical
contact is a 'transaction' at a deeper level. It is
this that takes the woman herself by surprise
when she finds that what she planned as a
secret one-way contact proves in fact to be
two-way, and is thus brought into the open."
France.

ἐπιστραφεὶς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s

ἐπιστρεφω turn round, turn

ἄπτω see v.27

Cranfield says, "A good many earlier
commentators (including Calvin) think that
Jesus knew all the time who had touched him
and asked simply to make her confess her
faith. It is more likely that he did not know,
and sought the information, not because he
wished to make the miracle conspicuous –
which would be inconsistent with his
injunction to secrecy – but because he desired
to draw away from his clothes to himself an
imperfect faith which was seeking his help
apart from a personal relationship with
himself."

Mark 5:31

καὶ ἔλεγον αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ· Βλέπεις
τὸν ὄχλον συνθλιβοντά σε, καὶ λέγεις· Τίς μου
ἤψατο;

μαθητης, ου m disciple, follower

βλεπω see, look, be able to see

συνθλιβοντά Verb, pres act ptc, m acc s & n
nom/acc pl συνθλιβω see v.24

"The disciples' disrespectful protest (softened
by Luke and omitted in Mt.) is evidence of the
reliability of the source Mark is using."
Cranfield.

Mark 5:32

καὶ περιεβλέπετο ἰδεῖν τὴν τοῦτο ποιήσασαν.

περιβλεπομαι look around

ἰδεῖν Verb, aor act infin ὄραω see

ποιήσασαν Verb, aor act ptc, f acc s ποιεω

Mark 5:33

ἡ δὲ γυνὴ φοβηθεῖσα καὶ τρέμουσα, εἰδυῖα ὃ
γέγονεν αὐτῇ, ἦλθεν καὶ προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ καὶ
εἶπεν αὐτῷ πάσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.

φοβηθεῖσα Verb, aor pass dep ptc, f nom s

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

τρεμω tremble, be afraid, fear

εἰδυῖα Verb, perf act ptc, f nom s οἶδα

know, understand

γέγονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s γινομαι

προσέπεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

προσπιπτω fall at someone's feet

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

Mark 5:34

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· Θυγάτηρ, ἡ πίστις σου
σέσωκέν σε· ὕπαγε εἰς εἰρήνην, καὶ ἴσθι ὑγιῆς
ἀπὸ τῆς μάστιγός σου.

θυγατηρ, τρος f daughter

"No one else in the gospels is addressed by
Jesus as θυγατηρ; the nearest parallel is the use
of τεκνον for the paralytic in 2:5. Here, as
there, the effect is to offer reassurance."
France.

πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief
 σέσωκέν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s σωζω
 save, heal

ὑπαγω go, go one's way, depart
 εἰρηνη, ης f peace

"The OT formula of reassurance and blessing, ὑπαγε εἰς εἰρήνην (cf. Jdg 18:6; 1 Sam 1:17; 2 Sam 15:9), confirms that she may now enjoy at last the shalom which she has long needed, and the further assurance ἴσθι ὑγιῆς ἀπὸ τῆς μάλιστα σου makes it clear that her cure is not a merely temporary remission." France.

ἴσθι Verb, pres imperat, 2 s εἰμι
 ὑγιῆς, ες sound, healthy, well, cured
 μαστιξ, γος f see v.29

"From this exhortation we infer that the benefit which she had obtained was fully ratified when she heard from the lips of Christ what she had already learned from experience: for we do not truly, or with a safe conscience, enjoy God's benefits in any other way than by possessing them as contained in the treasury of His promises." Calvin.

Mark 5:35

Ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος ἔρχονται ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρχισυναγώγου λέγοντες ὅτι Ἡ θυγάτηρ σου ἀπέθανεν· τί ἐτι σκύλλεις τὸν διδάσκαλον;

ἐτι still, yet

i.e. from his *home*

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνησκω
 die

σκυλλω trouble, annoy

Used here in the weakened sense of 'trouble'. The verb originally meant 'flay'.

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

Mark 5:36

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς παρακούσας τὸν λόγον λαλούμενον λέγει τῷ ἀρχισυναγώγῳ· Μὴ φοβοῦ, μόνον πίστευε.

παρακουω refuse to listen; pay no attention to; overhear

The verb could here mean 'ignore', but it is probably better to understand it in the sense 'overhear'. Most MSS read ἀκουσας but it is more likely that ἀκουω, as a more familiar verb, was substituted for παρακουω than vice versa.

λαλεω speak, talk

φοβεομαι see v.33

μονον adv only, alone

πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in), have confidence (in)

Mark 5:37

καὶ οὐκ ἀφῆκεν οὐδένα μετ' αὐτοῦ συνακολουθῆσαι εἰ μὴ τὸν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰακώβον καὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἰακώβου.

ἀφῆκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφημι allow, permit

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing

συνακολουθεω follow, accompany

"For these disciples as the inner circle of the Twelve cf. 9:2; 14:33, and (with the addition of Andrew) 13:3." Cranfield.

Mark 5:38

καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ ἀρχισυναγώγου, καὶ θεωρεῖ θόρυβον καὶ κλαίοντας καὶ ἀλαλάζοντας πολλά,

θεωρεω see, observe, notice

θορυβος, ου m confusion, disturbance

κλαιω weep, cry

ἀλαλαζω wail loudly

"καὶ κλαίοντας καὶ ἀλαλαζοντας πολλα explains θορυβον, to which it is in apposition." Cranfield. Cranfield thinks that, given the short time since the child's death, these were probably not professional mourners but members of the household. France comments that "The presence of noisy mourners is a clear indication that there was no doubt about the girl's death."

Mark 5:39

καὶ εἰσελθὼν λέγει αὐτοῖς· Τί θορυβεῖσθε καὶ κλαίετε; τὸ παιδίον οὐκ ἀπέθανεν ἀλλὰ καθεύδει.

θορυβεω set in uproar; pass be stirred up, be worried

παιδιον, ου n child

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνησκω
 die

καθευδω sleep

Having considered alternative interpretations, Cranfield says, "It is more natural to take the words to mean that, though she is dead, yet, since he is going to raise her up, her death will be no more permanent than sleep... For Mark, no doubt, the words had also – besides their particular significance in this context – a general significance, as a reminder to Christians that death is not the last word but a sleep from which Christ will wake us up at the last day, and therefore a rebuke to those who in the presence of death behave as those who have no hope."

Mark 5:40

καὶ κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ. αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκβαλὼν πάντας παραλαμβάνει τὸν πατέρα τοῦ παιδίου καὶ τὴν μητέρα καὶ τοὺς μετ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰσπορεύεται ὅπου ἦν τὸ παιδίον·

καταγελῶ laugh at

Jesus' words evoke derision.

ἐκβαλλῶ throw out, expel, cast out

παραλαμβάνω take

ὅπου adv. where

Mark 5:41

καὶ κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ παιδίου λέγει αὐτῇ· Ταλιθα κουμ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον· Τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε.

κρατέω hold, hold fast, sieze

ταλιθα (Aramaic word) girl, little girl

κουμ (Aramaic word) stand up

France comments, "Several variants have arisen owing to the unfamiliarity of the Aramaic words, and the chance similarity of ταλιθα to the name Ταβιθα in the raising formula in Acts 9:40. κουμ (κ Β C etc.) represents the masculine form of the imperative, which could be used for male or female subjects; the strictly feminine form κουμι in most later MSS and versions is probably a deliberate correction."

μεθερμηνεύω translate

"The original words were remembered and valued as being the actual words used by Jesus on a memorable occasion." Cranfield.

κορασιον, ου η girl

ἐγειρω raise, rise

Mark 5:42

καὶ εὐθὺς ἀνέστη τὸ κοράσιον καὶ περιεπάτει, ἦν γὰρ ἐτῶν δώδεκα. καὶ ἐξέστησαν εὐθὺς ἐκστάσει μεγάλῃ.

ἀνέστη Verb, 2 aor act indic, 3 s ἀνίστημι

rise, stand up, come back to life

περιπατέω walk, walk about, live

ἐτος, ους η year

δώδεκα twelve

"Looks like the sort of detail that someone who was present would remember: her age may well have been mentioned at the time." Cranfield.

ἐξίστημι be amazed, be surprised

Metzer comments on the UBS text, "It is exceedingly difficult to decide whether εὐθὺς was inserted by copyists in imitation of εὐθὺς in the previous sentence, or whether it was deleted as inappropriate and otiose."

ἐκστασις, εως f amazement

"In the LXX the dative of a cognate noun is used with a verb to represent the infinitive absolute used with a finite verb in Hebrew (e.g. Gen 2:16f.)." Cranfield.

Mark 5:43

καὶ διεστείλατο αὐτοῖς πολλὰ ἵνα μηδεὶς γνοῖ τοῦτο, καὶ εἶπεν δοθῆναι αὐτῇ φαγεῖν.

διεστείλατο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s

διαστελλομαι order, command, give strict orders

γνοῖ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s γινωσκω

δοθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin δίδωμι

φαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐσθιω eat

"A vivid detail. The practical thoughtfulness of Jesus was remembered." Cranfield.

Mark 6:1-6a

Cf. Mt 13:53-58; Lk 4:16-30.

"The triumphal progress of Jesus through the recent part of the narrative (since the explanatory discourse of chapter 4) is in danger of leaving the reader with a false sense of security. One after another the forces of wind and water, demonic possession, illness, and even death have yielded to his authority. Forgetting the picture of divided response in chapters 2-3, the reader may be beginning to feel there is something almost automatic about the 'success' of Jesus. This pericope therefore serves to redress the balance, and to remind us that the effect of his ἐξουσία cannot be taken for granted. If πιστις has been the key to at least some of the preceding miracles of deliverance (4:40; 5:34, 36), what is to be expected where it is absent?" France.

Mark 6:1

Καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκεῖθεν, καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τὴν πατρίδα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀκολουθοῦσιν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.

ἐκεῖθεν from there

πατρις, ιδος f native country, own town

Presumably Nazareth.

ἀκολουθοῦσιν Verb, pres act ptc, m/n dat pl

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany

"A detail dropped in Mt., but important for Mark, because in this part of the gospel he is concerned with their training. Their Master's rejection by his fellow townsmen was a valuable lesson for them, could they but grasp it." Cranfield.

Mark 6:2

καὶ γενομένου σαββάτου ἤρξατο διδάσκειν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ· καὶ οἱ πολλοὶ ἀκούοντες ἐξεπλήσσοντο λέγοντες· Πόθεν τούτω ταῦτα, καὶ τίς ἡ σοφία ἢ δοθεῖσα τούτω, καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις τοιαῦται διὰ τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ γινόμεναι;

σαββατον, ου n (often in pl) the seventh day, Sabbath
ἀρχω midd begin
διδασκω teach

Cf. 1:21ff, 39; 3:1ff. "The invitation to teach in the synagogue reveals at first a degree of goodwill, or at least the recognition that Jesus is now a person of significance." France.

ἐκπλησσομαι be amazed
ποθεν interrog adv. from where, how
σοφια, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence
δοθεῖσα Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s δίδωμι
τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind

There are several variants here but none affect the sense; all include both wisdom and acts of power as the basis for the response.

Mark 6:3

οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τέκτων, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς Μαρίας καὶ ἀδελφὸς Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωσήτος καὶ Ἰούδα καὶ Σίμωνος; καὶ οὐκ εἰσὶν αἱ ἀδελφαὶ αὐτοῦ ὧδε πρὸς ἡμᾶς; καὶ ἐσκανδαλίζοντο ἐν αὐτῷ.

τεκτων, ονος m wood-craftsman, carpenter

"τεκτων is used predominantly of workers in wood, though it can be applied to craftsmen of other sorts, such as masons, sculptors, or smiths. In a small village the τεκτων would need to be versatile, able to deal both with agricultural and other implements and also with the construction and repair of buildings. As such he was a significant figure in the village economy, probably also undertaking skilled work in the surrounding area." France.

"All uncials, many minuscules, and important early versions read "is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary...?" Objection was early felt to this description of Jesus as carpenter, and several witnesses (including p⁴⁵) assimilate the text to Mt 13:55 and read, "Is not this the son of the carpenter, the son of Mary...?" The Palestinian Syriac achieves the same result by omitting ὁ τεκτων." Metzger.

The absence of any reference to Joseph may suggest that he had died before Jesus began his ministry.

Ἰούδα Noun, gen s Ἰουδας
ἀδελφη, ης f sister
ὧδε adv here, in this place

σκανδαλιζω cause (someone) to sin, cause (someone) to give up the faith

"The meaning here is not just that they were provoked by him; there is also present the idea that to reject Jesus is to turn away from God." Cranfield.

Mark 6:4

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι Οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς συγγενεῦσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ.

προφητης, ου m prophet
ἀτιμος, ον unhonoured, dishonoured, despised
εἰ μη except
συγγενεῦσιν Noun, dat pl συγγενης, ους m relative, fellow-countryman

A proverbial saying, similar to our "familiarity breeds contempt."

Mark 6:5

καὶ οὐκ ἐδύνατο ἐκεῖ ποιῆσαι οὐδεμίαν δύναμιν, εἰ μὴ ὀλίγοις ἀρρώστοις ἐπιθεις τὰς χεῖρας ἐθεράπευσεν·

ἐκεῖ there, in that place
ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω
οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing

"Mt 13:58 rightly explains the οὐκ ἐδύνατο by reference to the ἀπιστία of the people. The point of οὐκ ἐδύνατο is not that Jesus was powerless apart from men's faith, but that in the absence of faith he could not work mighty works *in accordance with the purpose of his ministry*; for to have worked miracles when faith was absent would, in most cases anyway, have been merely to have aggravated men's guilt and hardened them against God." Cranfield.

ὀλιγος, η, ον little, small; pl. few
ἀρρωστος, ον sick, ill
ἐπιθεις Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἐπιτιθημι
place on, place, put
θεραπευω heal, cure; serve

"There is a delightful irony in the juxtaposition of the two clauses of this verse: for most people the healing of a few invalids by laying hands on them would hardly constitute οὐδεμίαν δύναμιν." France.

Mark 6:6a

καὶ ἐθαύμαζεν διὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν.
θαυμαζω wonder, be amazed

"Only here and in Mt 8:10=Lk 7:9 is θαυμάζειν used of Jesus. He marvels at the *Gentile* centurion's faith: here he marvels at the lack of faith of those who most of all ought to have had it." Cranfield.

ἀπιστία, ας f unbelief

Mark 6:6b-13

Cf. Mt 9:35, 10:1,9-11; Lk 9:1-6. "When Jesus called fishermen as his first disciples (1:16-20), he promised them that they would soon be fishing for people. When he selected the Twelve, it was in order that 'they might be with him and that he might send them out ...' (3:14-15). The first part of that job description (being with him) has been amply fulfilled in the story since then; wherever Jesus has gone the disciples (or at least some of them, 5:37) have gone with him, their presence being noted even when they contribute nothing to the events recorded (as in 6:1)... This second aspect of the disciples' job description is the subject of the next section of the story. In 6:7-13 they are sent out, and in 6:30 they report back to Jesus." France.

Mark 6:6b

Καὶ περιῆγεν τὰς κόμας κύκλῳ διδάσκων.

Cranfield argues that the second half of verse 6 belongs with what follows, not with what precedes it.

περιῆγεν Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl
 περιᾶγω go around
 κώμη, ης f village, small town
 κύκλῳ adv in a circle, round about

"κύκλῳ indicates that he remained in the hill country around Nazareth rather than returning yet to the lake." France.

Mark 6:7

καὶ προσκαλεῖται τοὺς δώδεκα, καὶ ἤρξατο αὐτοὺς ἀποστέλλειν δύο δύο, καὶ ἐδίδου αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν ἀκαθάρτων,

προσκαλεομαι call to oneself, summon
 δώδεκα twelve
 ἀποστελλω send, send out

"The time of their preliminary training is over." Cranfield.

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυσιν two; δύο δυο in pairs

The repetition is perhaps Semitic (e.g. Gen 7:8-9). Jeremias suggests that the OT requirement of at least two witnesses to establish legal testimony (Dt 17:6 etc.) suggested the need for two messengers to support one another's message.

ἐδίδου Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s διδομι
 ἐξουσία, ας f authority, power
 ἀκαθάρτος, ον unclean

"What has hitherto been a special mark of the ἐξουσία of Jesus (1:27; 3:11) is now to be shared with those who have been μετ αὐτοῦ (3:14-15)." France.

Mark 6:8

καὶ παρήγγειλεν αὐτοῖς ἵνα μὴδὲν αἴρωσιν εἰς ὁδὸν εἰ μὴ ῥάβδον μόνον, μὴ ἄρτον, μὴ πήραν, μὴ εἰς τὴν ζώνην χαλκόν,

παραγγελλω command, instruct
 μὴδεις, μὴδεμια, μὴδεν no one, nothing
 αἶρω take, take up, take away
 ὁδος, ου f way, road, journey
 ῥαβδος, ου f stick, rod, sceptre

"This exception is peculiar to Mk. In both Mt 10:10 and Lk 9:3 the staff is expressly forbidden." Cranfield. France comments, "Various reasons for the difference may be conjectured, either in terms of the context of writing (differing sociological contexts for the gospels or different lengths of mission envisaged) or arising from the process of tradition (including the possibility of a common source other than Mark for Matthew and Luke – a 'Mark-Q overlap'), but the disagreement about the staff remains unresolved."

μόνον adv only, alone

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food

"They are not to take provisions with them, but to rely on hospitality." Cranfield.

πίρα, ας f bag (either a traveller's or a beggar's bag)

ζώνη, ης f belt, money belt

χαλκος, ου m copper, bronze, copper coin

Mark 6:9

ἀλλὰ ὑποδεδεμένους σανδάλια, καὶ μὴ ἐνδύσησθε δύο χιτῶνας.

"As the list of instructions continues the syntax becomes increasingly ragged. The third-person indirect command of v. 8 (using ἵνα), with its extended series of objects, is followed by two coordinate clauses (introduced by ἀλλὰ and καὶ) in the first of which a participle does duty for a main verb while the subjunctive verb of the second (presumably still governed by ἵνα, though it could equally be a change to direct speech) has gone over to the second person. The style is unliturgical but quite intelligible as colloquial reported speech." France.

ὑποδεδεμένους Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc pl
 ὑποδοεμαι put on (ὑ. τους ποδας put on one's shoes)

σανδάλιον, ου n sandal

Cranfield points out that, "In Mt 10:10 and Lk 10:4 ὑποδηματα, which are not to be distinguished from σανδαλια, are forbidden." He continues, "As with the staff (in v.8) the stricter version is probably original, Mark having modified it in view of western conditions." France comments, "It is possible that the prohibition in Matthew and Luke is of carrying spare pairs (while the permission in Mark is specifically for *wearing* sandals), but that is certainly not the natural reading of the text, especially in Lk. 10:4."

ἐνδύω dress, clothe; midd put on, wear
 δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυοισιν two
 χιτων, ονος m tunic, shirt (generally of garment worn next to the skin); pl. clothes

An extra tunic could have been used for night time cover. They were to depend on the provision of lodging. France comments, "Jesus' intention in sending them out in this way is not so much to encourage asceticism as such (they are after all to expect and accept hospitality), but to emphasise that loyalty to the kingdom of God leaves no room for a prior attachment to material security."

Mark 6:10

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς: Ὅπου ἐὰν εἰσέλθητε εἰς οἰκίαν, ἐκεῖ μένετε ἕως ἂν ἐξέλθητε ἐκεῖθεν.

ὅπου adv. where
 ἐκεῖ there, in that place
 μένω trans remain, stay, abide
 ἕως ἂν until
 ἐξέλθητε Verb, 2 aor act subj, 2 pl ἐξερχομαι
 ἐκεῖθεν from there

"The point of v.10 is that, having once accepted a household's hospitality, they are not to dishonour it by moving elsewhere in the same village if more comfortable accommodation is offered. ἐκεῖ refers to the household, ἐκεῖθεν to the locality." Cranfield.

Mark 6:11

καὶ ὅς ἂν τόπος μὴ δέξηται ὑμᾶς μηδὲ ἀκούσωσιν ὑμῶν, ἐκπορευόμενοι ἐκεῖθεν ἐκτινάξατε τὸν χοῦν τὸν ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς.

ὅς ἂν whoever, whatever
 τόπος, ου m place
 δέξηται Verb, aor act subj, 3 s δεχομαι
 receive, accept, welcome
 μηδε negative particle nor
 ἐκπορευομαι go or come out
 ἐκτινάξατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl
 ἐκτινασσω shake off, shake out
 χοῦν Noun, acc s χους, χους m dust
 ὑποκατω prep with gen under, beneath

πους, ποδος m foot
 μαρτυριον, ου n testimony, witness

"The dust of a heathen land was carefully removed from the feet and clothing of pious Jews before re-entering Jewish territory, as something defiling (see Strack & Billerbeck I, p.571). So the significance of the action here enjoined is to declare the place which rejects them heathen. At the same time it gives warning that the missionaries have fulfilled their responsibility towards the place and henceforth the inhabitants must answer for themselves. Cf. Acts 18:6 where the shaking off of the dust is accompanied by the words, 'Your blood be upon your own heads'." Cranfield. See also, Acts 13:51.

Mark 6:12

Καὶ ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν ἵνα μετανοῶσιν, ἐκήρυξαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl κηρυσσω
 preach, proclaim
 μετανοῶσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl
 μετανοεω repent, turn from one's sins

"Even though not included explicitly in Jesus' charge in v. 7, proclamation (κηρυσσω) is an essential element in the disciples' commission (3:14), just as it is in Jesus' own ministry (1:14, 38-39)." France.

"The purpose of the mission was, we may assume, to bring the summons to repentance in view of the nearness of the kingdom of God to as many people as possible in Galilee... The urgency of their mission was the urgency which in all circumstances appertains to the message of God." Cranfield.

Mark 6:13

καὶ δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλλον, καὶ ἤλειπον ἐλαίῳ πολλοὺς ἄρρωστούς καὶ ἐθεράπευον.
 δαιμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit
 ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out
 ἀλειφω anoint
 ἐλαιον, ου n olive oil, oil

"Oil was widely used in the ancient world as a medicament (Isa 1:6; Lk 10:34 [; cf. Jas 5:14], Rabbinic literature, Josephus, etc.); but its use by the Twelve was probably symbolic rather than medical in intention." Cranfield. "... a visible token of spiritual grace, by which the healing that was administered by them was declared to proceed from the secret power of God." Calvin.

ἄρρωστος, ου sick, ill
 θεραπευω heal, cure

Mark 6:14-8:26

This section of the Gospel sees Jesus seeking to withdraw from the crowds and direct his attention rather to his disciples.

For verses 14-16, cf. Mt 14:1-2; Lk 9:7-9.

Mark 6:14

Καὶ ἤκουσεν ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἡρώδης, φανερὸν γὰρ ἐγένετο τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔλεγον ὅτι Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτίζων ἐγίγερται ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐνεργοῦσιν αἱ δυνάμεις ἐν αὐτῷ·

βασιλευς, εως m king

Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. He was tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea from his father's death in 4 BC till AD 39. The title 'king' is not technically correct. It could, perhaps, have been used sarcastically or may rather reflect the self-view or aspiration of Herod.

φανερος, α, ον known, evident, plain
ὄνομα, τος n name, title, person

Here bears the sense 'fame'. We are not told explicitly what it was that Herod heard, but this clause implies that it was of Jesus' reputation.

ἔλεγον "The third person plural read by B W ... is almost certainly right, though the singular, ἔλεγεν is very much better attested." Cranfield. The plural makes this phrase the beginning of reports on *public* perception regarding Jesus rather than that of Herod. It would have been natural for copyists to alter the verb into the singular to agree with ἤκουσεν.

ἐγίγερται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω
raise

νεκρος, α, ον dead
ἐνεργεω work, be at work (in)

Probably in a sense similar to the transfer of the spirit of Elijah to his companion Elisha (cf. 2 Kings 2:15).

Mark 6:15

ἄλλοι δὲ ἔλεγον ὅτι Ἡλίας ἐστίν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἔλεγον ὅτι προφήτης ὡς εἷς τῶν προφητῶν.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
Ἡλιας, ου m Elijah

προθητης ὡς εἷς τῶν προθητων 'a prophet like one of the (old) prophets' (Taylor). "The consensus is clearly that Jesus is a prophet, but just how he fits into that ancient category is a matter of rather wild speculation." France.

Mark 6:16

ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἡρώδης ἔλεγεν· Ὅν ἐγὼ ἀπεκεφάλισα Ἰωάννην, οὗτος ἠγέρθη.

The sentence broken off in v. 14 is resumed.

ἀποκεφαλίζω behead
ἠγέρθη Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω

Mark 6:17-29

Cf. Mt 14:3-12; Lk 3:19f. The previous verse provides an excuse for this 'digression,' relating the story of John's death. However, as France notes, "The 'sandwiching' of this story within the account of the disciples' mission, and following the discussion of Jesus' identity, is intended to tie the fate of John in with the Jesus story as a foretaste of what 'another John' must expect (note how the four references in Mark to Ἡρώδης and to Ἡρωδαιοι, 3:6; 6:14-29; 8:15 and 12:12 all imply hostility and threat to the work of God). Jesus' mission has been seen as in continuity with that of John since 1:7-11, 14-15; and the link will be made clearer in 9:11-13 and especially in 11:27-33. So while the story has its own interest as providing the conclusion to the earlier account of John (left tantalisingly unfinished in 1:14), it also serves to set the scene within which Jesus will approach his own confrontation with authority."

Mark 6:17

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ Ἡρώδης ἀποστείλας ἐκράτησεν τὸν Ἰωάννην καὶ ἔδησεν αὐτὸν ἐν φυλακῇ διὰ Ἡρωδιάδα τὴν γυναῖκα Φιλίππου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι αὐτὴν ἐγάμησεν·

ἀποστελλω send, send out
κρατεω hold, hold fast, sieze

These verbs "should be translated as pluperfects." Cranfield.

δεω bind, tie
φυλακη, ης f prison

"According to Josephus, Ant 18:119, John was imprisoned and executed in the fortress of Machaerus (to the east of the Dead Sea in the southeasternmost part of Peraea)." Cranfield.

Ἡρωδίας, αδος f Herodias

"If by 'Philip' Philip the Tetrarch is meant, this contradicts Josephus who says (Ant 18:136) that Herodias was married to Herod the son of Herod the Great and Marianne II. Philip the Tetrarch actually married Salome. It would seem that either Mark is mistaken, or that Herod to whom Herodias was married had also the name Philip." Cranfield. France comments, "There is considerable obscurity surrounding both the relationships and the names of the Herod family (particularly since the name 'Herod' seems to have been used both as a personal name for certain members of the family and as a family name for all), and it is possible that the Herod who was Herodias's first husband also bore the personal name Philip, as did her son-in-law."

γαμεω marry

Mark 6:18

ἔλεγεν γὰρ ὁ Ἰωάννης τῷ Ἡρώδῃ ὅτι Οὐκ ἔξεστί σοι ἔχειν τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.

ἔλεγεν 'had been saying'

ἔξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is lawful, it is proper

"We behold in John an illustrious example of that moral courage, which all pious teachers ought to possess, not to hesitate to incur the wrath of the great and powerful, as often as it may be found necessary: for he, with whom there is acceptance of persons, does not honestly serve God." Calvin.

Mark 6:19

ἡ δὲ Ἡρωδιάς ἐνεῖχεν αὐτῷ καὶ ἠθέλεν αὐτὸν ἀποκτεῖναι, καὶ οὐκ ἠδύνατο·

France comments that verses 19-20 "set up the contrast, strongly reminiscent of the story of Ahab and Jezebel (whose 'target' was, of course, John's model Elijah), which the rest of the story will work out between a resolutely hostile Herodias and a wavering Antipas, who will eventually be tricked into pronouncing sentence against his better judgment. The parallel with Pilate's ineffectual resistance to the determined hostility of the priests in 15:1-15 is remarkable, yet another indication of Mark's desire to link together the fates of John and of Jesus (note how Pilate will in 15:14 by implication echo with regard to Jesus Antipas's view of John as δικαίος καὶ ἅγιος)."

ἐνεῖχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἐνεχῶ

have a grudge against, be hostile to

ἠθέλεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s θελω

wish, will

ἀποκτεῖναι Verb, aor act infin ἀποκτείνω

and ἀποκτενῶ kill, put to death

ἠδύνατο Verb, imperf midd/pass indic, 3 s
δύναμαι be able to, be capable of

Mark 6:20

ὁ γὰρ Ἡρώδης ἐφοβεῖτο τὸν Ἰωάννην, εἰδὼς αὐτὸν ἄνδρα δίκαιον καὶ ἅγιον, καὶ συνετήρει αὐτόν, καὶ ἀκούσας αὐτοῦ πολλὰ ἠπόρει, καὶ ἠδέως αὐτοῦ ἤκουεν.

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

εἰδὼς Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s οἶδα

know

ἄνδρα Noun, acc s ἄνηρ, ἄνδρος m man

δικαίος, α, ον righteous, just

ἅγιος, α, ον holy

συντηρεω keep safe

ἀπορεω act & midd be at a loss, be disturbed

"The support for ἠπορει, though numerically weak, is strong in quality, and intrinsically this reading is more likely [than ἐπιχειρῶ which is read by the majority of Greek MSS]. ἠπορει vividly describes Herod's moral weakness." Cranfield. France comments, "Elsewhere in the NT ἀπορεω is used in the middle (hence W ἠπορευετο), and the unfamiliarity of the form may have led to the correction to ἐπιχειρῶ in the majority of MSS."

ἠδέως gladly

"The implication is that, like Felix with another prisoner later (Acts 24:24-26), he was at least open to persuasion; but he remained confused and undecided." France.

Mark 6:21

Καὶ γενομένης ἡμέρας εὐκαιροῦ ὅτε Ἡρώδης τοῖς γενεσίοις αὐτοῦ δεῖπνον ἐποίησεν τοῖς μεγιστᾶσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῖς χιλιάρχοις καὶ τοῖς πρώτοις τῆς Γαλιλαίας,

εὐκαιρος, ον suitable, timely

'opportune' – probably means for Herodias and her purposes.

ὅτε conj when, at which time

γενεσια, ον n pl birthday celebration

δειπνον, ου n feast, banquet, supper

μεγισταν, ανος m person of high status

χιλιάρχος, ου m commander (a high ranking military officer generally in charge of 600-1000 men)

πρωτος, η, ον leading, prominent

"There was a palace as well as a prison in the fortress of Machaerus, and presumably, though it was certainly a long way from Galilee, if Herod was resident there, he would be surrounded by his courtiers. It certainly seems to be implied (vv 27f) that John was imprisoned close at hand." Cranfield.

Mark 6:22

καὶ εἰσελθούσης τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς τῆς Ἡρωδιάδος καὶ ὀρχησαμένης καὶ ἀρεσάσης τῷ Ἡρώδῃ καὶ τοῖς συνακαειμένοις, εἶπεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τῷ κορασίῳ· Αἴτησόν με ὃ ἐὰν θέλῃς, καὶ δώσω σοι·

εἰσελθούσης Verb, aor act ptc, f gen s
εἰσερχομαι enter, come in
θυγατηρ, τρος f daughter

There are textual difficulties here. The chief variants are:

- i) θυγατρος αὐτῆς τῆς Ἡρωδιαδος A C W Θ and the majority of Greek MSS and vg syr^h;
- ii) θυγατρος αὐτου Ἡρωδιαδος κ B D L Δ 565;
- iii) θυγατρος τῆς Ἡρωδιαδος f1 22 131 it (some mss) syr^{s-p} etc.

"According to (ii) the girl is herself named Herodias and is described as Herod's daughter. But in v.24 she is Herodias' daughter. Herodias had a daughter called Salome, but she was not Herod's daughter; and the narrative does not seem to allow for the union between Herod and Herodias to have been long-standing enough for there to be a daughter sufficiently old by it. So most commentators accept reading (i)." Cranfield.

France suggests that αὐτου "represents an early error. This might derive from a careless scribe who was puzzled by the intrusive αὐτῆς and mechanically altered it to αὐτου, thus producing a smoother text without realising what violence it did to the narrative in context. The majority reading, αὐτῆς (τῆς) Ἡρωδιαδος, is therefore to be preferred."

ὀρχησαμένης Verb, aor midd dep ptc, f gen s
ὀρχεομαι dance

ἤρεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀρεσκω
please

συνακαειμαι sit at table with, eat with
κορασιον, ου n girl

αἴτησόν Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s αἰτεω
ask, request

ὃ ἐὰν whatever

θελω see v.19

δώσω Verb, fut act indic, 1 s δίδωμι

Mark 6:23

καὶ ὤμοσεν αὐτῇ· Ὅτι ἐὰν με αἰτήσῃς δώσω σοι ἕως ἡμίσεως τῆς βασιλείας μου.

ὤμοσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὀμνῶ and ὀμνυμι swear, make an oath

France comments, "The adverbial addition of πολλα here is not very elegant, but typical of Mark (cf. v. 20 and 3:12; 5:10, 23, 38, 43, etc.); its absence from the majority of MSS is an obvious stylistic improvement."

ἡμισυς, εια, υ gen ἡμισους half

Cf. Esth 5:3,6 also 1 Kings 13:8.

Mark 6:24

καὶ ἐξελθοῦσα εἶπεν τῇ μητρὶ αὐτῆς· Τί αἰτήσωμαι; ἢ δὲ εἶπεν· Τὴν κεφαλὴν Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτίζοντος.

ἐξελθοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s
ἐξερχομαι

Of αἰτησωμαι Cranfield says "It is possible, though not certain, that a distinction is intended between the middle used here and the active in vv 22 and 23. If so, the meaning here would be 'claim', there being now a sort of business relationship since the king's promise."

κεφαλη, ης f head

Mark 6:25

καὶ εἰσελθοῦσα εὐθὺς μετὰ σπουδῆς πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα ἠτήσατο λέγουσα· Θέλω ἵνα ἐξαυτῆς δῶς μοι ἐπὶ πίνακι τὴν κεφαλὴν Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ.

σπουδη, ης f eagerness, zeal, haste
ἐξαυτῆς adv immediately, at once
δῶς Verb, aor act subj, 2 s δίδωμι
πιναξ, ακος f plate, platter, dish

"The grim ἐπι πινακι seems to be her own idea." Cranfield.

Mark 6:26

καὶ περίλυπος γενόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς διὰ τοὺς ὄρκους καὶ τοὺς ἀνακειμένους οὐκ ἠθέλησεν ἀθετῆσαι αὐτήν·

περιλυπος, ον very sad, deeply distressed

"A strong word only used again in Mk in 14:34." Cranfield.

γενόμενος Verb, aor ptc, m nom s γινομαι

ὄρκος, ου m oath, vow

ἀνακειμαι be seated at table, be a dinner
guest

ἀθετεω reject, set aside, refuse

Mark 6:27

καὶ εὐθὺς ἀποστείλας ὁ βασιλεὺς σπεκουλάτορα ἐπέταξεν ἐνέγκαι τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ. καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἀπεκεφάλισεν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ

ἀποστελλω send, send out

σπεκουλατωρ, ορος m soldier on special
duty, executioner

A Latinism.

ἐπέταξεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐπιτασσω
command, order

ἐνέγκαι Verb, aor act infin φερω bring

ἀποκεφαλιζω behead

φυλακη, ης f prison

Mark 6:28

καὶ ἤνεγκεν τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πίνακι καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν τῷ κορασίῳ, καὶ τὸ κοράσιον ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν τῇ μητρὶ αὐτῆς.

κορασιον, ου n see v.22

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

Mark 6:29

καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἦλθον καὶ ἦσαν τὸ πτώμα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔθηκαν αὐτὸ ἐν μνημείῳ.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἔρχομαι
αἶρω take, take up

πτωμα, τος n body, corpse

ἔθηκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s τιθεμι place
μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb

Cf. Lk 9:8 for Herod's later fears; also Mt 14:12 for John's disciples informing Jesus of what had happened.

Mark 6:30

Καὶ συνάγονται οἱ ἀπόστολοι πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν αὐτῷ πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησαν καὶ ὅσα ἐδίδαξαν.

συναγω gather (together), assemble

ἀποστολος occurs only here in Mk. Cranfield suggests that ἀποστολος in the NT is the general equivalent of the Hebrew *saliah* which, in Rabbinic Hebrew "denotes an authorised agent or representative." Taylor thinks that the term is not used here as an official title but means simply 'the missionaries'. France similarly says, "The noun echoes the verb ἀποστελλω [of verse 7] and in 3:14, and is used in its more etymological sense of 'those sent out'." But Cranfield says, "it seems rather unlikely that on this one occasion when he does use the word he would use it of the Twelve without having in mind the technical sense which it commonly had by the time he was writing."

ἀπήγγειλαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl

ἀπαγγελλω announce, proclaim

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

διδασκω teach

"The change of verb from κηρυσσω in v. 12 to διδασκω here is a warning against positing too clear a distinction between the two verbs; both refer to the verbal communication of God's message." France.

Mark 6:31

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Δεῦτε ὑμεῖς αὐτοὶ κατ' ἰδίαν εἰς ἔρημον τόπον καὶ ἀναπαύσασθε ὀλίγον. ἦσαν γὰρ οἱ ἐρχόμενοι καὶ οἱ ὑπάγοντες πολλοί, καὶ οὐδὲ φαγεῖν εὐκαίρουν.

"Having discharged a temporary commission, they went back to school to make greater advances in learning." Calvin.

δευτε adv. come (of command or exhortation)

France comments, "ὕμεις αὐτοὶ is unusually emphatic, and places the focus on the need of the disciples themselves: they have been serving others; now they themselves need to be cared for."

κατ' ἰδιαν privately

ἐρημος, ου f deserted place; also ἐρμος,

ον adj lonely, deserted, uninhabited

τοπος, ου m place

The location is uncertain.

ἀναπαυω give relief; midd relax, rest

ὀλιγος, η, ον little; adv. ὀλιγον a little

ὑπαγω go, depart

φαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐσθιω eat

εὐκαίρουν Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl

εὐκαικω have time or opportunity

Cf. 3:20.

Mark 6:32

καὶ ἀπῆλθον ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κατ' ἰδίαν.

ἀπῆλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl

ἀπερχομαι

πλοιον, ου n boat, ship

Mark 6:33

καὶ εἶδον αὐτοὺς ὑπάγοντας καὶ ἐπέγνωσαν πολλοί, καὶ πεζῇ ἀπὸ πασῶν τῶν πόλεων συνέδραμον ἐκεῖ καὶ προῆλθον αὐτούς.

εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὁραω see

ἐπιγινωσκω perceive, recognise

πεζη on foot; by land

πολις, εως f city, town

συνέδραμον Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl

συντρεχω run together

The pursuit by such a large crowd suggests organised activity rather than spur-of-the-moment activity.

ἐκεῖ there, in that place, to that place

προερχομαι go ahead, go before

There are several variants which seem to arise from the unusual use of προερχομαι in the sense of 'arrive before' leading to the substitution of the more familiar προσερχομαι or συνερχομαι and to a variety of syntactical alterations. It may also be that some copyists thought it improbable that travellers on foot could arrive earlier than those going by boat.

Mark 6:34-44

Cf. Mt. 14:14-21; Lk 9:11b-17. The narrative in Mark has detail which suggests Petrine reminiscence.

Mark 6:34

καὶ ἐξελθὼν εἶδεν πολὺν ὄχλον, καὶ ἐσπλαγχνίσθη ἐπ' αὐτούς ὅτι ἦσαν ὡς πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα, καὶ ἤρξατο διδάσκειν αὐτούς πολλά

ἐξελθων Verb, aor act ptc, nom m s
ἐξερχομαι

I.e. from the boat.

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὄραω
ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude
ἐσπλαγχνίσθη Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 s
σπλαγχνίζομαι be moved with pity or compassion

Cf. Matt 9:36.

προβατον, ου n sheep
ποιμην, ενος m shepherd

Cf. Num 27:17; 1 Kings 22:17; 2 Chr 18:16; Ezek 34:5. France comments that the phrase in 1 Kings 22:17 "denotes a leaderless army" and that it may reflect the desire of the crowd for a military leader (cf. Jn 6). However, the focus in Mark is on Jesus' compassion for the crowd.

ἄρχω midd begin
διδασκω teach

"The words indicate Jesus' response to the need and wretchedness of the multitude, the action springing from his pity. Their greatest need is to be taught." Cranfield.

Mark 6:35

Καὶ ἤδη ὥρας πολλῆς γενομένης προσελθόντες αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἔλεγον ὅτι Ἐρημός ἐστιν ὁ τόπος, καὶ ἡδη ὥρα πολλή·

ἡδη adv now, already
ὥρα, ας f hour, period of time

ὥρας πολλης and ὥρα πολλη 'late in the day' i.e. towards the end of the afternoon when Jews would normally have their main meal.

προσερχομαι come or go to, approach
τοπος, ου m see v.31

Mark 6:36

ἀπόλυσον αὐτούς, ἵνα ἀπελθόντες εἰς τοὺς κύκλω ἀγροὺς καὶ κώμας ἀγοράσωσιν ἑαυτοῖς τί φάγωσιν.

ἀπόλυσον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s ἀπολυω
release, send away, dismiss

ἀπελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
ἀπερχομαι

κυκλω adv round about

ἀγρος, ου m field, farm, countryside

κωμη, ης f village, small town

ἀγοράσωσιν Verb, aor act subj ἀγοραζω
buy, redeem

ἑαυτος, εαυτη, εαυτον him/ her/ itself

φάγωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ἐσθιω eat

Mark 6:37

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Δότε αὐτοῖς ὑμεῖς φαγεῖν. καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Ἀπελθόντες ἀγοράσωμεν δηναρίων διακοσίων ἄρτους καὶ δώσομεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν;

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

δοτε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl διδομι

The ὑμεῖς is here emphatic. France draws attention to the parallels with Elisha's miracle in 2 Kings 4:42-44 where his servant is also asked to feed the crowd.

ἀγοραζω buy, redeem

A deliberative subjunctive.

δηναριον, ου n denarius

διακοσιοι, αι, α two hundred

δηναριων διακοσιων "genitive of price. In Mt 20:2 a denarius is the wage for a day's work in a vineyard." Cranfield.

ἄρτος, ου m bread, food

δώσομεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl διδομι

Their question is surely ironical. "The tone of the question 'is characteristic of the boldness of Mark's narrative' (Taylor). As with 4:38, in Mt and Lk the suggestion of disrespectfulness has been removed." Cranfield.

Mark 6:38

ὁ δὲ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Πόσους ἔχετε ἄρτους; ὑπάγετε ἴδετε. καὶ γνόντες λέγουσιν· Πέντε, καὶ δύο ἰχθύας.

ποσος, η, ον how much(?), how many(?)
ἄρτος, ου m see v.37

Probably round flat loaves, each large enough for one person for one day.

ὑπαγω go, go one's way

ἴδετε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s ὄραω see

"The two imperatives have a very decisive tone." Taylor.

γνόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl γινωσκω

πεντε (indeclinable) five
 δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυοισιν two
 ιχθυς, υος m fish

Mark 6:39

καὶ ἐπέταξεν αὐτοῖς ἀνακλῖναι πάντας
 συμπόσια συμπόσια ἐπὶ τῷ ἡλωρῷ χορτῷ.

ἐπέταξεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐπιτασσω
 command, order
 ἀνακλῖναι Verb, aor act infin ἀνακλινω
 seat at table, lay down

The active voice is transitive, 'he commanded them [the disciples] to cause them to recline by companies...' It appears that some copyists, not understanding the use of the active voice here, assimilated the text to the parallel reading, ἀνακλιθῆναι in Mt 14:19 – the passive is intransitive, 'he commanded them that they should recline by companies...'

συμποσιον, ου n a group sharing a meal
 (συμποσια συμπόσια in groups)
 ἡλωρος, α, ον green (pale); το χ. green
 plant
 χορτος, ου m grass

"The mention of the green grass may perhaps point to springtime; but near streams green grass might be found as late as July." Cranfield. France, following Gundry, suggests that "Mark's motive in mentioning it [the green grass] after the shepherd metaphor of v. 34 may be rather to allude to the shepherd's role in leading his flock to 'green pastures' in Ps 23:2."

Mark 6:40

καὶ ἀνέπεσαν πρασιαὶ πρασιαὶ κατὰ ἑκατὸν καὶ
 κατὰ πενήκοντα.

ἀνέπεσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἀναπιπτω
 sit, sit at table
 πρασια, ας f (lit. garden plot) group
 (πρασιαὶ πρασιαὶ in groups)

"πρασια is literally a garden plot or flower bed and is not elsewhere used to describe people, so that πρασιαὶ πρασιαὶ (... 'in rows') offers a remarkably visual impression of the scene, with men lined up in groups like plots of vegetables on the green grass." France.

ἑκατον one hundred
 πενήκοντα fifty

Mark 6:41

καὶ λαβὼν τοὺς πέντε ἄρτους καὶ τοὺς δύο
 ἰχθύας ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εὐλόγησεν
 καὶ κατέκλασεν τοὺς ἄρτους καὶ ἐδίδου τοῖς
 μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ἵνα παρατιθῶσιν αὐτοῖς, καὶ
 τοὺς δύο ἰχθύας ἐμέρισεν πᾶσιν.

λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω

"According to Jewish custom at the beginning of a meal the head of the family or host took the bread into his hands before saying the blessing." Cranfield.

ἀναβλεπω look up
 οὐρανος, ου m heaven
 εὐλογεω speak well of, bless

"The object of εὐλόγησεν is not the loaves and the fishes (in spite of αὐτοὺς in the great majority of MSS in the Lk parallel ...), but 'the Lord' understood; for the *berakah* was a blessing of the Name of God. The ancient *berakah* for bread is: 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the world, who bringest forth bread from the earth.'" Cranfield.

κατακλαω break in pieces
 ἐδίδου Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

"The change to the imperfect is perhaps meant to suggest successive distributions of bread." Cranfield.

μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower

The absence of αὐτοῦ in Matthew and Luke suggests that it may be original here and was omitted in some MSS by assimilation.

παρατιθῶσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl
 παρατιθημι place before, distribute
 μερίζω divide, assign, apportion

Cranfield draws attention to the parallels between the language of vv 40-42 and the record of the Last Supper in Mk 14:18ff. He says, "Though these contacts may be explained as due to the fact that the same Jewish meal customs would be features alike of the feeding miracles, the Last Supper and the Eucharist, Taylor's words are probably justified: 'Mark has conformed the vocabulary of the passage to that of the Supper in the belief that in some sense the fellowship meal in the wilderness was an anticipation of the Eucharist.' As the multitude had once enjoyed table-fellowship with Jesus as his guest by the Lake of Galilee, so now the Church enjoys table-fellowship with the exalted Jesus in the Eucharist. Mark and the early Church probably also saw in this miracle a pointer to the final consummation, which is often likened to a banquet (e.g. Is 25:6ff; Lk 13:29; 14:15; 22:16, 30; 14:16ff = Mt 22:1ff; Mt 26:29; Rev 19:9). Jesus may himself have had this significance in mind." Cranfield also suggests that in Jesus provision of bread for the crowd he may have been teaching them that he is the living bread, giving life to the world.

Mark 6:42

καὶ ἔφαγον πάντες καὶ ἐχορτάσθησαν.

ἔφαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl ἐσθιω
 eat

χορτάζω feed, satisfy

"ἐχορτασθησαν shows that Mark regarded the meal as miraculous – not a sacramental meal in which the people received only a tiny fragment, but a meal in which their hunger was satisfied." Cranfield.

Mark 6:43

καὶ ἤραν κλάσματα δώδεκα κοφίνων
πληρώματα καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἰχθύων.

αἶρω take, take up, take away
κλάσμα, τος n fragment, piece
δώδεκα twelve

κοφινος, ου m basket
πληρωμα, τος n fulness

δώδεκα κοφινων πληρωματα "'twelve basketfuls', in apposition to κλάσματα. The κοφινος [was] a wicker basket [characteristic of the Jews]." Cranfield. France suggests that such baskets may have been kept in the boat for holding the catch of fish.

Mark 6:44

καὶ ἦσαν οἱ φαγόντες τοὺς ἄρτους
πεντακισχίλιοι ἄνδρες.

φαγόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ἐσθιω

"It would be typical of Mark to be fuller than Matthew and for the additional words to be omitted by assimilation. τοὺς ἄρτους is probably therefore an original part of the text, though some doubt may be cast on this by the fact that Mark elsewhere generally makes a point of mentioning the fish as well." France.

πεντακισχίλιοι, αι, α five thousand
ἄνηρ, ἄνδρος m man

Mark 6:45-52

Cf. Mt 14:22-33. Again, this passage in Mk seems to reflect Petrine reminiscence. Matthew expands the story with the account of Peter's abortive attempt to walk on the water. "Luke, however, does not record this incident on the lake, and his narrative continues immediately after the feeding miracle with Peter's confession, from which the story moves quickly to Jerusalem. Mark 6:45 thus marks the beginning of Luke's 'Great Omission' (he has none of the contents of Mk. 6:45-8:26)." France.

Of Mark's account of this incident on the lake France writes, "Two themes run through this pericope. The first is clearly the supernatural power of Jesus, as Mark continues to build his picture of a Jesus who, though he could walk, eat, and sleep with his disciples as master with pupils, is nevertheless more than an ordinary human being (compare OT descriptions of God walking on or through the sea: Job 9:8; Ps. 77:19; Is. 43:16). But corresponding to the increasingly supernatural character of the portrait of Jesus is the increasing inability of his disciples to cope with it. The incomprehension of the disciples is well known as a theme emphasised more in Mark's gospel than in the other accounts, but it is not evenly distributed throughout the narrative. Up to this point the disciples have been portrayed more as the privileged recipients of special revelation, in contrast with the uncomprehending crowds (4:11-12, 34; cf. 3:31-35), but 6:52 introduces a new and ominous note (perhaps already hinted at in 4:13) which will be further developed in 8:14-21, and will become a central feature of the second main section of the narrative after Caesarea Philippi."

Mark 6:45

Καὶ εὐθὺς ἠνάγκασεν τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ
ἐμβῆναι εἰς τὸ πλοῖον καὶ προάγειν εἰς τὸ
πέραν πρὸς Βηθσαϊδάν, ἕως αὐτὸς ἀπολύει τὸν
ὄχλον.

ἀναγκάζω force, compel, urge

Cf. Jn 6:14f. for the response of the crowd which may explain the action of Jesus here. Cranfield draws attention to the trouble the disciples faced on the lake and says that the Christian should not be dismayed by trouble if it comes as a result of obeying Christ.

ἐμβαινῶ get into, embark

πλοῖον, ου n see v.32

προαγῶ go before or ahead of

πέραν beyond; το π. the other side

ἕως until, while

ἀπολυῶ send away, dismiss

Mark 6:46

καὶ ἀποταξάμενος αὐτοῖς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸ ὄρος
προσεύξασθαι.

ἀποτασσομαι leave, part with

αὐτοῖς commentators differ over whether the reference is to the crowd or to the disciples.

ὄρος, ους n mountain, hill

προσευχομαι pray

Cf. 1:35.

Mark 6:47

Καὶ ὄψιας γενομένης ἦν τὸ πλοῖον ἐν μέσῳ τῆς θαλάσσης, καὶ αὐτὸς μόνος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

ὄψια, ας f evening

Cf. v.35 which probably referred to the late afternoon. "Here it seems to be implied that it was light enough for Jesus on the high ground to see the disciples on the lake; but it was probably moonlight, for the general impression is that it must have been a good while after sunset since Jesus came to them in the fourth watch." Cranfield.

A significant group of MSS (p⁴⁵ D etc.) read ἦν παλαι rather than ἦν. παλαι, which normally means 'long ago' or 'for some time' would in this instance mean 'just now' or 'already.' France thinks the reading could be original but it is rejected by the majority of the UBS Committee who argued that, if original, it is difficult to account for its absence from such a wide variety of witnesses.

μεσος, η, ον middle
θαλασσα, ης f sea
μονος, η, ον adj only, alone
γη, γης f earth, land

Mark 6:48

καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτοὺς βασανιζομένους ἐν τῷ ἐλαύνειν, ἦν γὰρ ὁ ἄνεμος ἐναντίος αὐτοῖς, περὶ τετάρτην φυλακὴν τῆς νυκτὸς ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτοὺς περιπατῶν ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης· καὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς.

ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω see
βασανίζω torment, disturb

"Here the participle could be either passive ('being battered') or middle ('toiling hard', 'exerting themselves').

ἐλανω row
ἄνεμος, ου m wind
ἐναντιος, α, ον against, contrary to
τεταρτος, η, ον fourth
φυλακη, ης f prison, watch (of the night)
νυξ, νυκτος f night

"Mark follows the Roman custom of counting four night watches (cf. 13:35). The Jews divided the night into three watches." Cranfield. The time would be before dawn, between 3 and 6 am.

περιπατεω walk, walk about
ἤθελεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s θελω wish
παρελθεῖν Verb, aor act infin παρερχομαι pass, pass by

This last phrase occurs only in Mark. "Perhaps the words are to be explained as recording the impression the disciples had at the time: the impression they got was that he intended to pass by them. Or perhaps θελω is here used as more or less equivalent to μελλω. Some have suggested that his intention was to get to the other side before them, others that it was to test their faith." Cranfield. France comments, "In the narrative context the clause is best seen not as a statement of what was in Jesus' mind but of how his approach appeared from the disciples' point of view; this mysterious figure on the water seemed at first to be making his way past the boat (and thus to be making better progress than they, with all their muscle power, could achieve)."

Mark 6:49

οἱ δὲ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης περιπατοῦντα ἔδοξαν ὅτι φάντασμα ἔστιν καὶ ἀνέκραζαν,

δοκεω think, suppose
φαντασμα, τος η ghost, apparition
ἀνακραζω cry out, shout

Mark 6:50

πάντες γὰρ αὐτὸν εἶδον καὶ ἐταράχθησαν. ὁ δὲ εὐθὺς ἐλάλησεν μετ' αὐτῶν, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ εἰμι, μὴ φοβεῖσθε.

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας
εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω see
v.48

ἐταράχθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
ταρασσω trouble, disturb, frighten

'were terrified'

λαλεω speak, talk
θαρσεω (only in imperat) Courage! Take courage!

"The command θαρσει (or θαρσειτε) occurs seven times in the N.T. – always on the lips of Jesus (in Acts 23:11 of the exalted Christ) except for Mk 10:49 where it is spoken by those who tell the blind man that Jesus is calling him." Cranfield.

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

Mark 6:51

καὶ ἀνέβη πρὸς αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, καὶ ἐκόπασεν ὁ ἄνεμος. καὶ λίαν ἐκ περισσοῦ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἐξίσταντο,

ἀνέβη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀναβαινω go up, come up, embark

κοπαζω cease, stop

ἄνεμος, ου m see v.48

λίαν adv exceedingly, very much; λ. ἐκ περισσου utterly, completely

"The double phrase *λίαν ἐκ περισσοῦ* would be typical of Mark, and we may best explain the readings which offer either *λίαν* alone or (*ἐκ*) *περισσοῦ(-ως)* alone as 'improvements' of Mark's prolix style." France.

περισσος, η, ον adj more
ἐξίστημι be amazed, be surprised

"The widely attested addition of *καὶ ἐθαυμάζον* after *ἐξίσταντο* further increases the emphasis without affecting the sense; in other such expressions of amazement, Mark uses only one such verb, so this may be a later expansion (modelled on Acts 2:7)." France.

Mark 6:52

οὐ γὰρ συνήκαν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἄρτοις, ἀλλ' ἦν αὐτῶν ἡ καρδία πεπωρωμένη.

συνήκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl *συνημι*
understand, comprehend
ἄρτος, ου m bread

"They had not grasped its significance as a pointer to the secret of Jesus' person." Cranfield. Cf. 4:12.

πωροω make stubborn, make hard, make insensitive

Echoes Is 6:10. The previous incident of the 'loaves' (the feeding of the 5,000) should have caused them to see things in a new light (cf. 8:14-21).

"It is part of the summons to repentance which the Gospel addresses to us, that alongside the riches of Jesus it shows us the poverty of the disciples and makes clear for all by their case how much kindness and patience He must show us, before we will believe in Him." Schlatter.

Mark 6:53-56

Cf. Mt 14:34-36. "The sequence of miracles around the lake which began in 6:31 now concludes with a return to the familiar area of the western shore, where Jesus remains the focus of attention and of popular enthusiasm, at least for his miraculous healing power." France.

Mark 6:53

Καὶ διαπεράσαντες ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ἤλθον εἰς Γεννησαρετ καὶ προσωρμίσθησαν.

διαπεράσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
διαπεραω cross over

"Γεννησαρετ is either the fertile and populous plain to the S.W. of Capernaum or else a village or township in it." Cranfield.

προσωρμίσθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
προσορμιζομαι moor, tie up (of boats)

Mark 6:54

καὶ ἐξεληθόντων αὐτῶν ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου εὐθύς ἐπιγνόντες αὐτὸν

ἐπιγινωσκω understand, recognise

Mark 6:55

περιέδραμον ὅλην τὴν χώραν ἐκείνην καὶ ἤρξαντο ἐπὶ τοῖς κραβάττοις τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας περιφέρειν ὅπου ἤκουον ὅτι ἐστίν.

περιέδραμον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl
περιτρεχω run about

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all

χώρα, ας f country, region, territory

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that

ἤρξαντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl *ἄρχω*
midd begin

κραβαττος, ου m bed, stretcher

Cranfield suggests that the definite article here should perhaps be rendered 'their'.

κακῶς badly, severely; *κακῶς ἔχω* be sick
περιφερω carry about, bring

ὅπου adv. where; *ὅπου ἂν οἱ ὅπου ἔαν*
wherever, whenever

Mark 6:56

καὶ ὅπου ἂν εἰσπορευέτο εἰς κόμας ἢ εἰς πόλεις ἢ εἰς ἀγροὺς ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς ἐτίθησαν τοὺς ἀσθενοῦντας, καὶ παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν ἵνα κἂν τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ ἄψωνται· καὶ ὅσοι ἂν ἤψαντο αὐτοῦ ἐσφύζοντο.

κωμη, ης f village, small town

ἢ οἱ

πόλις, εως f city, town

ἄγρος, ου m field, countryside

ἀγορα, ας f market place

τιθημι place, set

ἀσθενεω be sick, be ill, be weak

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

καν (καὶ ἔαν) even if, and if, even

κρασπεδον, ου n fringe, edge, tassel

"Jesus, as a pious Jew, wears the fringes or tassels commanded in Num 15:37ff., Deut 22:12." Cranfield.

ἱματιον, ου n clothing, robe, cloak

ἄψωνται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 pl *ἄπτω*
midd. take hold of, touch

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as;

ὅσος ἂν, ὅσος ἔαν whoever; pl. as

many as, all

σωζω save, heal

Cf. 3:10; 5:28.

Mark 7:1-20

Cf. Mt 15:1-20. "In the sequence of miracle stories around the lake in 6:31-56 Jesus has appeared as a figure of powerful action rather than a teacher, and has met with popular acclaim. With the beginning of chapter 7 we return to a situation of controversy and of teaching, the two closely woven together." France.

Mark 7:1

Καὶ συνάγονται πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ τινες τῶν γραμματέων ἐλθόντες ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων

συναγω gather (together), assemble
γραμματεως, εως m scribe, expert in
Jewish law, scholar; town clerk

Suggests that the incident occurred in Galilee. "Matthew's phrase ἀπο Ἱεροσολύμων Φαρισαῖοι καὶ γραμματεῖς suggests a single group coming from Jerusalem to Galilee. Mark's wording, however, divides the group into the (presumably local) Φαρισαῖοι and τινες τῶν γραμματέων ἐλθόντες ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων. Judging from the area of their concern, the scribes from Jerusalem were themselves also Pharisees, and no distinction between the two groups is discernable in the pericope. The local Pharisees are already established in the narrative as the focus of opposition to Jesus in Galilee (2:16, 24; 3:6). Local scribes have also been mentioned in 2:6, 16, but the reappearance here of *Jerusalem* scribes (first encountered in 3:22), indicates a reinforcement of the local opposition by a delegation from the capital. The fact that in both instances they are described as having arrived (καταβάντες, 3:22; ἐλθόντες here) from Jerusalem indicates that they have come specially to investigate and/or dispute with Jesus." France.

Mark 7:2

καὶ ἰδόντες τινὰς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ὅτι κοιναῖς χερσίν, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἀνίπτοις, ἐσθίουσιν τοὺς ἄρτους –

ἰδόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὄρω
see, observe

κοινος, α, ον common, unclean

Key word to the theme of this section.

χειρ, χειρος f hand

ἀνίπτος, ον not washed according to ritual law

ἐσθιω and ἐσθω eat

ἄρτος, ον m bread, food

France says that the practice of washing hands before eating "was a matter of scribal development, and it is uncertain how far it had progressed by the time of Jesus. It is unlikely that ritual handwashing was yet the norm among ordinary people, and it may well be that what the Pharisees were here expecting of Jesus and his disciples was their own distinctive practice. Surely a self-proclaimed religious teacher might be expected to require of his followers at least as rigorous a ritual practice as the Pharisees expected of theirs."

Mark 7:3

οἱ γὰρ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐὰν μὴ πύγμῃ νίψωνται τὰς χεῖρας οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν, κρατοῦντες τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων Ἰουδαίος, α, ον a Jew, Jewish

"The inclusion of πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in this description along with the Pharisees is more impressionistic than historically exact, since there is no evidence that the sort of precautions described were yet observed by Jews in general, if indeed they ever were. It was precisely the observance of such rules which marked out the members of the Pharisaic party from the general populace." France.

ἐὰν μὴ except, unless
πύγμη, ης f fist (πύγμη of doubtful meaning with the fist, to the wrist)

Cranfield suggests that πύγμῃ νίψωνται is a reference to minor washing before eating in contrast with βαπτισθῶνται which refers to a more serious ablution. He adds "πύγμη might be explained as a not very felicitous way of saying 'up to the wrist'. Perhaps more probably it means 'with a fistful' with reference to the small amount of water necessary for the minor ablution. Other explanations have been suggested, and the problem cannot be said to have been definitively settled." The difficulty of the phrase gave rise to several textual variants.

νίψωνται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 pl νιπτω
wash; midd wash oneself

κρατεω hold, hold fast

παραδοσις, εως f tradition

πρεσβυτερος, α, ον elder

"What is meant is the Jewish oral tradition or oral law, which was regarded as the 'fence for (preserving the integrity of) the Torah.'" Cranfield.

Mark 7:4

καὶ ἀπ' ἀγορᾶς ἐὰν μὴ βαπτίσωνται οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν, καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ ἐστὶν ἃ παρέλαβον κρατεῖν, βαπτισμοὺς ποτηρίων καὶ ξεστῶν καὶ χαλκίων καὶ κλινῶν –

ἀγορα, ας f market place

Black takes this phrase to mean 'anything from the marketplace', but Cranfield thinks it better to understand it as 'when they come from the marketplace.'

βαπτίσωνται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 pl

βαπτίζω baptise, wash

ἄλλος, α, ον adj other, diverse

παρέλαβον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl

παραλαμβάνω receive, accept

βαπτισμος, ου m ritual washing, ablution, baptism; washing (of hands)

Some MSS have ῥαντίζονται (sprinkle, wash) rather than βαπτίσωνται – Cranfield thinks the term was substituted for the sake of Gentile readers who might not understand Jewish customs. France suggests, "A Christian scribe confronted by βαπτίζομαι as a term of Jewish ritual washing might well have wished to substitute a less 'Christian' word."

ποτηριον, ου n cup

ξεστης, ου m jug, pitcher, pot

χαλκιον, ου n (copper) vessel, bowl

κλινη, ης f bed, couch, stretcher, sickbed

"The evidence is strong both for and against the inclusion of καὶ κλινῶν. It is perhaps a little more likely that scribes omitted the phrase (referring to the legislation on unclean beds in Lv. 15) because it seemed inappropriate with a list of food vessels than that it was added subsequently in order to provide a fuller list of Jewish purification rituals (the washing of the bed is not explicitly mentioned in Lv. 15)..."

"The inclusion also of beds [dining couches?] (if original ...) is incongruous, but presumably represents a desire to offer an even more comprehensive account of Jewish purification rites by including also the theme of Lv. 15." France.

Mark 7:5

καὶ ἐπερωτῶσιν αὐτὸν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς· Διὰ τί οὐ περιπατοῦσιν οἱ μαθηταὶ σου κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, ἀλλὰ κοιναῖς χερσὶν ἐσθίουσιν τὸν ἄρτον;

ἐπερωτῶσιν Verb, pres act ptc, m dat pl

ἐπερωτᾶω ask, interrogate, question

περιπατεῶ walk, live

"The use of περιπατῶ with reference to a person's way of life reflects Jewish usage (cf. *halak*): it is frequent in Paul (e.g. Rom 6:4; 8:4)." Cranfield.

παραδοσις, εως f see v.3

"Jesus will pick up the term παραδοσις in his response, but will describe it pointedly not as τῶν πρεσβυτέρων but as τῶν ἀνθρώπων (as opposed to the word *of God*, v. 8) and as ὕμων (vv. 9, 13), thus questioning the automatic assumption by the Pharisees and scribes that there is authority inherent in tradition as such." France.

Mark 7:6

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Καλῶς ἐπροφήτευσεν Ἡσαΐας περὶ ὑμῶν τῶν ὑποκριτῶν, ὡς γέγραπται ὅτι Οὗτος ὁ λαὸς τοῖς χεῖλεσίν με τιμᾷ, ἡ δὲ καρδία αὐτῶν πόρρω ἀπέχει ἀπ' ἐμοῦ·

καλως adv well, truly

προφητεω prophesy

"This 'contemporising' use of OT texts is typical of much NT interpretation, and presupposes a typological understanding of continuity in the relationship between God and his people such that earlier events and situations appropriately serve as models for a later era of fulfilment, even though in themselves they had no predictive force." France.

ὑποκριτης, ου m hypocrite

"The thought here is probably not so much that the people concerned were consciously acting a part as that there was a radical inconsistency in their lives." Cranfield.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω write

The quotation is from LXX Isa 29:13.

λαος, ου m people, a people

χειλος, ους n lip

τιμαω honour, reverence

πορρω adv far away, far

ἀπεχω be distant

Mark 7:7

μάτην δὲ σέβονταί με, διδάσκοντες διδασκαλίας ἐντάλματα ἀνθρώπων·

ματην adv in vain, to no purpose

σεβομαι worship

διδασκω teach

διδασκαλια, ας f what is taught, teaching, doctrine

ἐνταλμα, τος n commandment, rule

"The contrast in Isaiah between lips (words) and heart is not taken up as a regular form of expression in the gospels, but reflects an important prophetic theme (cf. Is. 1:12-17; Hos. 6:6; Am. 5:21-24; Mic. 6:6-8, etc.) and corresponds to the charge elsewhere in the gospels that scribal religion is more concerned with external correctness than with fundamental attitudes and relationship to God (Mt. 23:23-28; Lk. 11:37-44). The priority of the internal over the external will be picked up as the focus of the alternative approach commended by Jesus in vv. 14-23, where the word καρδια will recur prominently in vv. 19 and 21." France.

Mark 7:8

ἀφέντες τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ κρατεῖτε τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

ἀφιημι leave, forsake

ἐντολῆ, ἡς f command, order, instruction

"Jesus challenges the authority of the oral law radically. It pretended to be a fence to protect the Law from infringement, but in actual fact it tampered with the Law. Jesus charges the Pharisees and scribes with actually disobeying the Law of God through their exaggerated reverence for the oral law. For the Pharisees the oral law was equally binding with the written law: Jesus rejects its authority – he calls it merely 'tradition of men' ... His attitude to the written Law itself is expressed in the phrase τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ: it confronts men with divine authority." Cranfield.

Mark 7:9

Καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Καλῶς ἀθετεῖτε τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα τὴν παράδοσιν ὑμῶν τηρήσητε·

καλῶς see v.6

"Should probably be translated 'well enough', 'all right', the sense being: 'You are making a good job of rejecting the commandment of God...' To take the sentence as a question and render: 'Are you acting rightly in ...?' seems less satisfactory." Cranfield. France speaks of a note of sarcasm.

ἀθετεῶ reject, set aside

παραδοσις, εως f see v.3

στήσητε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl ἵστημι set, establish

Many MSS read τηρησητε. It is difficult to decide which is the original reading – the external evidence is finely balanced and both make good sense in context.

Mark 7:10

Μωϋσῆς γὰρ εἶπεν· Τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου, καὶ· Ὁ κακολογῶν πατέρα ἢ μητέρα θανάτῳ τελευτάτω·

τιμαω honour, reverence

Ex. 20:12a = Deut 5:16a.

κακολογεω speak evil of, curse

ἢ or

θανατος, ου m death

τελευταω die

Ex. 21:17 (LXX 21:16).

Mark 7:11

ὕμεις δὲ λέγετε· Ἐὰν εἴπῃ ἄνθρωπος τῷ πατρὶ ἢ τῇ μητρὶ· Κορβᾶν, ὃ ἐστὶν Δῶρον, ὃ ἐὰν ἐξ ἐμοῦ ὠφελῆθῃς,

ὕμεις an emphatic contrast with Μωϋσης

Κορβαν Corban (Hebrew term for a gift set apart to God)

Cranfield says "To declare something *korban* was to fix upon it the character of an offering dedicated to God. It did not always mean that the thing concerned had actually to be offered; rather that it was withdrawn from its originally intended use and was no longer available for a particular person or persons." Cranfield suggests, "Jesus here has in mind a situation in which a man repents of a harsh vow which would deprive his parents of all the help which they would normally expect from their son, but is told by the scribes to whom arbitration of his case has been submitted that he must abide by the vow."

δωρον, ου n gift, offering

ὅς ἐάν whoever, whatever

ὠφελῆθῃς Verb, aor pass subj, 2 s ὠφελεω gain, profit, benefit

Mark 7:12

οὐκέτι ἀφίετε αὐτὸν οὐδὲν ποιῆσαι τῷ πατρὶ ἢ τῇ μητρὶ,

οὐκετι adv no longer, no more

ἀφιημι allow, tolerate, permit

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing;

οὐδεν not at all

ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω

"This example drawn from a quite distinct area of law and ethics [from the food laws] serves merely to illustrate and to hold up to criticism the disproportionate concern for the authority of scribal tradition out of which the accusation in v. 5 has sprung." France.

Mark 7:13

ἀκυροῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ παραδόσει ὑμῶν ἢ παρεδώκατε· καὶ παρόμοια τοιαῦτα πολλὰ ποιεῖτε.

ἀκυροῶ cancel, disregard, annul

τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ is not a reference to the Scriptures as a whole but to a specific divine pronouncement – the fifth commandment.

παρεδώκατε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl
 παραδίδωμι hand or give over

"Perhaps παρεδώκατε is used here rather than παρελαβετε [cf. v.4], because the scribes are here thought of not just as passive recipients of a tradition but as having had an active and responsible part in the matter." Cranfield.

παρομοίως, ον like, similar
 τοιούτος, αυτή, ουτον correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind, similar

I.e. the example is illustrative of a general tendency among the scribes.

Mark 7:14

Καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος πάλιν τὸν ὄχλον ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Ἀκούσατέ μου πάντες καὶ σύνετε.

προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m
 nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself, summon, invite

πάλιν again, once more

σύνετε Verb, pres act imperat συνημι and
 συνιω understand, comprehend

Jesus uses their accusation as an opportunity for instructing the crowds.

"The words indicate that what follows is specially important and also that it calls for careful thought." Cranfield. It is important not only to listen but also to understand.

Mark 7:15

οὐδέν ἐστιν ἔξωθεν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς αὐτὸν ὃ δύναται κοινῶσαι αὐτόν· ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκπορευόμενά ἐστιν τὰ κοινοῦντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον.

For the οὐ ... ἀλλά ... form cf. 2:17, 22; 10:43; 12:25.

ἔξωθεν prep with gen from outside, outside
 δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of
 κοινοῶ defile, make unclean

Jesus explains his meaning in vv 18-23.

Mark 7:16

Of v.16 (εἰ τις ἔχει ὡτα ἀκουειν ἀκουετω) Metzger writes, "This verse, though present in the majority of witnesses, is absent from important Alexandrian witnesses. It appears to be a scribal gloss, introduced as an appropriate sequel to verse 14."

Mark 7:17

Καὶ ὅτε εἰσηλθεν εἰς οἶκον ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου, ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ τὴν παραβολήν.

ὅτε conj when, at which time
 ἐπερωτῶ ask, interrogate, question
 μαθητης, ου m disciple

For παραβολη see on 4:2 and 11. Cf. 4:10-12, 33-34.

Mark 7:18

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀσύνετοί ἐστε; οὐ νοεῖτε ὅτι πᾶν τὸ ἔξωθεν εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον οὐ δύναται αὐτόν κοινῶσαι,

οὕτως and οὕτω adv. thus, in this way

Here used inferentially – 'then.'

"καὶ ὑμεῖς indicates that the disciples at least should have been able to understand the παραβολη. But their failure to grasp the significance of Jesus' ministry is now, in contrast with 3:31-35; 4:11-12, an increasingly prominent theme of the narrative, highlighted in 6:52 and further developed in 8:17-21, and one which threatens to put them on a level with the uncomprehending crowds with whom they were so sharply contrasted in 4:11-12. What differentiates them is not an inherent ability to grasp spiritual truth, but the fact that they are privileged to receive special instructions from Jesus." France.

ἀσυνετος, ον without understanding, dull

Cf. 4:13; 6:52; 8:17, 21.

νοεω understand, perceive, discern

Mark 7:19

ὅτι οὐκ εἰσπορεύεται αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν καρδίαν ἀλλ' εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν, καὶ εἰς τὸν ἀφεδρῶνα ἐκπορεύεται; – καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα.

"Whereas in English 'heart' tends to connote emotion, in both Hebrew and Greek it conveys equally, and perhaps more strongly, the spiritual and intellectual processes, including the will. It refers to what makes people what they really are, their individuality. It is thus particularly with the heart that a person relates to God, and a purported relationship with God which bypasses the heart is a mockery. It is the heart, in this sense, which Jesus declares to be unaffected by what comes in from outside. Food is of merely nutritional significance, and has in itself no bearing on a person's relationship with God." France.

κοιλια, ας f stomach
ἀφεδρων, ωνος m latrine

A rare word.

καθαρίζω cleanse, make clean

The variants καθαρίζων and indicatives και καθαρίζαι (-εται) are best understood as attempts to 'correct' the syntax by scribes who did not recognise the parenthetical nature of the clause.

βρωμα, τος n food, solid food

"The words καθαρίζων παντα τα βρωματα are best explained as the evangelist's own comment, drawing out the implications of Jesus' words with an eye on the contemporary problem of what was to be the church's attitude to Jewish ideas about clean and unclean foods." Cranfield. France speaks of "The revolutionary significance of this declaration, and its relevance to the relations between Jews and Gentiles in the early days of the Christian movement"

If Mark's chief source was Peter, it is interesting to consider the contribution to his understanding from the vision given Peter in Acts 10:9ff.

Mark 7:20

ἔλεγεν δὲ ὅτι Τὸ ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκπορευόμενον ἐκεῖνο κοινοῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον· ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that

Mark 7:21

ἔσωθεν γὰρ ἐκ τῆς καρδίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ ἐκπορεύονται, πορνεῖαι, κλοπαί, φόνοι,

ἔσωθεν adv. within, inside, from within
διαλογισμος, ου m thought, opinion,
reasoning, dispute

Described first by a broad term οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ followed by a list of examples.

κακος, η, ον evil, wrong, harmful

"The evil thoughts, which are the origin of evil acts." Cranfield. France suggests, 'evil machinations.'

πορνεια, ας f sexual immorality
κλοπη, ης f theft
φονος, ου m murder, killing

Mark 7:22

μοιχεῖαι, πλεονεξίαι, πονηρίαί, δόλος, ἀσελγεία, ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρός, βλασφημία, ὑπερηφανία, ἀφροσύνη·

"The first part of the list reflects (though less clearly than Matthew) some of the commandments of the decalogue." France.

μοιχεια, ας f adultery
πλεονεξια, ας f greed, covetousness
πονηρια, ας f wickedness, uncleanness
δολος, ου m deceit, treachery
ἀσελγεια, ας f sensuality, vice,
debauchery
πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

ὀφθαλμος πονηρος "probably denotes 'envy' or 'grudgingness', 'illiberality'; cf Lk 11:34 = Mt 6:22f ..." Cranfield.

βλασφημια, ας f slander, blasphemy
ὑπερηφανια, ας f arrogance, pride
ἀφροσυνη, ης f folly, foolishness

Used in LXX of the *nabal* – the 'fool' who has no perception of ethical and religious claims – who neither knows God nor wants to know him. Cf. Lk. 12:20; Eph 5:17-18.

Mark 7:23

πάντα ταῦτα τὰ πονηρὰ ἔσωθεν ἐκπορεύεται καὶ κοινοῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον.

ἔσωθεν see v.21.

Verse 24-30

Cf. Mt. 15:21-28. "It is hardly a coincidence that in the narrative which follows Jesus himself moves outside Jewish territory and begins to exercise his ministry among non-Jews. The controversy over ritual purity, with its radical implications for the status of the food laws which divide Jew from Gentile, thus appropriately acts as the narrative hinge between the Jewish and Gentile phases of Jesus' ministry in the north, and at the same time points forward to what awaits him in the subsequent phase of the drama when he makes his way to Jerusalem, the place from which the hostile delegation has come..."

"Misunderstandings of the pericope spring largely from the failure to read it as a whole. It is a dialogue within which the individual sayings function only as parts of the whole, and are not intended to carry the weight of independent exegesis on their own. The whole encounter builds up to the totally positive conclusion of vv. 29-30, while the preceding dialogue serves to underline the radical nature of this new stage in Jesus' ministry into which he has allowed himself to be 'persuaded' by the woman's realism and wit. He appears like the wise teacher who allows, and indeed incites, his pupil to mount a victorious argument against the foil of his own reluctance. He functions as what in a different context might be called 'devil's advocate', and is not disappointed to be 'defeated' in argument. As a result the reader is left more vividly aware of the reality of the problem of Jew-Gentile relations, and of the importance of the step Jesus here takes to overcome it. The woman's 'victory' in the debate is a decisive watershed as a result of which the whole future course of the Christian movement is set not on the basis of Jewish exclusivism but of sharing the 'children's bread'." France.

Mark 7:24

Ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστὰς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὰ ὄρια Τύρου. καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς οἰκίαν οὐδένα ἤθελεν γνῶναι, καὶ οὐκ ἠδυνήθη λαθεῖν·

ἐκεῖθεν from there

Refers either to the house (7:17) or to Gennesaret (6:53).

ἀνίστημι rise, stand up
ὄριον, ου n territory, region,
neighbourhood, vicinity

"ὄριον in the singular means 'boundary', in the plural 'territory'." Cranfield.

"The inclusion of καὶ Σιδωνος after Τύρου, while very widely attested, is best understood as an assimilation to the familiar joint designation in Mt. 15:21, possibly also influenced by the mention of Sidon along with Tyre in 7:31." France.

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing
ἤθελεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s θέλω
wish, will

γνῶναι Verb, aor act infin γινώσκω

Jesus may have been looking for opportunity to teach the disciples privately, or just to rest.

ἠδυνήθη Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3s

δυναμαι

λαθεῖν Verb, aor act infin λανθάνω be
hidden, escape notice

Cf. 1:32-33, 36-37, 45; 2:2; 3:7-12, 20; 6:33-34.

Mark 7:25

ἀλλ' εὐθὺς ἀκούσασα γυνὴ περὶ αὐτοῦ, ἧς εἶχεν τὸ θυγάτριον αὐτῆς πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον, ἐλθοῦσα προσέπεσεν πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ·

ἀκούσασα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s ἀκουῶ

εἶχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἔχω

θυγάτριον, ου n little daughter

ἀκάθαρτος, ον unclean

ἐλθοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s ἐρχομαι

προσέπεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

προσπιπτω fall at someone's feet, fall
down before someone

πόδας Noun, acc pl πους, ποδος m foot

Cf. 5:22.

Mark 7:26

ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἦν Ἑλληνίς, Συροφονικίσσα τῶ γένει· καὶ ἠρώτα αὐτὸν ἵνα τὸ δαιμόνιον ἐκβάλῃ ἐκ τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς.

Ἑλληνίς, ἰδος f Greek or Gentile woman

Not Greek by nationality but Greek-speaking or Gentile.

Συροφονικίσσα, ης f Syrophoenician
woman

"The term Συροφονιζ was used to distinguish the Phoenicians of Syria from the Carthaginians (Λιβυφονιζ). It is interesting to compare Elijah's miracle on behalf of a Phoenician woman (1 Kings 17:8ff; Lk 4:26)." Cranfield.

γένει Noun, dat s γενος, ους n family, race,
people, nation

"That such a woman chose to approach a Jewish healer, and even fell at his feet, indicates either desperation or a remarkable insight into the wider significance of Jesus' ministry (and into the biblical pattern of salvation history). The subsequent dialogue suggests at least an element of the latter." France.

ἔρωταω ask, request, beg, urge
δαίμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit
θυγατηρ, τρος f daughter

Mark 7:27

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτῇ· Ἄφες πρῶτον χορτασθῆναι τὰ τέκνα, οὐ γὰρ καλόν ἐστιν λαβεῖν τὸν ἄρτον τῶν τέκνων καὶ τοῖς κυναρίοις βαλεῖν.

ἀφημι allow

πρῶτον adv. first, first of all

χορτασθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin χορταζω
feed, satisfy

τεκνον, ου n child; pl descendants

"In *πρωτον ... τα τεκνα* we are up against the mystery of divine election. Cf. Rom 1:16 *Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρωτον και Ἑλληνι*, and also Jn 4:22; Acts 3:26; 13:46. This priority of the Jews is implied in Isa 2:2-4; 42:1ff; 60:1ff.: Israel is first to be gathered, and then afterwards the Gentiles. The Servant of the Lord is first 'to raise up the tribes of Jacob' and then to be 'for a light to the Gentiles' (Isa 49:6). Jesus accepts this divinely appointed order and follows faithfully the path ordained for the Lord's Servant. So his whole earthly life was given to Israel. He was 'made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises given unto the fathers' (Rom 15:8). For him during his ministry to conduct a mission to the Gentile world would have been to depart from the way of obedience." Cranfield.

καλος, η, ον good, right, proper
λαβεῖν Verb, aor act infin λαμβανω
ἄρτος, ου m bread, food
κυναριον, ου n house dog, dog

The diminutive means 'house dog'. The point is the priority of the claims of the children of the house over those of household pets. France comments, "The diminutive form (used in biblical literature only in this pericope), perhaps indicates the status of the dogs in Jesus' image as dogs of the house rather than of the yard, but it does not remove the harshness of picturing Gentiles *en masse* as 'dogs' as opposed to 'children', it is the sort of language a Gentile might expect from a Jew, but to find it in a saying of Jesus is shocking."

Mark 7:28

ἡ δὲ ἀπεκρίθη καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Κύριε, καὶ τὰ κυνάρια ὑποκάτω τῆς τραπέζης ἐσθίουσιν ἀπὸ τῶν ψιγίων τῶν παιδίων.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply

France comments, "The inclusion of *ναί* [after *Κυριε*] in the majority of MSS is generally accounted for as a further assimilation to Matthew. But its strong attestation suggests the alternative possibility that it was omitted from the tradition represented by p⁴⁵ D W etc. because it was misunderstood as turning the woman's reply into a meek acceptance of Jesus' words (which it certainly is not) rather than, as it should be read, a firm repudiation of his *οὐκ ἐστιν καλον*. The substitution of *ἀλλα* after *κυριε* in D suggests such a misunderstanding. I therefore think it more likely that *ναί* belongs to the original text of Mark, as in Matthew."

In commenting on the omission of *ναί* in the UBS text, Metzger points out that the word occurs 8 times in Matthew, 4 times in Luke but nowhere else in Mark.

ὑποκάτω prep with gen under, beneath
τραπέζα, ης f table, food, meal; bank
ψιγιον, ου n small crumb, scap (of food)
παιδιον, ου n child

Calvin comments, "she concludes that the door is shut against her, not for the purpose of excluding her altogether, but that, by a more strenuous effort of faith, she may force her way, as it were, through the chinks."

"France comments, "Jesus' image (and his inclusion of *πρωτον*) have given the woman the clue she needs, and enable her, on the basis of his own saying, to refute his *οὐ ἐστιν καλον* and replace it with a defiant *Ναί, κυριε* (see Textual Note) – 'Yes, it *is* right'... Granted that the children have a priority, the dogs, too (*και*), have a legitimate share in the food available. Jesus' own image is thus pressed to its full extent, and provides the basis for her request to be granted, not refused. It is a remarkable twist to the argument, and one which displays as much shrewdness. She does not dispute the lower place which Jesus' saying assumes for the Gentiles, and even accepts without protest the offensive epithet 'dog', but insists that dogs, too, must have their day. Putting it more theologically, the mission of the Messiah of Israel, while it must of course begin with Israel, cannot be confined there. The Gentiles may have to wait, but they are not excluded from the benefits which the Messiah brings. On this basis, she is bold enough to pursue her request; even the crumbs will be enough."

Mark 7:29

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· Διὰ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ὕπαγε, ἐξελήλυθεν ἐκ τῆς θυγατρὸς σου τὸ δαιμόνιον.

ὕπαγω go, go one's way, depart
ἐξελήλυθεν Verb, perf indic ἐξερχομαι

"The dialogue, rather than the exorcism, remains the focus of interest in the pericope. No account of the exorcism is offered, and no word of command recorded; the removal of the demon is simply spoken of as already a past event (*ἐξελήλυθεν*)." France.

Mark 7:30

καὶ ἀπελθοῦσα εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτῆς εὗρεν τὸ παιδίον βεβλημένον ἐπὶ τὴν κλίνην καὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον ἐξεληλυθός.

ἀπελθοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s
ἀπερχομαι

βεβλημένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n
nom/acc s βαλλω throw, place
κλινη, ης f bed, couch
ἐξεληλυθός Verb, perf act ptc, n nom/acc s
ἐξερχομαι

Mark 7:31-37

Cf. Mt 15:29-31. "This story is in a number of ways closely parallel to that in 8:22-26. Both are set outside Galilee; in both the crowd asks for Jesus' help but he takes the patient away to heal him in private; in both he is recorded unusually as touching specifically the organs affected, and in both there is mention of the use of saliva. That both these stories, with their more detailed account of Jesus' healing method, are among the very few pericope of Mark which do not appear in either Matthew or Luke, indicates perhaps either Mark's special interest in Jesus' healing technique or the discomfort of the other synoptists with the more 'earthy' (some would say 'magical') nature of the accounts (and their non Jewish location?)." France.

Mark 7:31

Καὶ πάλιν ἐξεληθὼν ἐκ τῶν ὀρίων Τύρου ἦλθεν διὰ Σιδῶνος εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἀνά μέσον τῶν ὀρίων Δεκαπόλεως.

παλιν again, once more
ὄριον, ου n see v.24

Instead of ἐκ τῶν ὀρίων Τύρου ἦλθεν διὰ Σιδῶνος some MSS read ἐκ τῶν ὀρίων Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος ἦλθεν... France comments, "Here the reading Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος is less well supported, and is best seen as a further reversion to the familiar biblical pair of names. The difficult geography of a journey from the region of Tyre to Decapolis via Sidon (which is in an almost opposite direction) would be another reason for 'correction' by a scribe who knew something of the geography of the area."

θάλασσα, ης f sea
ἀνα μέσον among, between

"Mark's terms may leave us geographically confused, but they convey clearly enough that Jesus, on his return to the lake from his journey into Phoenicia, remains outside properly Jewish territory rather than taking the more direct route to the Capernaum area. However and whyever he got there, Jesus is back in Decapolis." France.

Mark 7:32

καὶ φέρουσιν αὐτῷ κωφὸν καὶ μογιᾶλον, καὶ παρακαλοῦσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα ἐπιθῇ αὐτῷ τὴν χεῖρα.

φέρω bring, carry, bear, lead

κωφος, α, ον dumb, mute, deaf

Here the meaning is 'deaf'.

μογιᾶλος, ον having difficulty in speaking;
mute, dumb

A very rare word, occurring here only in the NT and in the LXX only in Isa 35:6. Strictly it means 'speaking with an impediment'. France comments, "In view of the likely influence of that passage of Isaiah in v. 37, it is probable that Mark's use of it [μογιᾶλον] here is also a deliberate allusion."

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge
ἐπιθῇ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἐπιτιθημι
place on

χειρ, χειρος f hand

Mark 7:33

καὶ ἀπολαβόμενος αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου κατ' ἰδίαν ἔβαλεν τοὺς δακτύλους αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰ ὄτια αὐτοῦ καὶ πτύσας ἤψατο τῆς γλώσσης αὐτοῦ,

ἀπολαβόμενος Verb, aor midd ptc, m nom s
ἀπολαμβανω midd take aside
κατ' ἰδίαν privately

Cf. v.36.

δακτυλος, ου m finger
οὖς, ὠτος n ear, hearing
πτωω spit
ἅπτω midd. take hold of, touch
γλωσσα, ης f tongue

"Such actions are common to the techniques of Greek and Jewish healers." Taylor. France comments, "How far these specific contacts with ear and with tongue were the physical 'means' of healing, and how far a psychological assurance to the patient of Jesus' ability to heal, is a question which is probably both inappropriate and unanswerable. But physical contact is clearly more appropriate in the case of a man who would be unable to hear spoken words."

Cranfield, commenting on the relevance of Mark's narrative to the life of the church says, "We may well see also in the order here (first ears, then tongue) a reminder that it is only as the church hears the Word of God that it has anything worthwhile to say."

Mark 7:34

καὶ ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐστενάξεν, καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Εφραθα, ὃ ἐστὶν Διανοίχθητι·

ἀναβλεπω look up
οὐρανος, ου m heaven

Emphasises the divine dimension in Jesus' healing powers.

στεναζω sigh, groan

Cf. Rom 8:22f. The term "indicates the strong emotion of Jesus as he wages war against the power of Satan, and has to seek divine aid in urgent prayer." Cranfield.

εφραθα (Aramaic word) be opened!

"The use of Aramaic in a probably non-Jewish context is not particularly significant, since the language was widely spoken outside Jewish circles, but Mark's recording of the Aramaic form suggests a memory of an impressive command on the part of someone who was there, perhaps the patient himself, for whom this may have been the first word he ever heard." France.

διανοίχθητι Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 s
διανοίγω open

Mark 7:35

καὶ ἠνοίγησαν αὐτοῦ αἰ ἀκοαί, καὶ ἐλύθη ὁ δεσμός τῆς γλώσσης αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐλάλει ὀρθῶς·

Metzger suggests that Mark's fondness for εὐθυσ/εως makes it quite likely that the inclusion is original. France, however, thinks that since there is no good reason for its later omission it is more likely that it is an addition to the original text. Either way, it makes no difference to the sense.

ἠνοίγησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl ἀνοίγω
open

ἀκοη, ης f hearing

ἐλύθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s λυω loose,
untie, release, set free

δεσμός, ου m (& n) bond, imprisonment

λαλεω speak, talk

ὀρθῶς rightly, correctly, properly

The impediment cured.

Mark 7:36

καὶ διεστείλατο αὐτοῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ λέγωσιν· ὅσον δὲ αὐτοῖς διεστέλλετο, αὐτοὶ μᾶλλον περισσότερον ἐκήρυσσον.

διεστείλατο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s
διαστελλομαι order, command

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as,
how much,

μαλλον adv more; rather

περισσοτερον adv. more

κηρυσσω preach, proclaim

"The imperfects διεστέλλετο and ἐκήρυσσον suggest a protracted appeal for silence, and equally protracted disobedience." France.

Mark 7:37

καὶ ὑπερπερισσῶς ἐξεπλήσοντο λέγοντες· Καλῶς πάντα πεποίηκεν, καὶ τοὺς κωφοὺς ποιεῖ ἀκούειν καὶ ἀλάλους λαλεῖν.

ὑπερπερισσῶς completely, exceedingly

Occurs here only in the NT.

ἐκπλησσομαι be amazed

Cranfield suggests that καλῶς παντα πεποίηκεν could be an echo of Gen 1:31. The latter part of the verse echoes Isa 35:5-6.

Mark 8:1-10

Cf. Mt 15:32-39. "Understood by most commentators as recording an incident in the primarily non-Jewish territory of the eastern shore, and thus as continuing the theme of Jesus' ministry among the Gentiles." France.

Mark 8:1

Ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις πάλιν πολλοῦ ὄχλου ὄντος καὶ μὴ ἐχόντων τί φάγωσιν, προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς μαθητὰς λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those
παλιν see 7:31

"παλιν underlines Mark's belief that this was a sequel to an earlier and similar event, and alerts the reader to compare and contrast the two stories." France.

φάγωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ἐσθιω
προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m
nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself,
summon

Mark 8:2

Σπλαγχνίζομαι ἐπὶ τὸν ὄχλον ὅτι ἤδη ἡμέραι τρεῖς προσμένουσίν μοι καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν τί φάγωσιν·

σπλαγχνίζομαι Cf. 6:34

ἤδη adv now, already

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
προσμενω remain, stay with

"Mark does not say whether the three-day period has been spent in teaching or in healing, or in both, but to remain so long away from home and food supplies suggests a remarkable enthusiasm and persistence among this presumably largely Gentile crowd." France.

Mark 8:3

καὶ ἐὰν ἀπολύσω αὐτοὺς νήστες εἰς οἶκον αὐτῶν, ἐκλυθήσονται ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ· καὶ τινες αὐτῶν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἦκασιν.

ἀπολυω release, send away, dismiss

νήστες Noun, acc pl νηστις, ιδος m & f
hungry, without food

ἐκλυομαι give up, faint

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

μακροθεν adv far off, from a distance

ἦκασιν Verb, pres act indic, 3 pl ἦκω
come, have come

Mark 8:4

καὶ ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι
Πόθεν τούτους δυνήσεται τις ὧδε χορτάσαι
ἄρτων ἐπ' ἑρημίας;

ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply
ποθεν interrog adv. from where, how
ὧδε adv here, in this place
χορτάσαι Verb, aor act infin χορταζω feed,
satisfy
ἐρημία, ας f deserted place, uninhabited
region

"The disciples' incredulity at the suggestion (not here, as in 6:37, a direct instruction) that food should be found for the crowd was natural enough in 6:37, but one might expect them to have learned from that experience... But the failure of the disciples to learn from the events they witness and to recognise the new dimensions which Jesus' ministry involves will become an increasingly prominent theme in the next act of Mark's story, and it will be precisely the point of Jesus' rebuke to his disciples in 8:17-21 that they have failed to learn from repeated experience." France.

Mark 8:5

καὶ ἡρώτα αὐτοῦς· Πόσους ἔχετε ἄρτους; οἱ δὲ
εἶπαν· Ἑπτὰ.

ἔρωταω ask, request
ποσος, η, ον how much(?), how many(?)

Cf. 6:38.

ἑπτα seven

Mark 8:6

καὶ παραγγέλλει τῷ ὄχλῳ ἀναπεσεῖν ἐπὶ τῆς
γῆς· καὶ λαβὼν τοὺς ἑπτὰ ἄρτους
εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἐδίδου τοῖς
μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ἵνα παρατιθῶσιν καὶ
παρέθηκαν τῷ ὄχλῳ.

παραγγελλω command, instruct
ἀναπεσεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἀναπιπτω sit,
sit at table, lean

γη, γης f earth
λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω
εὐχαριστεω thank, give thanks
κλαω break (only of bread)
ἐδίδου Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s διδωμι
παρατιθῶσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl
παρατιθημι place before, distribute
παρέθηκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl
παρατιθημι

Mark 8:7

καὶ εἶχον ἰχθύδια ὀλίγα· καὶ εὐλογήσας αὐτὰ
εἶπεν καὶ ταῦτα παρατιθέναι.

ἰχθυδιον, ου n small fish, fish
ὀλιγος, η, ον little, small; pl. few

Emphasises how inadequate this supply is for such a crowd.

εὐλογεω speak well of, bless

εὐλογήσας αὐτὰ "The various readings (αὐτὰ or ταυτα; order of participle and pronoun; omission of pronoun) do not affect the sense. εὐλογήσας αὐτὰ is probably the best attested. The omission of the pronoun may have been caused by discomfort over the inclusion of a different object (the fish) rather than leaving it to be assumed that God is 'blessed', though the same idiom occurs clearly in Lk 9:16; 1 Cor 10:16." France.

Mark 8:8

καὶ ἔφαγον καὶ ἐχορτάσθησαν, καὶ ἦσαν
περισσεύματα κλασμάτων ἑπτὰ σφυρίδας.

ἔφαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl ἐσθιω
χορταζω see v.4

αἶρω take, take up

περισευμα, τος n overflow, pieces left
over

κλασμα, τος n fragment, piece

σφυρις, ιδος f basket (larger than the
κοφινος)

Again, the crowd are fully satisfied.

Mark 8:9

ἦσαν δὲ ὡς τετρακισχίλιοι. καὶ ἀπέλυσεν
αὐτοῦς.

τετρακισχίλιοι, αι, α four thousand
ἀπολυω see v.3.

Mark 8:10

καὶ εὐθὺς ἐμβὰς εἰς τὸ πλοῖον μετὰ τῶν
μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ἦλθεν εἰς τὰ μέρη
Δαλμανουθά.

ἐμβαινω get into, embark

πλοιον, ου n boat, ship

μερος, ους n part

"The various forms of the name Δαλμανουθά, the different ways of designating it as a destination (τα μερη, το ὄρος, το ὄρια), and the substitution of different forms of a more familiar name (Μαγεδαν, Μαγδαλα, both found in the textual tradition of the parallel Mt 15:39) all result naturally from the presence in the text of an otherwise unknown name. τὰ μέρη Δαλμανουθα is the reading which best explains the rest." France.

Mark 8:11-13

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 αὐτοὺς 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.

Mark 8:11

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 ζητεῖω
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 πειράζοντες αὐτόν, 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."

Mark 8:12

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
ἀναστεναζῶ give a deep groan

Cf. 7:34.

γενεα, ας f generation, age

Cf. 8:38; 9:19.

For ἀμὴν λεγῶ ὑμῖν cf. 3:28.

δοθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s δίδωμι

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.

Mark 8:13

καὶ ἀφεις αὐτοὺς πάλιν ἐμβάς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸ πέραν.

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

πάλιν again, once more

ἐμβαίνω get into, embark

Some MSS add εἰς τὸ πλοῖον.

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.

Mark 8:14-21

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 συνημι 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.

Mark 8:14

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

πλοῖον, ου n boat

Mark 8:15

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 διεστέλλετο 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.

ὄραω see, make sure, see to

βλεπω see, beware of, watch out

ζύμη, 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 ζύμη in reference to teaching; Lk 12:1 glosses it by ἡτις ἐστὶν ὑποκρισις... [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 Φαρισαῖοι in 3:6 and 12:13 has led to the substitution of τῶν Ἡρώδιανων 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.

Mark 8:16

καὶ διελογίζοντο πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὅτι ἄρτους οὐκ ἔχουσιν.

διελογίζομαι 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.

Mark 8:17

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

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

νοεω understand, discern

συνημι and συνιω understand, comprehend

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

"Both *συνημι* 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.

Mark 8:18

ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες οὐ βλέπετε καὶ ὅτα 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.

Mark 8:19

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 αἶρω take, take up, take away

δωδεκα twelve

Cf. 6:43

Mark 8:20

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

ἑπτα seven

τετρακισχιλιοι, αι, α four thousand

σπυρις, ιδος f basket (larger than the κοφινος)

πληρωμα, τος n fulness, completeness, fulfilment

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

Mark 8:21

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 λεγετε 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. It's 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.

Mark 8:22-26

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."

Mark 8:22

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

φέρω bring, carry, bear, lead
 τυφλός, ἡ, ον blind
 παρακαλεῶ exhort, encourage, urge
 ἄψηται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 s ἅπτω midd.
 take hold of, touch

Mark 8:23

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

ἐπιλαβόμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom
 s ἐπιλαμβανομαι take hold of, sieze
 χεῖρ, χεῖρος f hand, power
 ἐκφέρω bring out; lead out
 ἐξω out, outside, away
 κώμη, ἡς 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.

πτύω spit
 ὄμμα, τος n eye
 ἐπιθείς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἐπιτιθεῖμι
 place on, place, put
 ἐπήρωτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s
 ἐπερωτᾶω ask, question
 βλέπω 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.

Mark 8:24

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

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

δένδρον, ον n tree
 ὁρᾶω see, observe, perceive
 περιπατεῶ walk, walk about

"The contrast with seeing τηλαυγῶς 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.

Mark 8:25

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 ἐπιτιθεῖμι
 διαβλεπῶ see clearly
 ἀπεκατέστη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s
 ἀποκαθιστηῖμι reestablish, restore
 ἐμβλεπῶ 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.

τηλαυγῶς clearly, plainly
 ἅπας, ασα, αν (alternative form of πας) all, whole; pl 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.

Mark 8:26

καὶ ἀπέστειλεν αὐτὸν εἰς οἶκον αὐτοῦ λέγων·
Μηδὲ εἰς τὴν κώμην εἰσέλθῃς

ἀπέστειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

ἀποστελλῶ 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."

Mark 8:27-33

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.

Mark 8:27

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

τὰς κώμας 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

ἐπερωτῶ see v.23

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

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

Mark 8:28

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

βαπτιστης, 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.

Mark 8:29

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

The ὑμεῖς is emphatic, '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 endued 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.

Mark 8:30

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, μηδεμα, 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 Χριστος is forbidden." France.

Mark 8:31

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.

τρεις, 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.

Mark 8:32

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

ἐπιτιμαω command, rebuke

Suggests a confident and confrontational approach by Peter.

Mark 8:33

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

ἐπιστραφεὶς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s

ἐπιστρεφω turn round, turn

ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὁραω 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.

ὕπαγω 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.

φρονεω 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.

Mark 8:34-9:1

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

Mark 8:34

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.

Mark 8:35

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

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

"ἐμοῦ 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 ἐμοῦ 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.

Mark 8:36

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

ὠφελῶ gain, profit, benefit
κερδῆσαι Verb, aor act infin κερδαίνω
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 ζημιῶ
(only in pass) lose, suffer loss

Mark 8:37

τί γὰρ δοῖ ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ;

δοῖ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s δίδωμι

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

ἀνταλλάγμα, τος η something offered in exchange

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

Mark 8:38

ὃς γὰρ ἐὰν ἐπαισχυνθῆ 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 λογους 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 λογους, 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 υἱὸς 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 υἱὸς 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 ἔλθῃ 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 υἱὸς 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 γεύσονται 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

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

θανατος, ου m death

ἕως (ἂν) until

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

ἐληλυθυῖαν Verb, perf act ptc, f acc s
έρχομαι

"The perfect tense of ἐληλυθυῖαν indicates that they are not to see the 'coming' of the βασιλεια 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.

Mark 9:2-8

Cf. Mt 17:1-8; Lk 9:28-36. "Underlying Mark's telling of the story are clear echoes of the OT. This is explicit in the naming of Elijah and Moses as Jesus' companions in the vision. The 'transformation' of Jesus and the shining of his clothes may recall the shining of Moses' face in Ex 34:29-35, though Mark offers no verbal echoes or direct parallels to that account. More explicit are the repeated reminders of Moses' experiences at Sinai in Ex. 24. Moses took three named companions (though also seventy others) up onto the high mountain to meet with God (Ex. 24:1, 9), and there they had a vision of the divine glory (24:10); subsequently Moses went higher with only Joshua as a companion (24:13-14); cloud covered the mountain (24:15), and after 'six days' Moses went up into it (24:16); there God spoke to Moses (Ex. 25ff.); when Moses relayed God's words to the people, they promised to obey (24:3, 7). Mark's narrative does not reproduce exactly the Exodus story, but there are enough verbal and conceptual echoes to trigger thoughts of a new Sinai experience, and perhaps of Jesus as a new Moses (see on v.4). The fact that Elijah also met with God on the same mountain (1 Ki. 19:8-18) reinforces the link." France.

Mark 9:2

Καὶ μετὰ ἡμέρας ἕξ παραλαμβάνει ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν Πέτρον καὶ τὸν Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην, καὶ ἀναφέρει αὐτοὺς εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν κατ' ἰδίαν μόνους. καὶ μετεμορφώθη ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν, ἕξ six

"No other temporal statement in Mk outside of the Passion is so precise." Taylor. "Its effect is to link the ensuing story closely with the saying of 9:1, and to invite the reader to interpret the one in the light of the other." France.

παραλαμβάνω take

ἀναφέρω lead or take up

ὄρος, ος n mountain, hill

ὑψηλός, η, ον high

Cranfield says that while this mountain has from early times traditionally been identified as Tabor, that mountain is only 2000 ft high. He suggests that at more than 9000 ft, one of the spurs of Mt Hermon might be more appropriate. France thinks Mt Heron is more likely as "much closer to Caesarea Philippi and more nearly en route to Capernaum", but adds, "apart from the demands of the tourist industry, it seems neither important nor possible to determine just where the 'high mountain' was."

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own; κατ' ἰδιαν privately
 μονος, η, ον adj only, alone
 μετεμορφωθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s
 μεταμορφοομαι be changed in form

This verb occurs in the NT only here, the Mt. parallel and in Rom 12:2 and 2 Cor 3:18.

ἐμπροσθεν prep + gen before, in front of

Mark 9:3

καὶ τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο στίλβοντα λευκὰ
 λίαν οἷα γναφεὺς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οὐ δύναται οὕτως
 λευκᾶναι.

ἱματιον, ου n garment, clothing, robe
 στίλβω glisten, dazzle, shine
 λευκος, η, ον white, shining
 λιαν adv exceedingly, greatly
 οίος, α, ον relative pronoun such as, of what
 kind

γναφευς, εως m one who bleaches (cloth)
 ούτως adv. thus, in this way
 λευκᾶναι Verb, aor act infin λευκαινω
 make white; bleach

Cf. Dan 7:9; Rev 3:5; 4:4; 7:9. Mt and Lk also mention Jesus' face shone. France comments, "Shining white clothing is a feature of accounts of the appearance of heavenly beings." Cf. Ps. 104:1-2.

Calvin says it was a "temporary exhibition of his glory" which would enable the disciples after the resurrection to realise that "even during the time that he emptied himself (Phil 2:7), he continued to retain his divinity entire, though it was concealed under the veil of his flesh."

Mark 9:4

καὶ ὄφθη αὐτοῖς Ἡλίας σὺν Μωϋσεῖ, καὶ ἦσαν
 συλλαλοῦντες τῷ Ἰησοῦ.

ὄφθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ὄραω see
 Ἡλιας, ου m Elijah

France comments, "Of the many suggestions as to the significance of these two figures in Mark's narrative, probably the least valid is the traditional idea that they represent the law and the prophets. The fact that Elijah's name precedes Moses' would be very odd on this view; besides Elijah was not a writing prophet, and it is not in that capacity that he is discussed in vv. 11-13. What his presence triggers in the disciples' minds is the promise of his eschatological return (for which see below on vv. 11-13), and it is this which would probably have been uppermost in Jewish minds at that time (hence the popular tendency to identify Jesus as the new Elijah, 6:15; 8:28). Moses, too, featured in eschatological hopes, at least in the form of the promised 'prophet like Moses' of Dt. 18:15-19 who was the central figure in Samaritan messianic hope. The reappearance of these two great figures of the past thus symbolises the coming of the long-expected messianic age." France quotes Schweitzer, "This story has united two expectations which were alive in Judaism: the coming of the prophet of the end-time who is like Moses and the appearing of Elijah at the dawning of the end-time. It has declared to every Jew that the fulfilment of the history of Israel and of every hope for the glorious end-time have already begun with the coming of Jesus."

συλλαλεω speak with, talk with

Mark 9:5

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Πέτρος λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ·
 Ῥαββί, καλόν ἐστιν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι, καὶ
 ποιήσωμεν τρεῖς σκηνάς, σοὶ μίαν καὶ Μωϋσεῖ
 μίαν καὶ Ἡλίᾳ μίαν.

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

Here not 'reply' but 'respond'.

ῤαββι rabbi, teacher, master

"The vocative Ῥαββί, occurring here for the first time, means the same as διδάσκαλε (see on 4:38), but in this context, where Jesus has been revealed to be so much more than a human 'teacher', it seems even more inadequate. It appropriately conveys Peter's total failure to grasp the significance of the occasion, and fits well with the bizarre proposal to erect shelters on the mountain for each of the august 'teachers'." France.

καλος, η, ον good, right, proper, fine,
 beautiful, precious

ὧδε adv here, in this place

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

ποιησωμεν – hortatory subjunctive

τρεεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

σκηνη, ης f tent, temporary shelter,
tabernacle, dwelling place

"Peter was perhaps thinking of shelters made of intertwined branches or twigs such as were used in the Feast of Tabernacles... [though] it is possible that Peter's idea was to provide more permanent dwelling places." Cranfield.

εις, μια, εν gen ενος, μιας, ενος one

Mark 9:6

οὐ γὰρ ἦδει τί ἀποκριθῆ, ἔκφοβοι γὰρ ἐγένοντο.

ἦδει Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 s οἶδα know,
understand

ἀποκριθῆ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἀποκρίνομαι
ἐκφοβος, ον frightened, terrified
ἐγένοντο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 pl
γίνομαι

Mark 9:7

καὶ ἐγένετο νεφέλη ἐπισκιάζουσα αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἐγένετο φωνὴ ἐκ τῆς νεφέλης· Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ.

νεφέλη, ης f cloud

"The OT background is here of the utmost importance. Cf the following groups of passages: Ex 13:21f; 14:19f, 24; 40:36-38; Num 9:15-23; Ex 33:9f; 40:34f; Lev 16:2; Ex 16:10; 34:5; Ex 19:16; 24:15-18; Deut 5:22; Ps 78:14; 99:7; 105:39; 1 Kings 8:10f; 2 Chron 5:13f; Ezek 10:3f; Is 4:5... In the NT cf. Acts 1:9; Mk 13:26; 14:62; 1 Thess 4:17." Cranfield. France comments that "the echoes here are more specifically of the Sinai narratives, in the coming of a cloud on the mountain (Ex. 19:16; 24:15-16) and the voice of God speaking from the cloud (Ex 19:9; 24:16; 24:18-25:1; 34:5). Ex 19:9 offers a particularly interesting parallel, in that God's speaking out of the cloud to Moses was intended to ensure that the Israelites would thereafter heed his words; here, too, the voice is not so much a pronouncement to Jesus but is addressed to the disciples, and calls on them as a result to 'listen to him'. The manifestly divine means of communication authenticates the messenger."

ἐπισκιάζω overshadow, fall upon
ἀγαπητος, η, ον beloved

Ὁν ἀκούετε αὐτον Cf. Deut 18:15.

"When he enjoins us to hear him, he appoints him to be the supreme and only Teacher of his Church... he alone is appointed to be our Teacher, that in him all authority may dwell." Calvin. Jesus is the one in whom all the Law and the Prophets find their focus and fulfilment. France comments, "In the light of these words, Peter's proposal to put Elijah and Moses on a par with Jesus is seen to be even more out of place."

Mark 9:8

καὶ ἐξάπινα περιβλεψάμενοι οὐκέτι οὐδένα εἶδον ἀλλὰ τὸν Ἰησοῦν μόνον μεθ' ἑαυτῶν.

ἐξάπινα suddenly

"Mark's use of the rare word ἐξάπινα rather than his usual εὐθύς emphasises the dramatic change." France.

περιβλεψάμενοι Verb, aor midd ptc, m nom
pl περιβλεπομαι look around
οὐκετι adv no longer, no more
οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing
εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω see
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

Mark 9:9-13

Cf. Mt 17:9-13.

Mark 9:9

Καὶ καταβαινόντων αὐτῶν ἐκ τοῦ ὄρους διεστείλατο αὐτοῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ ἃ εἶδον διηγήσωνται, εἰ μὴ ὅταν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆ.

καταβαινω come or go down, descend

ὄρος, ος n see v.2

διεστείλατο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s

διαστελλομαι order, give strict orders
μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing

εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω see

διηγήσωνται Verb, aor midd dep subj, 3 pl

διηγεομαι tell, relate

εἰ μὴ except

ὅταν when

νεκρος, α, ον dead

ἀναστῆ Verb, 2nd aor act subj, 3 s ἀνίστημι
rise

Cranfield points out that the disciples would not have understood what they had witnessed until after the Resurrection. France comments, "It is likely that the messianic and eschatological connotations of the vision would have sparked off the same sort of triumphalism and misdirected hopes which made the term ὁ Χριστός itself so hazardous. There is triumph to come, but before that there is to be rejection and death in Jerusalem. Only after that, and after ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστή, would it be possible for the vision to be shared without provoking the wrong sort of messianic enthusiasm. By that time, the open secret of Jesus' resurrection would already have made public something of what this private vision had told them about Jesus."

Mark 9:10

καὶ τὸν λόγον ἐκράτησαν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς συζητοῦντες τί ἐστὶν τὸ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστήναι.

κρατεῶ hold, hold fast, hold back
ἑαυτός, ἑαυτή, ἑαυτόν him/her/itself

πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς could be read either with καὶ τὸν λόγον ἐκράτησαν or with συζητοῦντες τί ἐστὶν τὸ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστήναι.

συζητεῶ argue, discuss, question
ἀναστήναι Verb, 2nd aor act infin ἀνίστημι

France comments "If the disciples understood Jesus to be talking of his own individual restoration to life after death within the normal course of history, they had good reason to be bewildered, as no clear precedent for such an idea can be found in extant literature of the period. They would more easily have understood 'resurrection' language less literally, probably as part of a more general eschatological hope rather than of his individual destiny." The central assertion of the NT that Jesus' bodily resurrection is the intrusion of the eschaton was, at this juncture, incomprehensible to the disciples.

Mark 9:11

καὶ ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες· Ὅτι λέγουσιν οἱ γραμματεῖς ὅτι Ἡλίαν δεῖ ἐλθεῖν πρῶτον;

ἐπερωτῶ ask, interrogate, question

For the interrogative use of ὅτι, cf. 2:16.

γραμματεὺς, εὼς m scribe

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must

ἐλθεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐρχομαι

πρῶτον adv. first

"The disciples' question arises naturally out of the appearance of Elijah on the mountain, and confirms the essentially eschatological implications of the incident; a reappearance of Elijah could mean only one thing, the coming of the 'great and terrible day of the LORD' (Mal 4:5). But Elijah's coming is to be 'before' that day comes; he is to come πρῶτον. (Note that neither Malachi nor the disciples' question here suggests that Elijah is to precede the *Messiah*; he is the herald of the 'day of the LORD'.) How then does his presence on the mountain fit in with the eschatological dimension of Jesus' ministry and the coming of the kingdom of God?" France.

Mark 9:12

ὁ δὲ ἔφη αὐτοῖς· Ἡλίας μὲν ἐλθὼν πρῶτον ἀποκαθιστάνει πάντα, καὶ πῶς γέγραπται ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἵνα πολλὰ πάθη καὶ ἐξουδενηθῇ;

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say
μὲν here means, 'indeed', 'it is true'
ἀποκαθιστήμι reestablish, restore

Cf. Mal 4:5f (LXX) and also Acts 3:21.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφῶ
write

πάθη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s πασχω suffer

ἐξουδενηθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s

ἐξουδενεῶ treat with contempt,

despise; reject

Cf. Is 53:3 and Ps 118 (LXX 117):22 as quoted in Acts 4:11.

"Having admitted that the scribes are correct in this that they say, Jesus goes on to suggest that this 'restoring of all things' cannot mean just what on the surface it seems to mean, since scripture foretells for the Son of Man much suffering and humiliation." Cranfield.

Mark 9:13

ἀλλὰ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι καὶ Ἡλίας ἐλήλυθεν, καὶ ἐποίησαν αὐτῷ ὅσα ἤθελον, καθὼς γέγραπται ἐπ' αὐτόν.

ἐλήλυθεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s ἐρχομαι

"In the person of John the Baptist: cf. Mt 17:13; 11:14 and also Mk 1:2-6 parallels." Cranfield.

France comments, "What then was the significance of Elijah's appearance on the mountain, if Malachi's prophecy has already been fulfilled in John the Baptist? No direct connection is made, but the perfect tense of Ἠλίας ἐλήλυθεν directs the disciples' minds away from their natural assumption that what they have just witnessed was the fulfilment of the prophecy. That has already happened, and the vision on the mountain stands apart. Its significance is not the coming of Elijah as such, but in the appearance of Jesus as himself the focus of the fulfilment of OT hopes. The brief appearance of Moses and Elijah on the mountain testifies to *his* eschatological role, rather than giving to either of them a role of their own in the messianic events now unfolding."

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as, how much, how far

θελω wish, will

France makes the point that such treatment is not predicted in Malachi. The reference, he suggests, is to the historical Elijah who was "driven by his faithfulness to God's commission into potentially fatal conflict with the royal house (1 Ki. 19:2-3, 10, 14). His bold confrontations with Ahab and Jezebel prefigure John's open challenge to Antipas and Herodias; the difference is that Herodias will succeed where Jezebel failed."

Mark 9:14-29

Cf. Mt 17:14-21; Lk 9:37-43a.

The vividness of this section suggests personal reminiscence by someone who came back down the mountain with Jesus.

"Apart from the two healings of the blind which 'frame' the journey to Jerusalem, this is the only other 'normal' miracle recorded in the gospel after Act One. There is of course also the cursing of the fig tree in chapter 11, but that is, as we shall see, a symbolic act of power quite unlike the miracles of Act One, in which Jesus' special ἐξουσία is deployed to meet human need... What distinguishes this narrative from the others is the previous failure of the disciples (vv. 14-18) and their subsequent question about why they had failed (vv. 28-29). It is this feature which gives the story a special appropriateness for Act Two... The lesson here, then, derives from a spectacular failure to fulfil the commission to cast out demons which has been given to the twelve in 3:15 and 6:7, and which they have already begun to undertake successfully (6:13). In the light of that earlier success, the failure has come as an unwelcome surprise to them, as well as to the watching crowd." France.

Mark 9:14

Καὶ ἐλθόντες πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς εἶδον ὄχλον πολὺν περὶ αὐτοὺς καὶ γραμματεῖς συζητοῦντας πρὸς αὐτούς.

"It seems likely that Mark wrote the plural ἐλθόντες ... εἶδον, continuing the account of the four men who went up the mountain, and that the verbs were altered to the singulars found in most MSS and versions in order to focus attention on Jesus, thus providing an antecedent for αὐτόν (v. 15) and the singular verbs which follow." France.

εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω see
ὄχλος, ον m crowd, multitude
γραμματεὺς, εως m scribe
συζητεω argue, discuss, question

"συζητεω (especially when followed by πρὸς) sometimes carries a hostile sense, 'dispute with', and here, where the grammatical subject of συζητούντας is specifically the γραμματεῖς, we are reminded of other occasions when hostile criticism has come not from the crowd but from a group of scribes (2:6, 16; 3:22; 7:1). The disciples' failure has given them further grounds for scepticism. The crowd, on the other hand, appears to be well disposed, at least in the welcome they gave to Jesus, perhaps already hoping for a more successful treatment of the boy's condition. Their leaving the disciples and running up to meet Jesus emphasises the distinction between the Master and his followers." France.

Mark 9:15

καὶ εὐθὺς πᾶς ὁ ὄχλος ἰδόντες αὐτὸν ἐξεθαμβήθησαν, καὶ προστρέχοντες ἠσπάζοντο αὐτόν.

ἰδόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὄραω
ἐξεθαμβήθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
ἐκθαμβεομαι be greatly surprised or alarmed

"Probably their astonishment was due to Jesus' unexpected and opportune arrival – the suggestion that it was because Jesus' face was still shining after the Transfiguration, like Moses' face (Ex. 34:29ff), is not very likely." Cranfield. France, also dismissing the idea of Jesus' face shining, says, "More likely Mark uses the verb rather extravagantly to denote the powerful impression which Jesus' personal presence by now created; 'this authority emanates from him even before he speaks or acts' (Schweitzer)." France.

προστρέχω run up to
ἀσπάζομαι greet, welcome

Mark 9:16

καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτούς· Τί συζητεῖτε πρὸς αὐτούς;

ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question

Cranfield thinks that the first αὐτούς refers to the crowd and the second to the disciples. France thinks that the first αὐτούς refers to the scribes, cf. v. 14.

Mark 9:17

καὶ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ εἷς ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου·
Διδάσκαλε, ἤνεγκα τὸν υἱόν μου πρὸς σέ,
ἔχοντα πνεῦμα ἄλαλον·

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

ἤνεγκα Verb, aor act indic, 1 s φερω bring,
lead

"It was his intention to bring his son to Jesus, but he had found the disciples without Jesus." Cranfield.

ἄλαλος, ον unable to speak, dumb

"It is surprising ... to find that the demon is described as πνεῦμα ἄλαλον. The same characteristic is picked up by Jesus' address to the demon in v. 25, το ἄλαλον και κωθον πνευμα. While there is nothing improbable in this combination of problems, it is interesting that neither Matthew nor Luke mentions a speech defect, and Mark's narrative focuses on the 'epileptic' symptoms rather than on the restoration of speech. The fact that the boy was also dumb seems to one of those 'irrelevant' narrative details which Mark so often preserves even though it is not where his interest centred." France.

Mark 9:18

καὶ ὅπου ἐὰν αὐτὸν καταλάβῃ ῥήσσει αὐτόν,
καὶ ἀφρίζει καὶ τρίξει τοὺς ὀδόντας καὶ
ξηραίνεται· καὶ εἶπα τοῖς μαθηταῖς σου ἵνα
αὐτὸ ἐκβάλωσιν, καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσαν.

ὅπου adv. where, while; ὅπου ἂν οἱ ὅπου

ἐὰν wherever, whenever

καταλάβῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s

καταλαμβάνω seize

ῥήσσει Verb, pres act indic, 3 s ῥηγγυμι and

ῥησσω burst, break forth

Liddell and Scott suggest that this is not from ῥησσω/ῥηγγυμι but from ῥησσω, the Ionic form of ῥασσω or ῥαττω ('dash' or 'dash down').

ἀφρίζω foam at the mouth

τρίξω grind (of teeth)

ὄδους, ὀδοντος m tooth

ξηραίνω dry up; pass wither; become stiff

Trench recognises that this is an accurate description of epilepsy, but continues, "Not that we have here *only* an epileptic; but this was the ground on which the deeper spiritual evils of this child were super-induced." France warns against reading a modern medical diagnosis into the story. He comments, "In the circumstances it seems wiser to avoid the word 'epilepsy' here, and to interpret the story, as all three evangelists tell it, as one of exorcism. This may help to avoid two opposite and unhelpful extremes, on the one hand the reductionist assumption that all biblical accounts of demon possessions are merely primitive ways of describing malfunctions of the brain, and on the other hand the simplistic attribution of epilepsy as we know it to demonic causes."

εἶπα Verb, aor act indic, 1 s (less usual form)

λεγω

ἐκβάλλω throw out, expel, cast out

ἰσχυω be strong, be able, be sufficient

Cf. the use of ἰσχυω in 5:4.

Mark 9:19

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτοῖς λέγει· ἼΩ γενεὰ
ἄπιστος, ἕως πότε πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἔσομαι; ἕως πότε
ἀνέξομαι ὑμῶν; φέρετε αὐτὸν πρὸς με

ὦ Ο!

γενεα, ας f generation, age

ἄπιστος, ον unfaithful, unbelieving

"Possibly not exclusively directed at the disciples, but surely it is to them specially that the words are addressed. It is their lack of faith that has been brought to light by their failure to cure the lad (cf. Mt 17:20)." Cranfield. France says of the disciples, "Their faithlessness is symptomatic of the wider human condition, as Jesus in his ministry so often encountered it, an unwillingness to take God at his word and a horizon limited to merely human possibilities."

πότε interrog adv. when? (ἕως ποτε how long?)

ἔσομαι Verb, fut indic, 1 s εἰμι

ἀνεχομαι endure, be patient with

Cf. Dt. 32:5. "Not so much of one longing to put off the evil of the flesh, as of a master complaining of the slowness and dullness of his scholars; 'Have I abode with you all this time, and have you profited so little by my teaching'." Trench.

"But the remedy at this point is not further teaching for the crowd, or even for the disciples, but a visible demonstration of his own ἐξουσία and of the liberating power of God. With the command φέρετε αὐτὸν πρὸς με (which is just what the father had originally tried to do, v.17) the reader is put on the alert to see the disciples' failure overturned." France.

Mark 9:20

καὶ ἤνεγκαν αὐτὸν πρὸς αὐτόν. καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν τὸ πνεῦμα εὐθὺς συνεσπάραξεν αὐτόν, καὶ πεσὼν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐκυλίετο ἀφρίζων.

ἤνεγκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl φέρω
 ἰδὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω
 συσπαρασσῶ throw into convulsions, throw into a fit
 πεσῶν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s πιπῶ
 fall, fall down

The subject changes from the demon to the boy.

γη, γης f earth
 κυλιομαι roll about
 ἀφρίζω foam at the mouth

Mark 9:21

καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ· Πόσος χρόνος ἐστὶν ὡς τοῦτο γέγονεν αὐτῷ; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· Ἐκ παιδιόθεν·

ποσος, η, ον how much(?)
 χρονος, ου m time, period of time
 ὡς here 'since'
 γέγονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s γινομαι
 παιδιοθεν from childhood

Mark 9:22

καὶ πολλάκις καὶ εἰς πῦρ αὐτὸν ἔβαλεν καὶ εἰς ὕδατα ἵνα ἀπολέσῃ αὐτόν· ἀλλ' εἴ τι δύνη, βοήθησον ἡμῖν σπλαγχνισθεὶς ἐφ' ἡμᾶς.

πολλακις often, repeatedly, frequently
 πυρ, ος n fire
 ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water
 ἀπολλυμι destroy
 δύνη Verb, fut midd dep indic, 2 s δυναιμι

Cf. the certainty of the leper in 1:40. "In the light of the disciples' recent failure the father is understandably cautious in asking for deliverance even by Jesus." France.

βοήθησον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s βοηθεω
 help
 σπλαγχνισθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s σπλαγχνιζομαι
 take pity, have compassion

Cf. 6:34.

Mark 9:23

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Τὸ εἰ δύνη, πάντα δυνατὰ τῷ πιστεύοντι.

The awkwardness of the expression has given rise to several textual variants including the inclusion of πιστευσσαι (TR). Metzger comments, "The extreme expression of the sentence has given trouble to the copyists. Not seeing that in το εἰ δυνη Jesus is repeating the words of the father in order to challenge them, a majority of witnesses have inserted πιστευσσαι, which has the effect of changing the subject of the verb 'can' from Jesus to the father."

Cranfield says of το εἰ δυνη "The το has the effect of making εἰ δυνη into a noun. Translate: 'As to your "If you can"... Jesus quotes the father's words in order to challenge them." France suggests "'If you can" indeed!'

δυνατος, η, ον possible
 πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)

Cranfield suggests that the sense is, "There is nothing which is impossible for (i.e. in the view of) a man who has faith' (in other words, 'A man who has faith will not set any limit to what I (Jesus) (or perhaps God?) can do')." France says similarly, "Faith is not a mechanical aid to the exorcist, but rather the attitude, or better the relationship with God, required of all concerned if the force of evil is to be defeated."

Mark 9:24

εὐθὺς κράξας ὁ πατήρ τοῦ παιδίου ἔλεγεν· Πιστεύω· βοήθει μου τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ.

κράξας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s κραζω
 cry out
 παιδιον, ου n child

Many MSS include μετα δακρυων before ἐλεγε(v). This "appears to be a Western storytelling embellishment." France.

πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)
 βοηθεω see v.22
 ἀπιστια, ας f unbelief

"He declares that he *believes*, and yet acknowledges himself to have *unbelief*. These two statements appear to contradict each other, but there is none of us that does not experience both of them in himself. As our *faith* is never perfect, it follows that we are partly *unbelievers*; but God forgives us, and exercises such forbearance towards us, as to reckon us believers on account of a small portion of faith." Calvin.

We might add that it is not the quantity of faith that is important but its object: there is no power in faith itself but only in the one in whom it rests. "The apparent *carte blanche* offered by πάντα δυνατὰ τῷ πιστεύοντι, as of many other NT assurances about prayer, may need to be tempered by pastoral advice, but it puts the emphasis where it should be, on the unlimited power of God in whom faith is placed; it rules out the suggestion that any force, certainly not the present demonic opponent, can be too much for God." France.

Mark 9:25

ιδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἐπισυντρέχει ὄχλος ἐπετίμησεν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἀκαθάρτῳ λέγων αὐτῷ· Τὸ ἄλαλον καὶ κωφὸν πνεῦμα, ἐγὼ ἐπιτάσσω σοι, ἐξέλθε ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ μηκέτι εἰσέλθῃς εἰς αὐτόν.

ιδὼν see v.20

ἐπισυντρέχω gather rapidly, close in

ἐπιτιμαῶ command, order

ἀκαθαρός, ον unclean

ἄλαλος, ον see v.17

κωφος, α, ον dumb, mute, deaf

ἐπιτάσσω command, order

"The inclusion of the pronoun ἐγὼ suggests that ἐγὼ ἐπιτάσσω σοι (unparalleled in the gospels in such a context) is not a redundant piece of 'padding', but draws attention to the person issuing the order: 'It is I who command it'. The demon may have been able to resist the lesser authority of the disciples, but has now met its match (cf. the recognition of Jesus and his authority by demons in 1:24; 3:11; 5:7, 10)." France.

μηκετι no longer

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

"Mt, 12:43-45 envisages the possibility of the return of an expelled demon, and the request of Legion's demons for an alternative home (5:12) indicates the problem of homelessness for an evicted demon, a problem which an exorcist had to take into account, hence this specific command not to return. For the father it is a much needed reassurance that a condition which has persisted ἐκ παιδιοθεν is now at an end." France.

Mark 9:26

καὶ κράζας καὶ πολλὰ σπαράζας ἐξῆλθεν· καὶ ἐγένετο ὡσεὶ νεκρὸς ὥστε τοὺς πολλοὺς λέγειν ὅτι ἀπέθανεν.

κράζας see v.24

σπαράζας Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s

σπαρασσῶ throw into convulsions

ὡσει like, as

νεκρός, α, ον dead

ὥστε so that, with the result that
ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνήσκω
die

Mark 9:27

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς αὐτοῦ ἤγειρεν αὐτόν, καὶ ἀνέστη.

κρατέω hold, hold fast, sieze

χειρ, χειρός f hand

Cf. 1:31; 5:41-42.

ἐγείρω raise

ἀνέστη Verb, 2 aor act indic, 3 s ἀνίστημι

rise, stand up

Mark 9:28

καὶ εἰσελθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς οἶκον οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ κατ' ἰδίαν ἐπηρώτων αὐτόν· Ὅτι ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἠδυνήθημεν ἐκβαλεῖν αὐτό;

εἰσελθόντος Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in

οἶκος, ον m house

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own; κατ' ἰδίαν privately

ἐπερωτῶ ask, question

ὅτι here = τί as in 2:16; 9:11

ἠδυνήθημεν Verb, aor pass dep indic, 1 pl

δυναμαι be able to, be capable of

ἐκβαλλῶ throw out, expel, cast out

Their puzzlement was caused perhaps by the fact that they had not exceeded their commission (Matt 10:8) and had on former occasions found the demons subject to them (Lk 10:17).

Mark 9:29

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τοῦτο τὸ γένος ἐν οὐδενὶ δύναται ἐξελεθεῖν εἰ μὴ ἐν προσευχῇ.

γενος, ος n family, race, sort, kind

προσευχη, ης f prayer

"After ἐν προσευχῇ most MSS add καὶ νηστεια, but the authorities supporting omission (κ* B k geo¹ Clement), though few, are important. Moreover, there was a tendency to add references to fasting, as is seen in Acts 10:30; 1 Cor 7:5 (though in both instances the MS evidence for inclusion is weaker than in Mk 9:29). We find also that this verse with the reference to fasting is added to the Byzantine and other authorities in the Mt parallel. A motive for addition was near at hand in the interest of the early Church in fasting, indicated in such passages as Acts 13:2; 14:23; *Didache* 7 and 8; Justin, *I Apol* 61. It is more difficult to think of a possible motive for omission... We conclude that 'and fasting' is not part of the original text, and that behind this addition lies a radical misunderstanding of Jesus' point. By 'prayer' he means not merely prayer as a pious exercise, but rather the sense of complete dependence on God which sincere prayer brings. But it was early misunderstood in the sense of a meritorious human pious activity, as though what the disciples needed was greater 'holiness' of an ascetic sort." Cranfield. France, however, having carefully considered the evidence and various arguments, concludes, "While the words might have been added to promote a current ascetic spirituality, they might equally have been omitted to discourage an overemphasis on fasting, or perhaps because a scribe felt them to be incompatible with the dismissal of fasting in 2:19. In the light of the massive external evidence for the inclusion of καὶ νηστεια, they should perhaps be retained, despite the confident A rating in UBS⁴ (unless it is believed that κ and B together can never be wrong!). Huck-Greeven retains."

"It would seem that the disciples had thought of the gift of 6:7 as given to them in such a way that they had henceforth the disposing of it; and therein had lain their lack of faith. They had to learn that God's power is not given to men in that way. It has rather ever to be asked for afresh (ἐν προσευχῇ) and received afresh. To trust God's power in the sense that we imagine that we have it in our control and at our disposal is tantamount to unbelief; for it is really to trust in ourselves instead of God." Cranfield. France comments similarly, "The disciples' problem ... has been a loss of the sense of dependence on Jesus' unique ἐξουσια which has undergirded their earlier exorcistic success. They have become blasé and thought of themselves as now the natural experts in such a case, and they must learn that in spiritual conflict there is no such automatic power. Their public humiliation has been a necessary part of their education to the principles of the kingdom of God."

Mark 9:30-32

Cf. Mt 17:22-23; Lk 9:43b-45. "The process of re-educating the disciples which began in 8:31 with the first announcement of Jesus' coming rejection and death is now resumed with a second such announcement (9:30-32). As in 8:32-33, the disciples again respond by revealing how completely they have misunderstood the values of the kingdom of God, and Jesus offers a further lesson in the reversal of natural expectations (9:33-37)." France.

Mark 9:30

Κάκειθεν ἐξελθόντες παρεπορεύοντο διὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας, καὶ οὐκ ἤθελεν ἵνα τις γνοῖ·

κάκειθεν and from there – formed from καὶ ἐκειθεν

I.e. from the house mentioned in v.28 or from the region.

ἐξελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m pl nom
ἐξέρχομαι

παρεπορεύομαι pass by, go through
ἤθελεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s θελω
wish, will

γνοῖ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s γινώσκω

Mark 9:31

ἐδίδασκεν γὰρ τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι Ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων, καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ ἀποκτανθεὶς μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστήσεται.

διδάσκω teach

παραδίδωμι hand over, deliver up

"A futuristic present which conveys a note of assurance." Taylor. "The future course of events is already decided." France. Cranfield suggests that beyond the idea of human betrayal and manipulation there is also "that of Jesus being delivered by God into the power of men (cf. Rom 8:32 and also 4:25)."

χειρ, χειρος f see v.27

ἀποκτενοῦσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl
ἀποκτείνω and ἀποκτενῶ, -ννω kill,
put to death

ἀποκτανθεῖς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s
ἀποκτείνω

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

ἀναστήσεται Verb, fut midd indic, 3 s
ἀνιστημι rise, come back to life

Mark 9:32

οἱ δὲ ἠγνόουν τὸ ῥῆμα, καὶ ἐφοβοῦντο αὐτὸν ἐπερωτῆσαι.

ἠγνόουν Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl
ἀγνοεῶ not know, fail to understand

Cf. 4:13, 40; 6:52; 7:18; 8:17; 9:10.

ῥῆμα, ατος n word, thing, matter

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

ἐπερωταῶ see v.28

"They understood enough to be afraid to ask to understand more." Best.

Mark 9:33-37

Cf. Mt. 18:1-5; Lk 9:46-48.

Mark 9:33

Καὶ ἦλθον εἰς Καφαρναοῦμ. καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ γενόμενος ἐπηρώτα αὐτοῦς· Τί ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ διελογίζεσθε;

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι

The house mentioned is presumably that of Peter.

γενόμενος Verb, aor ptc, m nom s γίνομαι

ἐπηρώτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s

ἐπερωταῶ

ὁδος, ου f way, road, journey

διαλογομαι discuss, argue, consider

"Τί ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ διελογίζεσθε; is not an attempt to gain new information, for Jesus is clearly aware (through supernatural insight or from having overheard their argument?) of what has been going on. It is a challenge to bring into the open a debate of which they are apparently ashamed, aware that Jesus will not approve. Hence their silence." France.

Mark 9:34

οἱ δὲ ἐσιώπων, πρὸς ἀλλήλους γὰρ διελέχθησαν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ τίς μείζων.

ἐσιώπων Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl

σιωπαῶ be silent, be quiet

ἀλλήλων, οἰς, οὺς reciprocal pronoun one another

διελέχθησαν Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 pl

διαλογομαι

μείζων, ον and μείζοτερος, α, ον (comp of μεγας) greater, greatest

"Schlatter points out that the question of precedence was specially important in Palestine and was incessantly arising, whether in the synagogue service, judicial proceedings or at meals." Cranfield. "The question, τίς μείζων may have been sparked by the selection of Peter, James, and John for the trip up the mountain, leaving the others feeling aggrieved – and the more so after their humiliation over the failed exorcism. Perhaps also they have already grasped sufficient of what Jesus has been saying to realise that his death is a real possibility, which then leaves the pressing question of who is to take the lead after he is gone. The issue will surface more powerfully in the bid for leadership by James and John and in Jesus' response to it in 10:35-45." France.

Mark 9:35

καὶ καθίσας ἐφώνησεν τοὺς δώδεκα καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Εἴ τις θέλει πρῶτος εἶναι ἔσται πάντων ἔσχατος καὶ πάντων διάκονος.

καθίζω sit down, sit

"Jesus normally sat to teach, like the Rabbis. Cf. Mt 5:1." Cranfield. "It conveys the sense a deliberate, even formal, piece of instruction." France.

φωνεῶ call

After Jesus' original question the disciples may have fallen to muttering one with another or have drifted away in embarrassment. Jesus sits down and calls them to come and listen to what he has to say to them. Here is something he particularly wants them to understand.

δώδεκα twelve

θελῶ see v.30

πρῶτος, η, ον first, leading, foremost

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

ἔσχατος, η, ον adj last

διάκονος, ου m & f servant, helper

Cf. 10:43; Mt 20:26; Lk 9:48b; 22:26; Mt 23:11.

Mark 9:36

καὶ λαβῶν παιδίον ἔστησεν αὐτὸ ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐναγκαλισάμενος αὐτὸ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·

λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω
παιδιον, ου n child

"The use of a child as a teaching aid, both here and with a slightly different introduction in Mt. 18:1-5, has explicitly (in terms of context) to do with status, not with any character traits supposedly typical of children. The child represents the lowest order in the social scale." France.

ἔστησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἵστημι set,
place

μέσος, η, ον middle; ἐν μ., εἰς μ. in the
middle, among

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

"Only Mark adds here and in 10:16 the homely picture of Jesus ἐναγκαλισάμενος the child, which makes the message visual as well as verbal." France.

Mark 9:37

Ὅς ἂν ἐν τῶν τοιούτων παιδίων δέξεται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου, ἐμὲ δέχεται· καὶ ὃς ἂν ἐμὲ δέχεται, οὐκ ἐμὲ δέχεται ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με.

ὃς ἂν whoever

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and
adjective such, of such kind

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

ὄνομα, τος n name

"The meaning could be 'because the παιδιον belongs to me – as a believer' or 'because the παιδιον (in his human need and without necessarily being a believer) is my representative' (cf. Mt 25:40, 45) or 'because this action is something I desire.'" Cranfield.

ἐμὲ Pronoun, acc s ἐγώ

ἀποστείλαντά Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s
ἀποστελλω send, send out

Mark 9:38-40

Cf. Lk. 9:49f. "The effect of the pericope is to encourage a welcoming openness on the part of Jesus' disciples which is in stark contrast to the protective exclusiveness more often associated with religious groups, not least within the Christian tradition... There is a clear resemblance to the story of Eldad and Medad in Nu. 11:26-29, with John taking up the protective role of Joshua in that story, and Jesus echoing Moses' open-minded attitude and repudiation of the 'jealousy' of his loyal follower... This pericope follows hard on the story of the disciples' failure in exorcism in 9:14-29. To see an 'outsider' apparently succeeding where they, the chosen agents of Jesus, have failed is doubly distressing." France.

Mark 9:38

Ἐφη αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰωάννης· Διδάσκαλε, εἶδομέν τινα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ἐκβάλλοντα δαιμόνια, καὶ ἐκωλύομεν αὐτόν, ὅτι οὐκ ἠκολούθει ἡμῖν.

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

εἶδομέν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl ὄραω see,
observe

ἐκβαλλω see v.28

δαιμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit

Cf. Acts 19:13ff.

ἐκωλύομεν Verb, imperf act indic, 1 pl
κωλυω hinder, prevent, forbid

"Translate: 'We tried to prevent him' – conative imperfect." Cranfield.

ἠκολουθεω follow, accompany

The last clause ὅτι οὐκ ἠκολούθει ἡμῖν is subject to textual variations and is omitted by a number of witnesses. Cranfield is of the view that, "Probably we should follow the Western text and omit the ὅτι clause, which looks like an assimilation to Lk." – the Western text reads ... δαιμονια ὃς οὐκ ἀκολουθει ἡμῖν καὶ ἐκωλυσάμεν αὐτόν. France thinks the repetition of the phrase (both as a description of the man and as a reason for the prevention) "while not so well supported, would be typical of Mark's style, especially here to emphasise the man's dubious allegiance, and would be a prime candidate for scribal tidying up by assimilation to the Lucan text."

Of ἡμιν France writes, "What John is looking for is not so much personal allegiance and obedience to Jesus, but membership in the 'authorised' circle of his followers. We should perhaps understand ἡμεῖς here as specifically the Twelve, regarded as having an exclusive link with and commission from Jesus, so that other people's association with him must be through their mediation. Even if such a possessive doctrine is not explicit, it fits John's restrictive action and explains the terms of Jesus' response."

Mark 9:39

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· Μὴ κωλύετε αὐτόν, οὐδεὶς γάρ ἐστιν ὃς ποιήσει δύναμιν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου καὶ δυνήσεται ταχὺ κακολογῆσαί με·

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing
δυνήσεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s
δυναμαι

ταχὺ adv quickly, soon
κακολογεω speak evil of, curse

Mark 9:40

ὃς γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν καθ' ἡμῶν, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐστιν.

Cranfield draws attention to the sayings in Mt 12:30 and Lk 11:23 which seem to contradict this one. He suggests that these sayings need to be understood in the context of Jesus' messianic veiledness. While people still do not see who Jesus is we should not quickly assume they are opposed to Jesus. Once the point of recognition is reached, there can be no middle ground and Mt 12:30 holds.

Mark 9:41-50

Cf. Mt 18:6-9; Lk 17:1f; 14:34f; Mt 5:13.

Mark 9:41

Ὅς γὰρ ἂν ποτίσῃ ὑμᾶς ποτήριον ὕδατος ἐν ὀνόματι ὅτι χριστοῦ ἐστε, ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ ἀπολέσῃ τὸν μισθὸν αὐτοῦ.

ποτίσῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ποτιζω give
to drink, water

ποτηριον, ου n cup
ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

The use of Χριστοῦ here is striking. "It is *that* name which gives this kind of act its specific significance and justifies the reward. This is not mere benevolence, but the demonstration that a person is ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν by means of practical help given specifically to those who belong to Jesus." France.

ἀπολλυμι lose
μισθος, ου m wages, reward

"The language of reward, which is so prominent in Matthew, appears explicitly only here in Mark (though see 10:28-30 for the idea). It is a paradoxical term to use in connection with a gift of water, which is so basic a feature of Eastern hostility as to require no reward. But even so small an act betokens a person's response to Jesus in the person of his disciples (cf. Mt 25:31-46), and as such will not be unnoticed.

"The three sayings collected in vv 39-41 thus illustrate in different ways the open boundaries of the kingdom of God, where both committed disciple and sympathetic fellow traveller find their place." France.

Mark 9:42-50

"We are ... apparently dealing here with a little complex of sayings which lacked a fixed narrative context, and which occur together in this form only in Mark. They are linked together by repeated key words (σκανδαλιζω, vv. 42 and 43-47; πῦρ, vv. 43-48 and 49; ἄλας, vv. 49 and 50). It is generally agreed that the complex was collected together on this catchword basis, for easier memorisation, before coming to Mark." France.

Mark 9:42

Καὶ ὃς ἂν σκανδαλίσῃ ἓνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ, καλόν ἐστιν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον εἰ περικείται μύλος ὄνικος περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ καὶ βέβληται εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν.

ὃς ἂν see v.37

σκανδαλιζω cause (someone) to sin, cause
(someone) to give up the faith

"The verb here means to cause someone to stumble in his faith, to destroy someone's faith." Cranfield.

"This is Mark's only use of μικροὶ to denote disciples, a use which Matthew has developed more fully (Mt. 10:42; 18:6, 10, 14; cf. 25:40, 45). The description of them as πιστευοντες ... makes it clear that Mark is using the term in a similar sense, even though the lack of a clear narrative context makes it difficult to identify the immediate referent of τούτων." France.

πιστεωω believe (in), have faith (in)

"The absolute use of οἱ πιστευόντες as a synonym for disciples (as in Acts 2:44; 4:32, etc.) would be unique in Mark, though 9:23 partially prepares for it. The addition of εἰς ἔμμε would thus be a natural 'improvement' as well as an assimilation to Mt. 18:6, and the range of authorities which omit it is sufficiently broad (⋈ D Δ and some OL MSS) to favour the shorter reading." France.

καλος, η, ον good, right, proper
 μαλλον adv more; rather, instead
 περικειμαι be placed around
 μυλος, ου m mill; millstone (μ. ὄνικος large millstone drawn by a donkey)
 ὄνικος, η, ον of a donkey
 τραχηλος, ου m neck
 βέβληται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s βαλλω
 θαλασσα, ης f sea

Mark 9:43

Καὶ ἐὰν σκανδαλίζη σε ἡ χεὶρ σου, ἀπόκοψον αὐτήν· καλὸν ἐστὶν σε κυλλὸν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν ἢ τὰς δύο χεῖρας ἔχοντα ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὴν γέενναν, εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον.

ἐὰν if
 σε Pronoun, acc s συ
 χειρ, χειρος f hand
 ἀποκοπτω cut off, cut away
 κυλλος, η, ον crippled
 εἰσερχομαι enter, go in
 ζωη, ης f life
 ἢ or, than
 δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυοισιν two
 γεεννα, ης f hell

"The name of a valley to the south of Jerusalem... which had been the scene of human sacrifices to Molech (Jer 7:31; 19:5; 32:35), but had been desecrated by Josiah (II Kings 23:10) and used for burning offal. It came to be used to denote the place of divine punishment (e.g. Enoch 27:2; 90:26f; 4 Ezra 7:36)." Cranfield.

πυρ, ος n fire
 ἄσβεστος, ον unquenchable

"The phrase εἰς τὴν γέενναν seems a firmly established part of the text in both verses [43 and 45] (its omission in f¹ f¹³ etc. in v. 43 [noted in UBS³, not in UBS⁴] probably reflecting a desire to drop the unfamiliar Semitic term in favour of something more universally recognised; assimilation to Mt. 18:8 is another factor). The presence of εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον (which parallels but is not identical with the Matthean phrase εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον) at some point in the tradition seems necessary to account for the presence of this or a variant in many witnesses of both verses, and the decision of UBS⁴ to retain it in v. 43 but not in v. 45 (where its support is rather less, and it would naturally have been repeated from v. 43) seems appropriate." France.

Mark 9:44

Verses 44 and 46, identical in wording to v. 48 in TR, are omitted by ⋈ B C L W f¹ k sy^s co fa and appear to have been copied from v.48.

Mark 9:45

καὶ ἐὰν ὁ πούς σου σκανδαλίζη σε, ἀπόκοψον αὐτόν· καλὸν ἐστὶν σε εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν χωλὸν ἢ τοὺς δύο πόδας ἔχοντα βληθῆναι εἰς τὴν γέενναν.

πους, ποδος m foot

"The metaphor of amputation could hardly be more shocking; this is a matter of ultimate seriousness. Nothing less than eternal life or death is at stake. Christians who disparage 'hell-fire preaching' must face the awkward fact that Mark's Jesus (and still more Matthew's and Luke's) envisaged an ultimate separation between life and γέεννα which demanded the most drastic renunciation in order to avoid the unquenchable fire, and that he did not regard even his disciples as immune from the need to examine themselves and take appropriate action." France.

Mark 9:47

καὶ ἐὰν ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς σου σκανδαλίζη σε, ἔκβαλε αὐτόν· καλὸν σέ ἐστιν μονόφθαλμον εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἢ δύο ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντα βληθῆναι εἰς τὴν γέενναν, μονοφθαλμος, ον one-eyed

τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ is equivalent to τὴν ζωὴν (vv. 43, 45).

Mark 9:48

ὅπου ὁ σκόληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτᾷ καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβέννυται.

ὅπου adv. where

σκωληξ, ηκος m worm
 τελευταω die
 σβεννυμι extinguish, put out

Cf. Is 66:24. "It is evocative language, which is better appreciated in its awful deterrence than analysed as to precisely how the two methods of destruction relate to each other, or just what is the function of the worm." France.

Mark 9:49

Πᾶς γὰρ πυρὶ ἀλισθήσεται.

ἀλισθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s ἀλιζω
 salt, restore flavour to (salt)

Of the textual variants in this verse, Metzger writes, "The opening words of this verse have been transmitted in three principal forms: i) "For everyone will be salted with fire" (B L Δ *al*). ii) "For every sacrifice will be salted with salt" (D it^{a,b} *al*); and iii) "For everyone will be salted with fire and every sacrifice will be salted with salt" (A K Π *al*). The history of the text seems to have been as follows. At a very early period a scribe, having found in Lev 2:13 a clue to the meaning of Jesus' enigmatic statement, wrote the Old Testament passage in the margin of his copy of Mark. In subsequent copyings the marginal gloss was either substituted for the words of the text, thus creating reading ii), or was added to the text, thus creating reading iii). Other modifications also arose."

"Apart from general considerations of the metaphorical use of both fire and salt in biblical literature (each of which yields a variety of possible lines of interpretation, but it is the use of the two together which is unusual and arresting), the most promising line of approach is via Lv. 2:13, the requirement that grain offerings (which were burned) must be accompanied by salt, together with the more sweeping generalisation, 'With all your offerings you shall offer salt'. Salt is not mentioned elsewhere in the Levitical regulations for sacrifice, but Ezra 6:9; 7:22 include salt among the provisions required for restoring the temple ritual, and Ezk. 43:24 mentions salt added to animal burnt offerings in the restored temple. To be 'salted with fire' seems then to evoke the imagery of temple sacrifice, but the victims who are 'salted' are now the worshippers themselves. Their dedication to the service of their suffering Messiah is like that of a burnt offering, total and irrevocable. Fire occurs frequently as an image for eschatological suffering. The inclusion of the image of salt surprises the modern reader, since fire alone would have made this point. But anyone familiar with sacrificial ritual would not find it out of place. And once introduced, it contributes further nuances. The salt of Lv 2:13 is described as 'salt of the covenant with your God' (cf. 'covenant of salt', Nu 18:19; 2 Ch 13:5), while in Ex 30:35 salt, as an ingredient of the sacred incense, is linked with the qualities 'pure and holy'. These are among the resonances which the striking image of salting with fire might evoke from someone familiar with OT sacrificial language, and indeed with the ritual as it actually continued in Jerusalem up to AD 70. In this context it speaks of one who follows Jesus as totally dedicated to God's service, and warns that such dedication will inevitably be costly in terms of personal suffering." France.

Mark 9:50

καλὸν τὸ ἅλας· ἐὰν δὲ τὸ ἅλας ἀναλον γένηται, ἐν τίνι αὐτὸ ἀρτύσετε; ἔχετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἅλα, καὶ εἰρηνεύετε ἐν ἀλλήλοις.

ἅλας, ατος n salt
 ἀναλος, ον without salt, insipid
 γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι
 ἀρτυω season, restore flavour

Cf. Lk 14:34; Mt 5:13.

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/herself, itself

Cf Mt 5:13. Cranfield says "Salt was a necessity of life in the ancient world... it preserved from putrefaction food which without it would become putrid. So the disciples of Jesus are set, like salt, as a source of life and health in the midst of a world that left to itself must go bad. But they are warned of the possibility of their losing the very property that makes them precious, and so becoming like salt that has lost its saltiness." Cranfield links these words with 8:35-38. France comments concerning the link with v. 49, "The sequence may not be entirely arbitrary, however, since the disciple's character may be understood to derive from the sacrificial dedication symbolised in v. 49; the process of 'salting with fire' produces a 'salty' disciple."

εἰρηνεω live or be at peace
ἀλληλων, οἱς, οὗς reciprocal pronoun one another

This is part of what it means to maintain our savour – a challenge to those who think that maintaining distinctiveness requires constant division and separation. "While salt as a metaphor for peacefulness is in itself an unusual use, in the OT salt symbolises a covenant (Lv 2:13; Nu 18:19; 2 Ch 13:5) while in some rabbinic writings salt stands for wisdom or pleasing speech (cf. Col 4:6), which a sound basis for good relationships." France.

Mark 10:1-12

Cf. Mt 19:1-12 and also Mt 5:31f; Lk 16:18.

Mark 10:1

Καὶ ἐκεῖθεν ἀναστὰς ἔρχεται εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, καὶ συμπορεύονται πάλιν ὄχλοι πρὸς αὐτόν, καὶ ὡς εἶώθει πάλιν ἐδίδασκεν αὐτούς.

ἐκεῖθεν from there

I.e. Capernaum, cf. 9:33.

ἀνιστημι rise, stand up
ὄριον, οὗ n territory, region
Ἰουδαίος, α, ον a Jew, Jewish, Judean
πέραν prep with gen beyond, across
Ἰορδάνης, οὗ m Jordan River

"Mark is probably describing Jesus final journey up to Judea." Cranfield. The reading δια του πέραν while secondary, probably gives the right sense. καὶ πέραν may be an assimilation to Mt. 19:1.

France comments, "As in 7:31, Mark's description of the itinerary is not clear, but in his narrative context the two terms Ἰουδαία and πέραν του Ἰορδάνου serve to indicate progress towards Jerusalem, and bring Jesus into what is unfamiliar and potentially hostile territory (remembering the ominous implications of the two mentions of Jerusalem in 3:22 and 7:1, and the goal of Jesus' journey)."

συμπορευομαι go along with, walk along with
παλιν again, once more
εἶωθα pf. with pres. meaning) be accustomed to; το εἶωθος custom
διδασκω teach

Mark 10:2

Καὶ ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν εἰ ἔξεστιν ἀνδρὶ γυναῖκα ἀπολῦσαι, πειράζοντες αὐτόν.

"The introduction in 10:2-9 of a discussion with outsiders rather than a private dialogue with disciples ... shifts the scene for a time, even though from 10:10 onwards the disciples become again the focus of attention." France.

There are several variants here. France comments, "Most of the variants make little difference to the sense, but the reading of D etc. omits Pharisees altogether. Since it would be very natural for a scribe to specify unidentified interlocutors as Pharisees, the 'expected' opponents of Jesus (especially in a matter of halakhah), the shorter reading seems more probable, and the more so since Pharisees would naturally be inserted to assimilate Mt. 19:3."

ἐπερωτω ask, interrogate, question
ἔξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is lawful, it is proper, it is possible
ἀνηρ, ἀνδρος m man, husband
γυνή, αἰκος f woman, wife
ἀπολυω release, dismiss, divorce
πειραζω test, put to the test, tempt

"Their intention is presumably to see whether Jesus will say something which can be used against him – either to show him contradicting the Law or to compromise him in Herod's eyes (cf. 6:17f). Πειραζειν has to mean to 'test someone's defences', 'try to get someone off his guard'." Cranfield.

France comments, "In view of the fate of John the Baptist (6:17-29) an injudicious reply concerning divorce might well also land Jesus (the 'second Baptist') in trouble with Antipas and his wife, especially as Jesus has now moved into the area both of John's activity and of his death at Machaerus in Perea."

France provides the following background: "While the permitted grounds of divorce were debated in the rabbinic world, the admissibility of divorce (of a wife by her husband, not vice versa: Josephus, *Ant.* 15:259) as such was not questioned: Dt 24:1-4 (the only legislation relating specifically to divorce in the Torah) was understood to have settled the issue. The more restrictive interpretation of the school of Shammai (only on the basis of 'unchastity', *m. Git.* 9:10) was almost certainly a minority view. More typical, probably, is Ben Sira 25:26: 'if she does not accept your control, divorce her and send her away', or Josephus's laconic comment (*Life* 426): 'At this time I divorced my wife, not liking her behaviour.' Josephus paraphrases Dt 24:1, 'He who wants to be divorced from the wife who shares his home for whatever cause – and among people many such causes arise – ...' (*Ant* 4:253), and the school of Hillel allowed this to cover a spoiled meal, or even, so R. Akiba, 'if he found another fairer than she' (*m. Git.* 9:10)."

Mark 10:3

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τί ὑμῖν ἐνετείλατο Μωϋσῆς;

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply
ἐνετείλατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἐντέλλομαι command, order

"Jesus directs them back to the Law."
Cranfield.

Mark 10:4

οἱ δὲ εἶπαν· Ἐπέτρεψεν Μωϋσῆς βιβλίον ἀποστασίου γράψαι καὶ ἀπολῦσαι.

ἐπιτρέπω let, allow, permit

"The verbs in this opening exchange are interesting. Jesus asks about commands (ἐντέλλομαι), but they reply in terms of permission (ἐπιτρέπω). This reflects the equivocal nature of the legal basis of divorce in Dt 24:1-4. That passage does not specifically 'command', or even 'permit', divorce but rather regulates (in v.4) the situation which results after divorce has taken place and been duly certified: vv. 1-3 consists only of conditional clauses setting up the scenario for which v. 4 provides a legal ruling (that the husband who divorced his wife may not remarry her). The divorce which created that situation is presupposed but is not itself the subject of the legislation. βιβλίον ἀποστασίου γράψαι καὶ ἀπολῦσαι is thus not a quotation from Dt 24, but a summary of what is assumed to be its 'permission'. To interpret this even as permission for divorce is a matter of inference from the fact that divorce is envisaged without express disapproval. It certainly falls short of a 'command' (as Matthew's Pharisees boldly make it, Mt 19:7). Jesus' interlocutors here, therefore, show some sensitivity towards the rather ambivalent sanction which Dt 24:1-4 provides for divorce. But since there is no other relevant legislation in the Pentateuch, it had to serve." France.

βιβλίον, ου n book, written statement
ἀποστασιον, ου n written notice of divorce
(with or without βιβλίον)
γραφο write

"The regulation about giving a certificate of divorce in Deut 24:1 assumes the practice of divorce and provides some protection for the woman." Cranfield.

Mark 10:5

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Πρὸς τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ὑμῶν ἔγραψεν ὑμῖν τὴν ἐντολὴν ταύτην·

σκληροκαρδια, ας f stubbornness (of persons hard to teach)

"Moses' ἐντολή must refer to the whole long sentence Dt 24:1-4, which does indeed conclude with an injunction (that the divorced and remarried wife may not subsequently return to her original husband), rather than to the words βιβλίον ἀποστασίου γράψαι καὶ ἀπολῦσαι, which are not in fact what Moses 'wrote', nor do they represent what the law actually 'commands'. It is the whole complex sentence, with its recognition of the reality of divorce and remarriage, which Jesus now declares to be directed towards τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ὑμῶν, where the ὑμεῖς represents presumably the people of Israel in general rather than the specific group he is addressing." France.

ἐντολή, ης f command, order, instruction

"In this and the following verses Jesus is not setting the commandment of God against that of Moses, nor is he brushing aside the scripture. Rather he is bringing out the real meaning of Deut 24:1. A distinction has to be made between that which sets forth the absolute will of God, and those provisions which take account of man's actual sinfulness and are designed to limit and control its consequences... Human conduct which falls short of the absolute command of God is sin and stands under the divine judgement. The provisions which God's mercy has designed for the limitation of the consequences of man's sin must not be interpreted as divine approval for sinning. When our sinfulness traps us in a position in which all the choices still open to us are evil, we are to choose that which is least evil, asking for God's forgiveness and comforted by it, but not pretending that evil is good." Cranfield.

Mark 10:6

ἀπὸ δὲ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς·

ἀρχη, ης f beginning, origin
κτισις, εως f creation
ἄρσην, εν gen ενος male, man
θηλυς, εια, υ adj female

Metzger comments, "The insertion of ὁ θεός as the subject of ἐποίησεν must have seemed to copyists to be necessary lest the uninstructed reader imagine that the previously mentioned subject (Moses) should be carried on. Several witnesses omit αὐτούς as superfluous."

Mark 10:7

ἐνεκεν τούτου καταλείπει ἄνθρωπος τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν μητέρα καὶ προσκολληθήσεται πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, ἐνεκα (ἐνεκεν and εἰνεκεν) prep with gen
because of, for the sake of
καταλείπει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s καταλειπω
leave, leave behind
προσκολληθήσεται Verb, fut pass dep indic, 3 s προσκολληομαι
be united in marriage

"The clause καὶ προσκολληθήσεται πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ omitted by ⋈ B etc. seems so central to the argument that it is hard to imagine the quotation from Gen 2:24 being made without it. But by the same token it is hard to explain its deliberate omission if it were once in the text. It is therefore probably safer to assume that the clause dropped out accidentally (as the first of the two lines both begin with καὶ). Within the line, the construction πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα which corresponds to the better-supported text of the LXX, is more likely, since τὴν γυναῖκα is both stylistically more elegant and assimilates to Mt 19:5." France.

Mark 10:8

καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν· ὥστε οὐκέτι εἰσὶν δύο ἀλλὰ μία σὰρξ·
ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι
δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh

"The word σαρξ here is puzzling. Are we to take it as equivalent to σῶμα (cf. 1 Cor 6:16; Eph 5:28-31), the meaning being that the two become one *person*? Or are we rather to understand it in light of passages like Gen 29:14; 37:27; Jud 9:2; Rom 11:14, the meaning being that a man and a woman by marriage cease to be merely members of two different families and become one *kindred*?" Cranfield.

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
ὥστε so that, with the result that
οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more

"They are no longer two independent beings who may choose to go their own way, but a single indivisible unit." France. In modern terms, 'an item.'

Mark 10:9

ὁ οὖν ὁ θεὸς συνέζευξεν ἄνθρωπος μὴ χωριζέτω.
συνέζευξεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
συζευγνυμι join together
χωρίζω separate

"If marriage was instituted as a permanent 'one flesh' union of man and woman, then it must always be against the will of God for it to be broken. The legal provision of Moses in Dt 24 was not intended as a statement of God's purpose for marriage, but as a regrettable but necessary means of limiting the damage when that purpose had already been abandoned. It is a provision to deal with human σκληροκαρδια, not a pointer to the way things ought to be...
 "If we are to do justice to Mark's understanding of Jesus, we will do so not by attempting to weaken his bold statement of God's purpose for marriage but by recognising any broken marriage for what it is, a breach of God's standard, and by regarding any resultant provision for divorce not as good, but as, like the Mosaic legislation in Dt 24:1-4, a regrettable concession to σκληροκαρδια. Modern society shows us what can happen when a provision for damage limitation comes to be regarded as a right or even a norm. In such a context Jesus' clear-sighted return to 'the way it was meant to be' has a refreshing and compelling simplicity, and must not be relegated to the category of an 'ideal' which we all admire but do not seriously expect to be implemented. God's design for unbroken, lifelong marriage is not an 'ideal' in that sense, but the realistic standard to which we are expected to conform and on which the health of human society depends. Mark's Jesus allows us no lower aim." France.

Mark 10:10

Καὶ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν πάλιν οἱ μαθηταὶ περὶ τούτου ἐπηρώτων αὐτόν.

παλιν again, once more
 ἐπερωταω ask, question

Cf. 4:10; 7:17 etc.

Mark 10:11

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ὃς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ γαμήσῃ ἄλλην μοιχᾶται ἐπ' αὐτήν,

ὅς ἂν whoever

ἀπολυω see v.2

γαμήσῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s γαμεω marry

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

μοιχαμομαι commit adultery

"According to Rabbinic law a man could be said to commit adultery against another married man, and a wife could be said to commit adultery against her husband, but a husband could not be said to commit adultery against his wife. So Jesus goes beyond Rabbinic teaching by speaking of a husband committing adultery against his wife." Cranfield.

Mark 10:12

καὶ ἐὰν αὐτὴ ἀπολύσασα τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς γαμήσῃ ἄλλον μοιχᾶται.

"Mark's second statement is perhaps the most surprising, as it presupposes the possibility of the wife initiating a divorce, which was not envisaged in Jewish law, though it was in Roman." France.

Postscript to Mark 10:1-12

"The practical application of this teaching in a society in which both adultery and divorce are common and legally permissible cannot be straightforward. But Mark's Jesus offers no direct guidance on the problem, simply a clear, unequivocal, and utterly uncompromising principle that marriage is permanent and divorce (together with the resultant remarriage) is wrong. Whatever the other considerations which pastoral concern may bring to bear, some of them no doubt based on values drawn from Jesus' teaching on other subjects, no approach can claim his support which does not take as its guiding principle the understanding of marriage set forth in vv 9 and 11-12." France.

Mark 10:13-16

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

Mark 10:13

Καὶ προσέφερον αὐτῷ παιδία ἵνα αὐτῶν ἄνηται· 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 n child

ἄνηται Verb, aor midd subj, 3 s ἀπτω 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.

Mark 10:14

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

ιδὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω see
ἠγανάκτησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
ἀγανακτεῶ 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.

ἀφιημι 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."

Mark 10:15

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

"The fourteen ἀμην 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.

Mark 10:16

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

Mark 10:17-22

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

Mark 10:17

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.

ἐπηρωτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s
ἐπερωταω ask, question

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher
ἀγαθος, η, ον 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 ἡμων). It is the unusual character of the address which gives the cue for Jesus' probing response in v. 18." France.

ζωη, ης f life
αἰωνιος, ον eternal, everlasting
κληρονομεω receive, gain possession of,
inherit

He asks the question that really matters.

Mark 10:18

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

Mark 10:19

τάς ἐντολάς 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
κλεπτω steal

ψευδομαρτυρεω give false evidence or
testimony

ἀποστερεω defraud, rob, steal

"Since μὴ 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 μὴ 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.

Mark 10:20

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

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say
ἐφυλαξάμην Verb, aor midd indic, 1 s
φυλασσω keep, guard

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

νεοτης, 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.

Mark 10:21

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

ὕπαγω 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, 2 s διδωμι

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.

Mark 10:22

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

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

Mark 10:23

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

Mark 10:24

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

παλιν 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.

δυσκόλος, ον hard, difficult

Many MSS read ἐστιν τους πεποιθοντας ἐπι
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
τα χρηματα ἔχοντες in v. 23 and πλουσιος in v.
25 restricts it contextually. It is possible that
τους πεποιθοντας ἐπι 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."

Mark 10:25

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

εὐκοπωτερος, α, ον (comparitive from εὐκοπος easy) easier
καμηλος, ον m & f camel
τρυμαλια, ας f eye (of a needle)
ραφιδος, ιδος f needle
διερχομαι pass through, go through
ἢ οἱ, 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)."

Mark 10:26

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

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

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

σωζω save, rescue

Mark 10:27

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

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).

Mark 10:28

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

ἀρχω midd begin

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

ἠκολουθήκαμέν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl
ἀκολουθεω 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."

Mark 10:29f.

"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.

Mark 10:29

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

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say
οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing
ἀφήκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφημι
ἀγρος, ου m field, farm
ἕνεκα (ἕνεκεν 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 ἀφημι 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 ἕνεκεν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου." France.

Mark 10:30

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 καί. 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
ἑκατοναπλασιῶν, ον a hundred-fold
καιρος, ου m time, age
διωγμος, ου m persecution
αἰων, αἰωνος m age, world order, eternity
ζωη, ης f life
αἰωνιος, ον eternal, everlasting

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

Mark 10:31

πολλοὶ δὲ ἔσονται πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι καὶ οἱ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι.
ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι
πρωτος, η, ον first, leading, foremost,
prominent
ἔσχατος, 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."
"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.

Mark 10:32-45

France provides the following introduction to this section: "The journey towards Jerusalem and the cross comes to its climax with the third and most detailed passion prediction, followed by the most emphatic of all Jesus' reversals of accepted values in the call to serve rather than be served. This searching challenge culminates in v. 45 with the first and clearest statement of the purpose of his own coming death. Hitherto Jesus has spoken of its necessity, but now he offers a new perspective on the concept of messianic suffering which sets what might otherwise have been seen as a meaningless tragedy in the context of the redemptive purpose of God. This is not a setback to Jesus' mission, a victory for his opponents; it is what he came for.

"But as has been made clear since 8:31, what is to happen to Jesus will also have its implications for those who follow him on the road to Jerusalem. The unforgettable cameo of v. 32 focuses this theme, and the misguided hope of messianic glory which motivates James and John in their request in v. 37 enables us to see the gulf which separates Jesus' sense of mission from the natural aspirations of his all-too-human followers. For them, as for him, the fulfilment of God's redemptive plan will involve leaving behind the world's scale of achievement and accepting that the first will be last and the last first. With that lesson yet again reinforced, both he and they will be as ready as they can be for the fateful arrival at Jerusalem."

Mark 10:32

Ἦσαν δὲ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, καὶ ἦν προάγων αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ ἐθαμβοῦντο, οἱ δὲ ἀκολουθοῦντες ἐφοβοῦντο. καὶ παραλαβὼν πάλιν τοὺς δώδεκα ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς λέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα αὐτῷ συμβαίνειν

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

Cf. 9:33, 34; 10:17. We are brought back to the journey motif which characterises this part of Mark's gospel.

ἀναβαινω go up, come up, ascend

"The destination is now explicitly spelled out for the first time: ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα." France.

προαγω go before or ahead of, lead
 ἐθαμβοῦντο Verb, imperf pass indic, 3 pl
 θαμβεομαι be amazed or shocked
 ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a
 disciple
 φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

"A distinction seems to be implied between οἱ ἀκολουθουντες and the subject of ἐθαμβουντο. This was apparently felt to be difficult from early times. Hence there are several variants, all of which get rid of this distinction... The most probable explanation is that two groups are distinguished – the subject of ἐθαμβουντο being the Twelve, while οἱ ἀκολουθουντες denotes other followers including perhaps the women mentioned in 15:40f." Cranfield.

The amazement and fear "were obviously connected with the realisation that Jesus was going into immediate peril."

France suggests that the Twelve were amazed at Jesus' determination to reach Jerusalem as he 'strides ahead purposefully,' while a wider group of fellow travellers are afraid, affected by the ominous atmosphere.

παραλαμβανω take, receive

πάλιν again, once more

δωδεκα twelve

It is to the Twelve alone, and not to the wider group, that Jesus now speaks again of his death.

ἀρχω midd begin

μελλω be going, be about, be destined

συμβαίνω happen, come about

Mark 10:33

ὅτι Ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ τοῖς γραμματεῦσιν, καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν

Of vv. 33-34 France writes, "Elements from the preceding two passion predictions (8:31; 9:31) are combined into this climactic statement about the fate awaiting the υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, and more detail is added." France.

παραδοθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s

παραδιδωμι hand over, deliver up

ἀρχιερευς, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family

γραμματευς, εως m scribe

κατακρινω condemn, pass judgement on
 θανατος, ου m death

παραδώσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl

παραδιδωμι

ἔθνεσιν Noun, dat pl ἔθνος, ους n nation, people; τα ἔ. Gentiles

Mark 10:34

καὶ ἐμπαίζουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ μαστιγώσουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν, καὶ μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστήσεται.

The subject of the following verbs is the Gentiles.

ἐμπαίζω ridicule, make fun of

Cf. 15:20.

ἐμπυῶ spit on

Cf. 15:19.

μαστιγοῶ beat with a whip

Cf. 15:15.

ἀποκτενοῦσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl
ἀποκτείνω and ἀποκτενῶ, -νῶ kill,
put to death

"It is interesting ... that whereas in 8:31 the death of the Son of Man was mentioned in the passive, with no subject directly expressed, and in 9:31 it was attributed generally to οἱ ἄνθρωποι, here it is specifically the ἔθνη who will kill him, though it is the ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς who will condemn him to death." France.

τρεις, τρια gen τριῶν dat τρισιν three

"A 'correction' of μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας τοῦ τριτῆς ἡμέρας was almost inevitable, both to assimilate to the phrase consistently used by Matthew and Luke and to avoid the embarrassment of a phrase which appears to predict a longer period in the tomb than was in fact the case. In 8:31 comparatively few MSS make the change, but in 9:31 and here the majority do so.

Nonetheless it is so hard to imagine any scribe substituting μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας for an original τῆς τριτῆς ἡμέρας that editors have no hesitation in accepting μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας in all three passages." France.

ἀναστήσεται Verb, fut midd indic, 3 s
ἀνίστημι rise, come back to life**Mark 10:35-45**

Cf. Mt 20:20-28; Lk 22:24-27. "The previous passion predictions have each been followed by an example of the disciples' failure to grasp Jesus' new scale of values and by consequent remedial teaching. Here the pattern is repeated even more strongly, as James and John display a remarkable lack of awareness of what Jesus has just been saying about the mission of the Son of Man coupled with a personal ambition which is totally out of keeping with all that has been said since 9:33; moreover, the other disciples seem to share their perspective, and Jesus responds with the most thoroughgoing statement yet of the revolutionary values of the kingdom of God." France.

Mark 10:35

Καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου λέγοντες αὐτῷ· Διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἵνα ὁ ἐὰν αἰτήσωμέν σε ποιήσης ἡμῖν.

προσπορευομαι come to, approach

May suggest an attempt to 'corner' Jesus.

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

θελω wish, will

ὅς ἐαν, ὁ ἐαν whoever, whatever

αἰτεω ask, request

σε Pronoun, acc s συ

In the Mt parallel it is the mother of James and John who makes the request.

Mark 10:36

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τί θέλετε ποιῶσω ὑμῖν;

"There is some confusion in the MSS between the construction with subjunctive ποιῶσω or with the infinitive ποιῆσαι. The syntactically impossible reading of κ¹ B, τι θελετε με ποιῶσω, must result from a conflation of the two constructions. The reading which best explains the variants is τι θελετε ποιῶσω (with ἵνα understood), the abruptness of which led to correcting the subjunctive to an infinitive, with the consequent addition of με." France.

Mark 10:37

οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Δός ἡμῖν ἵνα εἴς σου ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ εἴς ἐξ ἀριστερῶν καθίσωμεν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου.

δός Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s δίδωμι

"The request, precipitated perhaps by the excitement of coming near Jerusalem, the 'royal' city, assumes that Jesus, as 'king', has positions of honour and influence in his gift: δός ἡμῖν will be picked up by οὐκ ἔστιν ἔμον δουναι in v. 40, showing that this assumption was false. For δίδωμι with ἵνα ('grant that') cf. Rev. 9:5; 19:8. To speak of sitting (rather than reclining, as at a banquet) on the right (or left) of someone implies a royal throne with the places of highest honour on either side; there are of course only two such places, leaving no room for Peter." France.

εἴς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

δεξιός, α, ον right, right hand

ἀριστερός, α, ον left, left hand

καθίζω sit (down), take one's seat

δοξά, ης f glory

"The vision of Dn 7:14 is of dominion, glory, and kingship given to the υἱός ἀνθρώπου, and while δοξά does not occur in either LXX or Thdt to describe that status, it sums up the vision well enough... As Jesus has used the title ὁ υἱός του ἀνθρώπου for himself, his disciples have grasped its royal connotations and can envisage a time when it will be fulfilled for Jesus (as they have already seen it briefly in the transfiguration), and therefore also for his faithful followers." France.

Calvin says that their request is "a bright mirror of human vanity" since it shows that in following Jesus they "have a different object in view from what they ought to have."

Mark 10:38

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Οὐκ οἶδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε· δύνασθε πιεῖν τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω, ἢ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆναι;

οἶδα know, understand

αἰτεῶ see on v.36

δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of
πιεῖν Verb, aor act infin πίνω drink
ποτήριον, ου n cup

"Jesus is apparently thinking of the cup of God's wrath against sin (cf. Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17-23; Jer 25:15-28; 49:12; 51:7; Lam 4:21f; Ezek 23:31-34; Hab 2:16; Zech 12:2...)." Cranfield.

ἢ or

βαπτίζω baptise

"The thought underlying βαπτισμα and βαπτίζομαι here is that of being overwhelmed in trouble... Jesus uses the same expression in Lk 12:50 with the same meaning, of the divinely appointed tribulation culminating in his death through which he must pass." Cranfield.

Mark 10:39

οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· Δυνάμεθα. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω πίεσθε καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε,

"Their self-confident reply showed that they had not understood Jesus' meaning. That he was referring to sufferings which had to be endured they no doubt realised; but whereas he was thinking of a shameful death under the curse of the Law and in abandonment by God (cf. 15:34), they were thinking of heroic and glorious sufferings in the cause of the messianic kingdom, something which could be faced in the mood of the martyrs of Maccabean days." Cranfield.

France comments, "They may lack understanding, but not loyalty or courage."

πίεσθε Verb, fut midd dep indic, 2 pl πίνω

βαπτισθήσεσθε Verb, fut pass indic, 2 pl

βαπτίζω

They could not share in his atoning sufferings but would be called to follow him in facing suffering and death.

Mark 10:40

τὸ δὲ καθίσει ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἢ ἐξ εὐωνύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἠτοίμασται.

"The cup and the baptism ... prove not to be qualifying conditions at all, but rather a way of indicating that their whole conception of δοῦσα and of the way it is to be achieved is misguided. It cannot be earned even by the extreme suffering which he must undergo and which they in turn will indeed share." France.

εὐωνυμος, ου left (hand side)

ἐμος, η, ου 1st pers possessive adj my, mine
δοῦναι verb, aor act infin δίδωμι

"ἄλλοις is an easy misreading of ἄλλ οἷς in the absence of word divisions, and indeed in most early MSS it is impossible to say which reading was intended. The preceding οὐκ requires a following ἀλλα (sys^s, having read ἄλλοις, found it necessary to add a 'but'). The addition of ὑπο του πατρος μου in N* etc. is an assimilation to Matthew, made more attractive by the lack of an explicit balance in the text to οὐκ ἐμον." France.

ἠτοίμασται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s

ἐτοίμαζω prepare, make ready

Cf. Mt 25:34,41; 1 Cor 2:9. "We are left no wiser as to who these favoured people are, and that is surely deliberate... The well-informed reader might well reflect that those who were soon to be on Jesus' right and left were not honoured disciples by λησται, and the setting not a throne but a gibbet (15:27)." France.

Mark 10:41

Καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ δέκα ἤρξαντο ἀγανακτεῖν περὶ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου.

δέκα ten

ἤρξαντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl ἀρχω
rule, govern; midd begin

ἀγανακτεῶ be indignant, be angry

"The rebuke which follows in vv 42-44 is apparently addressed not to James and John but to them all. This suggests that their annoyance is not over the ambition of the two brothers as such, but over the fact that they have got in first and tried to gain an unfair advantage over their colleagues in the competition for the highest places. On this issue they are all equally at fault." France.

Mark 10:42

καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς· Οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν τῶν ἔθνων κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν.

προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m
nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself,
summon
οἶδα know

Introduces a matter of common knowledge, a truism.

δοκεω think, suppose; seem

"The reality of power belongs to God (cf. Is 10:5,15; Dan 4:17 etc.)" Cranfield. France comments, "οἱ δοκουντες ἄρχειν, rather than simply οἱ ἄρχοντες, does not question the reality of their rule, but rather draws attention to the fact that they are *seen* to rule, and that their status is publicly recognised. Cf. οἱ δοκουντες for influential people in Gal 2:2, 6, and with infinitive 2:9"

ἔθνους, ους n cf. v.33
κατακυριεω have power over; try to show
one's authority over
μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great
κατεξουσιαζω rule over

"The verb can mean simply 'to exercise authority'; but here it clearly has the same nuance as κατακυριεουσιν – of exploitation of the people over whom authority is exercised." Cranfield. Cf. Acts 19:16; 1 Peter 5:3.

Mark 10:43

οὐχ οὕτως δέ ἐστιν ἐν ὑμῖν· ἀλλ' ὃς ἂν θέλη μέγας γενέσθαι ἐν ὑμῖν, ἔσται ὑμῶν διάκονος, οὕτως and οὕτω thus, in this way

The reading ἔσται rather than ἐστιν in the first part of the verse "may be explained as an assimilation to the following clauses, and possibly also to Matthew, where, however, the same variant occurs. In Mark the external evidence for ἐστιν is significantly stronger than in Matthew." France.

"If v.31 served as a summary of Jesus' teaching about status up to that point, v.43a now offers a further 'slogan' which encapsulates the revolutionary effect of his teaching about the kingdom of God: οὐχ οὕτως δέ ἐστιν ἐν ὑμῖν. The 'natural' assumptions and valuations by which people operate no longer apply in the kingdom of God. It is a genuinely alternative society. His own loss of his life for the sake of others not only embodies this new scale of values but also offers the disciples a model to follow." France.

"Cf. 2 Sam 13:12. In the new Israel the worldly idea of greatness has no place." Cranfield.

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

Cf. 9:35

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἰμι
διακονος, ου m & f servant, minister

Suggests the idea of personal service.

Mark 10:44

καὶ ὃς ἂν θέλῃ ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι πρῶτος, ἔσται πάντων δούλος·

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἰμι
πρῶτος, η, ον first, leading, foremost
δουλος, ου m slave, servant

"A further extension of the idea of subjection, since a δούλος had far less self-determination even than a διακονος." France.

Mark 10:45

καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντι πολλῶν.

διακονηθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin διακονεω
serve, wait on, care for
δοῦναι verb, aor act infin διδομι
ψυχη, ης f self, inmost being, life
λυτρον, ου n means of release, means of redeeming

This noun occurs in the NT only here and in the Mt parallel. "Outside of the Bible [it is] used of the ransom of a prisoner of war or a slave." Cranfield continues by giving examples of the use of the idea of redemption in the OT. He says of various Hebrew terms translated by λυτρον, "It denotes the half-shekel poll-tax, 'a ransom for his soul unto the LORD' (Exod 30:12), the money a man paid to redeem his life which was forfeit because his ox had killed someone (Exod 21:30), the price for the redemption of the firstborn (Num 18:15), the money by which the next of kin ransomed an enslaved relative (Lev 25:51f) or the payment for the redemption of a mortgaged property (Lev 25:26)." However, Cranfield thinks that another Hebrew word, never translated by λυτρον underlies the use of the term here, namely the Hebrew *koper*. "This word is used in Is 53:10: 'when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin'; and it seems likely that Jesus had this passage in mind." Cranfield concludes that the meaning of the term must be understood primarily "from the actual history of his Passion."

ἀντι prep with gen for, in place of

The πολλων emphasises the large number whom Jesus shall save (cf. Rom 5:15). It recalls the repeated 'many' of Is. 53:11,12.

"This, then, is the stated purpose of Jesus' mission. His many acts of mercy, healing, teaching, challenging the norms of society, and all the other elements of Mark's story must be seen in the light of this one purpose, δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν. Mark does not offer a lot of soteriological discussion, but what he does give is simple, clear, and far-reaching. Here is the answer to the puzzle of why Jesus had to die.
"But we must not forget that this crucial verse, however great its soteriological implications, occurs in context as a model for Jesus' disciples to follow. It is not the λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν that they are expected to reproduce: that was Jesus' unique mission. But the spirit of service and self-sacrifice, the priority given to the needs of the πολλοί, are for all disciples. They, too, must serve rather than be served, and it may be that some of them will be called upon, like James and John, to give up their lives. There is no room for quarrels about τις μειζῶν." France.

Mark 10:46-52

Cf. Mt 20:29-34; Lk 18:35-43.
Cf. the note on 8:22-26 concerning the 'framing' function of the two healings of blind men at the beginning and the end of Act Two. The present passage also serves as a bridge between the journey (Act Two) and the Jerusalem phase of the story (Act Three).

Mark 10:46

Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Ἱεριχῶ. καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ Ἱεριχῶ καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ὄχλου ἱκανοῦ ὁ υἱὸς Τιμαίου Βαρτιμαῖος τυφλὸς προσαιτῆς ἐκάθητο παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν.

ἐκπορευομαι go or come out
ἱκανος, η, ον sufficient, large, great

ἱκανος here carries the sense 'considerable' as is often the case in Luke/Acts (cf. Lk 7:12; Acts 11:24, 26; 19:26).

τυφλος, η, ον blind
προσαιτης, ον m beggar
καθημαι sit, sit down, live
ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

Mark 10:47

καὶ ἀκούσας ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζαρηνὸς ἐστὶν ἤρξατο κράζειν καὶ λέγειν· Υἱὲ Δαυὶδ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με.

κράζω cry out, call out

Of υἱε Δαυιδ France says, "Whether we should think of Bartimaeus as having unusual spiritual insight or as simply aiming to gain attention by the most flattering address he can think of, his words open up a new phase in the gradual disclosure of Jesus in Mark. For it is now time, as Jesus approaches Jerusalem, for the messianic aspect of his ministry to become more public, and in the next pericope this language will be on everybody's lips (11:9, ἡ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία του πατρος ἡμων Δαυιδ). Jesus' own attitude to it then will be left unclear, but later (12:35-3&) he will place a question mark against it. Here, however, he makes no comment, still less a rebuke, in response to this double salutation in such openly messianic language. The secrecy enjoined at Caesarea Philippi is beginning to weaken, and the way is being prepared for Jesus' eventual open declaration of his Messiahship in 14:62."

ἐλεαω and ἐλεεω be merciful, show kindness

Mark 10:48

καὶ ἐπετίμων αὐτῷ πολλοὶ ἵνα σιωπήσῃ· ὁ δὲ πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἔκραζεν· Υἱὲ Δαυὶδ, ἐλέησόν με.

ἐπιτιμαω command, order, rebuke
σιωπαω be silent, be quiet

"They regarded his importunity as a nuisance." Cranfield. France comments, "Like the disciples in 10:13, they (πολλοί, not just the disciples this time) rebuke someone of no status who wants to gain access to Jesus – and like the disciples they are overruled."

μᾶλλον adv more; rather

Mark 10:49

καὶ σταῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· Φωνήσατε αὐτόν. καὶ φωνοῦσι τὸν τυφλὸν λέγοντες αὐτῷ· Θάρσει, ἔγειρε, φωνεῖ σε.

σταῖς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἵστημι
stand, stop

Cf. 10:32 for Jesus' sense of urgency, against which Cranfield notes, "Even on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus has time for the individual who needs his help."

φωνεω call, call out
θαρσεω (only in imperat) Courage! Take courage! Cheer up!

Cf. 6:50.

ἐγειρω raise, rise
σε Pronoun, acc s συ

Mark 10:50

ὁ δὲ ἀποβαλὼν τὸ ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ ἀναπηδήσας ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν.

ἀποβαλὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

ἀποβαλλω throw off (clothes)

ἱματιον, ου n garment, robe, cloak

ἀναπηδήσας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

ἀναπηδαω jump up

The vivid detail suggests the reminiscence of an eye-witness.

Mark 10:51

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· Τί σοι θέλεις ποιῆσω; ὁ δὲ τυφλὸς εἶπεν αὐτῷ·

Ραββουνι, ἵνα ἀναβλέψω.

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s

ἀποκρινομαι reply, say

θελω wish, will

"Jesus is often depicted as asking questions in connection with his miracles (e.g. 5:9,30; 6:38; 9:21; Jn 5:6). Here the question is probably designed to strengthen the man's faith by encouraging it to be articulated." Cranfield. The form of address 'Ραββουνι' occurs only here and in Jn 20:16. It is stronger than 'Rabbi', and means 'my lord', 'my master'." Cranfield. The word suggests that the speaker would be a disciple.

ἀναβλέψω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἀναβλεπω
regain one's sight, be able to see

Mark 10:52

καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ὑπάγε, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε. καὶ εὐθὺς ἀνέβλεψεν, καὶ ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ.

ὑπάγω go, go one's way, depart

πίστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

σέσωκέν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s σωζω

save, heal

Cf. 5:34.

εὐθὺς adv. straightway, immediately

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany

"A literal following of Jesus along the road toward Jerusalem is no doubt intended. Possibly Mark had also in mind the deeper significance of ἀκολουθεῖν (1:18; 2:14f; 8:34 etc.), if Bartimaeus actually became a disciple, as seems likely from the fact that his name was remembered." Cranfield.

France comments, "The two terms ἀκολουθεω and ἡ ὁδος both speak of discipleship." And he concludes, "So as the pilgrim group sets off again up the Jerusalem road, with one additional member, the reader is prepared to witness the coming of the Son of David to 'his' city, and challenged to join him on the road."

Mark 11:1-25

Of 11:1-25 France writes, "Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, for the first and only time in Mark's narrative, and at the end of a lengthy account of the journey from the north, makes a climactic moment in the story. In the period leading up to the Passover festival, when large numbers of pilgrims would have been making their way into the city, it might have been possible for Jesus and his disciples to arrive quite inconspicuously if they had so wished. Instead, by means of two dramatic actions (the royal procession outside the city walls and the demonstration in the temple) Jesus makes sure that his arrival is noticed. Both actions claim a unique status and authority for Jesus, and neither is calculated to win the goodwill of the religious authorities; a direct challenge to Jesus' credentials will quickly follow (11:27-33). In introducing his third act in this way, Mark allows his readers no doubt that this is the beginning of a decisive confrontation, in which neither side will be in a mood to compromise."

Mark 11:1-11

Cf. Mt. 21:1-11; Lk 19:28-38.

France introduces verses 1-11 saying, "In the narrative context it is important to note the identity of the crowd who shout Hosanna. We have noted in the previous pericope the deliberate mention of an ὄχλος ἰκανός accompanying Jesus and his disciples as they leave Jericho for Jerusalem (see also on 15:40-41), and we must assume that the same crowd are now completing the journey together. The location is still outside Jerusalem (v. 1), and Jesus will not in fact enter the city until v. 11. The traditional description of this scene as the 'Triumphal Entry' is therefore inaccurate: It describes Jesus' approach to the city, not his entry. The shouting crowd are therefore the pilgrim group to whom we have already been introduced, and Mark puts their identity beyond doubt by using the phrase οἱ προαγοντες και οἱ ἀκολουθουντες (v. 9). This is not yet, then, the Jerusalem crowd, but the pilgrims, probably mostly like Jesus Galileans, who are accompanying him and his disciples to the city for the festival. (See on 15:40-41 for some comments on the composition of this crowd.) They are already predisposed, after the event at Jericho, to favour Jesus and to echo Bartimaeus' evaluation of him as υἱός Δαυιδ. Those who react with enthusiasm to the arrival of the Galilean Messiah are thus Jesus' Galilean supporters rather than the potentially more sceptical Jerusalem crowd whom he has not yet encountered. Matthew adds a note to make this contrast explicit in 21:10-11, but even in Mark the point is clear. There is no warrant here for the preacher's favourite comment on the fickleness of a crowd which can shout 'Hosanna' on one day and 'Crucify him' a few days later. They are not the same crowd. The Galilean pilgrims shouted 'Hosanna' as they approached the city; the Jerusalem crowd shouted, 'Crucify him'."

Mark 11:1

Καὶ ὅτε ἐγγίζουσιν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα εἰς Βηθφαγή καὶ Βηθανίαν πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν, ἀποστέλλει δύο τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ὅτε conj when, at which time
ἐγγίζω approach, draw near
ὄρος, ους n mountain, hill

"This apparently unnecessary mention of the Mount of Olives may arise from Mark's awareness of its messianic connotations (Zc. 14:4; cf. Ezk 11:23; 43:1-5)." France.

ἐλαία, ας f olive tree
ἀποστελλω send, send out
δύο gen & acc δύο dat δύοσιν two

Mark 11:2

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ὑπάγετε εἰς τὴν κώμην τὴν κατέναντι ὑμῶν, καὶ εὐθὺς εἰσπορευόμενοι εἰς αὐτὴν εὐρήσετε πῶλον δεδεμένον ἐφ' ὃν οὐδεὶς οὐπὼ ἀνθρώπων ἐκάθισεν· λύσατε αὐτὸν καὶ φέρετε.

ὑπαγω see 10:52

κωμη, ης f village, small town

κατεναντι prep with gen opposite, before

"Probably Bethphage, though it could just possibly be Bethany." Cranfield.

εὐρήσετε Verb, fut act indic, 2 pl εὐρισκω

πῶλος, ου m colt, young donkey

δεδεμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc s δεω

bind, tie

May echo Gen 49:10-11.

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing

οὐπὼ not yet

καθίζω sit (down), take on's seat

An echo of Zech 9:9.

λυω loose, untie, release

φερω bring, lead

Mark 11:3

καὶ ἂν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ· Τί ποιεῖτε τοῦτο; εἶπατε ὅτι Ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ χρεῖαν ἔχει· καὶ εὐθὺς αὐτὸν ἀποστέλλει πάλιν ὧδε.

εἰαν if

"It makes no difference whether τι; is read as interrogative adverb ('Why are you doing this?') or pronoun ('What is this that you are doing?'); the resumption of this clause in v. 5 favours the latter." France.

εἶπατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl λεγω

χρεῖα, ας f need, want

In referring to ὁ Κύριος, Jesus may have meant God rather than himself, or it could here mean 'its master has need of it' – so Taylor, who assumes that the owner was with Jesus at the time. France is of the view that, "the formula is much more likely to reflect the regular Jewish use of the phrase as a divine title. In that case the password asserts that the donkey is needed for God's service, a bold claim by Jesus for the significance of his own arrival at Jerusalem, but one which is no surprise to those who have learned from Mark that Jesus is bringing in God's kingdom."

πάλιν again, once more

ὧδε adv here, in this place

ἀποστελλει is a futuristic present. Cranfield thinks this last phrase is most naturally taken as part of the message – an assurance that the foal will be returned quickly. France, however, writes, "if we accept that ὁ κυριος is God. In that case the password ends at ἔχει, and the following clause (without παλιν; see Textual Note) is, as in Matthew, Jesus' prediction of the questioner's response to it: 'he will immediately send it here' (ὧδε being the place from which Jesus is sending the disciples on their errand). The same sequence of password and response will recur at v. 6, confirming that that was Mark's intention here too." The ambiguity has given rise to a number of textual variants.

Mark 11:4

καὶ ἀπήλθον καὶ εὔρον πῶλον δεδεμένον πρὸς θύραν ἔξω ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀμφοδου, καὶ λύουσιν αὐτόν.

ἀπήλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl
ἀπερχομαι

εὔρον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl εὕρισκω

πῶλος, ου m see v.2

θύρα, ας f door, gate

ἔξω adv. out, outside

ἀμφοδον, ου n street

Mark 11:5

καὶ τινες τῶν ἐκεῖ ἑστηκότων ἔλεγον αὐτοῖς·
Τί ποιεῖτε λύοντες τὸν πῶλον;

ἐκεῖ there, in that place

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

Suggests that the owner was not present.

Mark 11:6

οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτοῖς καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καὶ ἀφήκαν αὐτούς.

ἀφήκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἀφημι
allow

Mark 11:7

καὶ φέρουσιν τὸν πῶλον πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ ἐπιβάλλουσιν αὐτῷ τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπ' αὐτόν.

φέρω see v.2

ἐπιβάλλω throw or place on

ἱματιον, ου n clothing, robe, cloak

καθίζω see v.2

Mark 11:8

καὶ πολλοὶ τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν ἔστρωσαν εἰς τὴν ὁδόν, ἄλλοι δὲ στιβάδας κόψαντες ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν.

ἔστρωσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl

στρώννυμι and στρώννω spread

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

στιβας, αδος f leafy branch

κοπῶ cut

ἀγρος, ου m field, countryside

To add to the 'carpet' laid out for Jesus.

Mark 11:9

καὶ οἱ προάγοντες καὶ οἱ ἀκολουθοῦντες ἔκραζον· Ὡσαννά· Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου·

προαγω go before or ahead of

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany

Not intended to suggest two separate crowds.

κραζω cry out, call out

ὠσαννα hosanna (in Aramaic), an

exclamation of praise literally meaning,

"Save, I pray"

εὐλογεω speak well of, bless

Cf. Ps 118:26a. "In the psalm the sense is 'Blessed in the name of the Lord be he that cometh' (a blessing of the pilgrims who have come to the feast), and presumably the crowd used the words in this sense – whether with quite general intention or with a particular reference to the pilgrim whose way they were strewing with foliage is not clear. But Mark probably means his readers to catch another meaning – taking ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου with ὁ ἐρχόμενος rather than with εὐλογημένος, and so to see the special appropriateness of the words on this occasion. Cf. Lk 19:38, where the addition of ὁ βασιλεὺς makes this the plain meaning." Cranfield.

Mark 11:10

Εὐλογημένη ἡ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαβὶδ· Ὡσαννά ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.

"perhaps ... a patriotic shout called forth by the associations of Ps 118 and the Passover – a reference to the expected messianic kingdom. There is no need to take them to imply an identification of Jesus with the Messiah." Cranfield, who suggests that Jesus' actions were not understood as messianic at the time, but only with the wisdom of hindsight (cf. Jn. 12:16). Had his riding into Jerusalem upon a colt been viewed as a declaration of his messiahship it would have been mentioned at his trial.

France, however, notes, "The title υἱὸς Δαυὶδ which the crowd heard at Jericho has been remembered, and it is hardly surprising if now the king riding into the city of David is expected to re-establish Israel's national sovereignty, the βασιλεία του πατρός ἡμῶν Δαυὶδ. In deliberately enacting Zc 9:9-10 Jesus can have expected no less; David is not mentioned at that point in Zechariah (but see 12:7-13:1), but the king riding in triumph into Jerusalem as 'your king' is clearly modelled on David. It may be, as we shall see at 12:35-37, that Jesus would wish to challenge a *purely* Davidic understanding of his royal claim, but he could not claim that the crowd's Davidic interpretation of his ride into the city was unjustified, however limited their perception of its significance.

"The first dramatic public gesture, therefore, has placed the Galilean preacher firmly in contention for the title 'King of the Jews', and that title will be at the centre of his Roman trial (15:2, 9, 12, 18, 26, 32). For the Jewish leaders it would not have the same connotations as for the Roman governor, and 'Son of David' had an honourable place in their messianic ideology. But that does not mean that they would be pleased to hear it shouted outside the walls of Jerusalem by an excited Galilean crowd escorting a Galilean pretender, particularly one whose teaching and activity in Galilee have already given cause for scribal concern."

ὕψιστος, ἡ, ον highest, most high

'Save now (, O Thou who dwellest) in the highest.'

Mark 11:11-25

W. R. Telford entitled 11:11-25, 'The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree.' France writes, "This is one of the most elaborate examples of Mark's tendency to weave separate incidents together by shifting the spotlight to and fro between the two narrative scenes, so as to enable the reader to interpret each incident in the light of the other. The resultant enhancement of both episodes is impressive, and in particular a clear theological *raison d'etre* is provided for the otherwise pointless and embarrassing account of the cursing of the fig tree. The narrative sequence may be set out as follows:

- A First visit to the *temple* (11:11)
- B Cursing of the *fig tree* (11:12-14)
- A Jesus takes action in the *temple* (11:15-19)
- B The *fig tree* is found to be dead (11:20-25)
- A Jesus returns to the *Temple* (11:27) ...

To recognise this structure offers an answer to the puzzlement of some commentators over the function of Mark's unique v. 11, often described as an anticlimax after the royal procession, in that when Jesus eventually reaches the temple, the heart of 'his' city, nothing happens: Jesus simply 'looks at the temple as a tourist might and then leaves' (Schweitzer ...). But his 'looking around' is not without purpose, and he leaves, in Mark's telling of the story, in order to return and take decisive action the next day. In the meantime an incident will occur which gives to the reader (and to the disciples?) some food for thought on what that action is all about."

Mark 11:11

Καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα εἰς τὸ ἱερόν· καὶ περιβλεψάμενος πάντα ὄψε ἤδη οὔσης τῆς ὥρας ἐξῆλθεν εἰς Βηθανίαν μετὰ τῶν δώδεκα.

ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts
 περιβλεπομαι look around
 ὄψια, ας f evening
 ἤδη adv now, already
 ὥρα, ας f hour, moment, time
 δώδεκα twelve

"Jesus' first visit to the temple gives him the opportunity to see for himself what is going on there, and to plan his action for the next day. What happens in the morning will not be a spontaneous act of outrage, but a planned demonstration." France.

Mark 11:12-14

Cf. Mt 21:18f.

Cranfield suggests that the destruction of the fig tree is an acted parable. Schlatter says "That which happened in the Temple [vv.15-19] and Jesus' action against the tree [vv.12-14, 20-25] explained each other." France writes, "Mark's structuring of this section suggests such an interpretation, as we have seen, and it is supported by the prophetic use of fig trees and their fruit (especially the 'early' or 'first-ripe' figs) to symbolise the people of God and their obedience. See most obviously Je 8:13; 24:1-10; Ho 9:10, 16-17; Mi 7:1, and in the NT Lk 13:6-9. Mi 7:1-6 provides a particularly illuminating parallel. Similar symbolic use is found frequently in postbiblical Judaism. The evidence suggests that Mark and his readers would have had no difficulty in recognising the symbolism of the unsuccessful search for figs. Moreover, when the fig tree occurs again later in this gospel in a parabolic use in 13:28, it will again be in connection with the fate of the temple; while the symbolism is not the same as here, it will again focus on the close connection between the fig tree's leaves and the promise of fruit."

Mark 11:12

Καὶ τῇ ἐπαύριον ἐξεληθόντων αὐτῶν ἀπὸ Βηθανίας ἐπεινάσεν.

ἐπαυριον the next day
πειναω be hungry

Mark 11:13

καὶ ἰδὼν συκὴν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἔχουσαν φύλλα ἦλθεν εἰ ἄρα τι εὐρήσει ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ ἐλθὼν ἐπ' αὐτὴν οὐδὲν εὗρεν εἰ μὴ φύλλα, ὃ γὰρ καιρὸς οὐκ ἦν σύκων.

ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω see
συκη, ης f fig tree
μακροθεν adv far off, at a distance
φυλλον, ου n leaf
ἄρα inferential particle consequently, then,
thus – sometimes with εἰ or ἐπει for emphasis.
οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing
εἰ μὴ except
καιρος, ου m time, season
συκων, ου n fig

Mark 11:14

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτῇ· Μηκέτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἐκ σοῦ μηδεὶς καρπὸν φάγοι. καὶ ἤκουον οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.

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

Used here, as often in Mark, in the sense of response to some situation rather than reply to a comment.

μηκετι no longer

αἰων, αἰωνος m age, world order, eternity

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing

καρπος, ου m fruit, harvest

φάγοι Verb, aor act optative, 3 s ἐσθίω eat

μη (here μηκετι ... μηδεις) + optative expresses a negative wish.

Mark 11:15-19

Cf Mt 21:12f; Lk 19:45-48.

Of the cleansing of the Temple, Cranfield writes, "The inner meaning of this incident is messianic, and this is doubtless in Mark's mind. In Calvin's words, 'He declared Himself to be both King and High Priest, who presided over the Temple and the worship of God'. Indeed, we may see here the fulfilment of the promise of Mal 3:1ff. But outwardly the action did not go beyond the exercise of prophetic authority (cf. Jer 7:1ff., 26:1ff.). Its messianic nature was veiled. Had there been anything openly messianic about it, the Romans would surely have taken action. At the same time the question may have arisen in the minds of the Jewish authorities whether possibly his action pointed to an assertion of more than prophetic authority."

France writes that Jesus' "attack on the traders and money changers, who were there in the Court of the Gentiles with the permission of the temple authorities and who provided a convenient and probably essential service to worshippers visiting the temple from outside Jerusalem, was not simply (if at all) a protest against exploitation by unscrupulous traders. It extended also to their customers (τους ἀγοραζοντας) and even to anyone who was carrying things through the area. It was a repudiation of the way the temple's affairs were being conducted (and therefore of those under whose authority this took place), not simply an attempt to correct abuse of the system. What Antiochus had done by blatant idolatry, the Jewish leaders themselves have allowed to happen under pressure of commercial interests. Temple worship has lost its true focus, and must again be purified."

Mark 11:15

Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὸ ἱερόν ἤρξατο ἐκβάλλειν τοὺς πωλοῦντας καὶ τοὺς ἀγοράζοντας ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, καὶ τὰς τραπέζας τῶν κολλυβιστῶν καὶ τὰς καθέδρας τῶν πωλούντων τὰς περιστεράς κατέστρεψεν

ἱερον, ου n see v.11

ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out

πωλεω sell, barter

ἀγοραζω buy, redeem

"Mark tells the story in such a way as to suggest that Jesus' protest was not against the trade in itself, nor against any supposed exploitation by the traders (for in that case why should he expel buyers as well as sellers?), but rather against its being in the wrong place. This is not what the temple courts were for." France.

τραπεζα, ης f table, food, meal; bank
κολλυβιστης, ου m money-changer

Facilities were available for changing ordinary Greek or Roman money into the Tyrian coinage acceptable to the Temple.

καθεδρα, ας f seat, chair
περιστερα, ας f dove, pigeon
καταστρεφω overturn

Mark 11:16

και ουκ ηφιεν ινα τις διενεγκη σκευος δια του ιερου,

ηφιεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s αφημι
allow, permit

διενεγκη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s διαφερω
carry through, drive about

"διαφερω in the LXX and NT is usually intransitive, meaning 'differ' ... 'excel'; here it is used transitively – 'carry through' (cf. Acts 8:49; 27:27)." Cranfield.

σκευος, ους n object, thing, vessel

"Only Mark adds this much more far-reaching demand by Jesus... It is again a matter of an inappropriate use of the temple area." France.

Mark 11:17

και εδιδασκεν και ελεγεν αυτοις· Ου γεγραπται οτι Ο οικος μου οικος προσευχης κληθησεται πασιν τοις εθνεσιν; υμεις δε πεποιηκατε αυτον σπηλαιον ληστων.

διδασκω teach

γεγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω
write

προσευχη, ης f prayer

εθνεσιν Noun, dat pl εθνος, ους n nation; τα ε. Gentiles

Cf. Is 56:7. "The buying and selling in the Court of the Gentiles was effectually preventing the one area of the Temple that was open to the Gentiles from being 'a place of prayer'." Cranfield.

πεποιηκατε Verb, perf act indic, 2 pl ποιω
σπηλαιον, ου n cave, hideout
ληστης, ου m robber

Cf. Jer 7:11. A reference perhaps to the swindling nature of their trade. However, France thinks that it simply "highlights their lack of respect for God's house by comparing it with that earlier flagrant abuse of the sanctuary" – i.e. the one recorded in Jer. 7:11.

Mark 11:18

και ηκουσαν οι αρχιερεις και οι γραμματεις, και εζητουν πως αυτον απολεσωσιν· εφοβουντο γαρ αυτον, πας γαρ ο οχλος εξεπλησσετο επι τη διδαχη αυτου.

αρχιερευς, εως m high priest, member of
high priestly family

γραμματευς, εως m scribe

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

πως how(?)

"πως is used here to introduce an indirect question instead of οπως. It is sometimes so used in classical Greek." Cranfield.

απολλυμι destroy, kill

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

οχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

εκπλησσομαι be amazed

διδαχη, ης f teaching, what is taught

"While no doubt some of Jesus' supporters from the previous day may have been present, this is now essentially a Jerusalem crowd, and at this stage they, too, are on Jesus' side." France.

Mark 11:19

Και οταν οψε εγενετο, εξεπορευοντο εξω της πολεως.

οταν when

οψε late in the day, evening

εκπορευομαι go or come out

"Variation between singular (Jesus) and plural (Jesus and the disciples) in verbs of motion linking pericopes has been a feature both of Marcan style and of the MSS tradition. Here both readings are strongly supported, but the plural seems more natural since a plural follows in v. 20; the singular would then be due to the fact that in vv. 15-19 the focus has been on Jesus alone." France.

εξω adv. out, outside, away

πολις, εως f city, town

Mark 11:20-26

Cf. Mt 21:20-22. "It is not easy, and perhaps not important, to decide whether Matthew has telescoped an originally more extended event, and has capitalised on this foreshortening by then introducing παραχρημα, or whether Mark has stretched out a previously single incident in order to fold it around the protest in the temple." France.

Mark 11:20

Καὶ παραπορευόμενοι πρῶτ' εἶδον τὴν συκῆν ἐξηραμμένην ἐκ ῥιζῶν.

παραπορευομαι pass by

πρῶτ' adv in the early morning, morning
εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω see
συκῆ, ης f see v.13

ἐξηραμμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s

ξηραίνω dry up; pass wither
ρίζα, ης f root

"Indicates the completeness of the destruction. Cf. Job 18:16; 28:9; 31:12; Ezek 17:9; Hos 9:16." Cranfield.

Mark 11:21

καὶ ἀναμνησθεὶς ὁ Πέτρος λέγει αὐτῷ· Παββί, ἴδε ἡ συκὴ ἣν κατηράσω ἐξήρηνται.

ἀναμνησθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀναμνησκω remind; pass remember
κατηράσω Verb, aor midd dep indic, 2 s
(irreg) καταραομαι curse, place a curse
upon

"For the use of καταραομαι to describe Jesus' negative wish see on v. 14; Mark gives no hint that the term, however distasteful to some modern readers, is inappropriate to describe what Jesus has done. It is Jesus' powerful word, not coincidence, which has destroyed the tree, and the following verses will take up the theme of God's power operating dramatically through a human word." France.

ἐξήρηνται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ξηραίνω

Mark 11:22

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ἔχετε πίστιν θεοῦ·

ἀποκριθεὶς see v.14

The addition of εἰ before ἔχετε "looks like a correction to ease a rather abrupt imperative by echoing the more familiar construction of Mt 21:21; Lk 17:6, without recognising that the opening clause of the long sentence thus created becomes redundant before the later condition of faith." France.

πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

Mark 11:23

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὃς ἂν εἴπῃ τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ· Ἄρθητι καὶ βλήθητι εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ μὴ διακριθῆ ἔν τῃ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἀλλὰ πιστεύῃ ὅτι ὁ λαλεῖ γίνεται, ἔσται αὐτῷ.

ὃς ἂν whoever

ὄρος, ος n mountain, hill

ἄρθητι Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 s αἶρω

take up, take away

βλήθητι Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 s βαλλω

throw, throw down

θάλασσα, ης f sea

The Dead Sea is visible from the Mount of Olives.

διακριθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 2 s διακρινω
judge, evaluate, discern; midd & aor
pass doubt, hesitate

πιστεύῃ Verb, pres act subj, 3 s πιστευω

believe (in), have faith (in), have
confidence in

λαλεω speak, talk

"One is to be absolutely confident in God's readiness to respond to faith. Cf. Is 65:24; Mt 6:8; Jas 1:6.

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

"While the structure of Mark's narrative indicates that the fig-tree episode is to be read as a symbol of God's judgment on Jerusalem and its temple, the explicit lesson which is drawn from the event by the addition of this saying is, as in Matthew, on what may appear to be a different subject altogether... But even if originally independent, vv. 22-25 are not an alien intrusion in this context, for the imminent loss of the 'house of prayer' in Jerusalem (v. 17) poses the urgent question of where the tradition of prayer is then to continue. The implication of these verses thus appears to be that the Jerusalem temple is condemned and replaced by the praying community.

"The communal aspect of prayer is evident from the fact that vv. 22 and 24-25 are expressed in the plural (and the singular form of v. 23 derives from a ὃς ἂν which generalises the statement); prayer is here presented as something which the community of disciples undertakes together, not a private transaction between the individual believer and God." France.

Mark 11:24

διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν, πάντα ὅσα προσεύχησθε καὶ αἰτεῖσθε, πιστεύετε ὅτι ἐλάβετε, καὶ ἔσται ὑμῖν.

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

προσευχομαι pray

αἰτεω ask, request

ἐλάβετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl λαμβανω

"The aorist ἐλάβετε is the bolder and more striking expression, and λαμβανετε looks like a softening correction, assimilating the tense to the preceding γινεται. λημψεσθε is even less demanding, and may also have been introduced from the different construction in Mt 21:22." France.

"The simplistic reading of this passage which attributes all 'unanswered' prayer to inadequate faith on the part of the one praying can be pastorally disastrous, and must be set against the fact that the will of God is not necessarily to be equated with that of the person praying." France.

Mark 11:25

καὶ ὅταν στήκετε προσευχόμενοι, ἀφίετε εἴ τι ἔχετε κατὰ τινος, ἵνα καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἀφή ὑμῖν τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν.

ὅταν when, whenever

στήκετε Verb, perf act indic & imperat, 2 pl ἵστημι stand

ἀφίημι cancel, forgive

οὐρανός, ου m heaven

ἀφή Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἀφίημι

παραπτῶμα, τος n sin, wrongdoing

Cf. Mt. 5:23-24; 6:14f; 18:23-35.

Mark 11:26

This verse is omitted by x B L W 565 700 pc k l sy^s. It would appear to be an addition from Mt 6:15. The TR reads εἰ δε ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἀφίετε, οὐδε ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἀφήσει τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν.

Mark 11:27-33

Cf. Mt 21:23-27; Lk 20:1-8. "By comparing his own ἐξουσία with that of John the Baptist, Jesus invites two conclusions: first that his authorisation, like John's, was ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, and secondly that he himself is at least not inferior in importance to the eschatological prophet whose significance Mark has highlighted in the great combined quotation in 1:2-3. Those who have interpreted Jesus as a second John (6:14-16; 8:28) have not been on the wrong lines, even if their estimate falls short of the full truth. Those who have listened carefully to John's proclamation must go further and identify Jesus as the 'stronger one' whose mission supersedes that of John (1:7-8)... Thus while at the level of explicit reply this request for authorisation has received no more response from Jesus than the previous one in Galilee in 8:11-12, for those who will look below the surface there is a clear enough answer." France.

Mark 11:27

Καὶ ἔρχονται πάλιν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ περιπατοῦντος αὐτοῦ ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι

παλιν again, once more

ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

περιπατεω walk, walk about

ἀρχιερεὺς, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family

γραμματεὺς, εως m scribe, expert in Jewish law

πρεσβυτερος, α, ον elder

Cf. 8:31. "The three are mentioned together again in 14:43, 53; 15:1. Presumably here it is not the whole Sanhedrin that is meant, but a few representatives from each group." Cranfield. France comments, "We should think of this as a quasi-official delegation."

Mark 11:28

καὶ ἔλεγον αὐτῷ· Ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιεῖς; ἢ τίς σοι ἔδωκεν τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἵνα ταῦτα ποιῆς;

ποιός, α, ον interrog pro. what, which, of what kind

ἐξουσία, ας f authority, right

"In Mark's narrative scheme the question follows on the day after Jesus' disruptive demonstration in this same courtyard, so that ταῦτα must refer primarily to that event." France.

"They probably wondered whether he regarded himself as a prophet; the thought may also by this time have crossed their minds that he might possibly be thinking of himself as the Messiah." Cranfield.

ἢ οἱ

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s διδωμι

Mark 11:29

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ἐπερωτήσω ὑμᾶς ἓνα λόγον, καὶ ἀποκρίθητέ μοι, καὶ ἐρῶ ὑμῖν ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιῶ·

ἐπερωταω ask, question

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

λογος here = 'matter', 'point'

ἀποκρίθητέ Verb, aor pass dep imperat, 2 pl

ἀποκρινομαι answer

ἐρῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s λεγω

Mark 11:30

τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ Ἰωάννου ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἦν ἢ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων; ἀποκρίθητέ μοι.

οὐρανος, ου m heaven

"The question was no mere debating expedient but thoroughly apposite; for the question whether John was a prophet had a direct bearing on the question of Jesus' authority, their ministries being related as they were." Cranfield. France adds, "If they accept John's authority, they must also accept his as the greater."

Verse 31

καὶ διελογίζοντο πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς λέγοντες· Τί εἰπόμεν; εἴν εἰπόμεν· Ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, ἔρει· Διὰ τί οὖν οὐκ ἐπιστεύσατε αὐτῷ;

διαλογίζομαι discuss, consider, reason
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

"The Western inclusion of the deliberative question τί εἰπόμεν; [either in place of or immediately following λέγοντες] (noted in UBS³, not UBS⁴) is not necessary for the sense. Since such redundancy is typical not only of Western readings but also of Mark's style, it may well be original ... its omission by the majority of witnesses being explicable either as a simplifying assimilation to Matthew and Luke or as haplography, with another εἰπόμεν following." France.

εἴν if

εἰπόμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl λεγω

ἔρει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s λεγω

πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in)

Mark 11:32

ἀλλὰ εἰπόμεν· Ἐξ ἀνθρώπων; – ἐφοβοῦντο τὸν ὄχλον, ἅπαντες γὰρ εἶχον τὸν Ἰωάννην ὄντως ὅτι προφήτης ἦν.

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

ἅπας, ασα, αν (alternative form of πας) all; pl everyone

"For this use of ἐχω (= 'hold', 'consider') cf. Mt 14:5; 21:46; Phil 2:29." Cranfield.

ὄντως really, certainly, indeed

Mark 11:33

καὶ ἀποκριθέντες τῷ Ἰησοῦ λέγουσιν· Οὐκ οἶδαμεν. καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς· Οὐδὲ ἐγὼ λέγω ὑμῖν ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιῶ.

οἶδα know

οὐδε neither

Jesus leaves their question unanswered, "save by the veiled and indirect answer implicit in his counter question." Cranfield.

Mark 12:1-12

Cf. Mt 21:31-46; Lk 20:9-19. Gundry treats 11:27-12:12 as a single section. He writes, "The pericope ... falls into two halves, a dialogue between the Sanhedrin and Jesus (11:27-33) and a parable spoken by him to and about them (12:1-12)."

In Matthew's Gospel this is the second of three parables all with a theme of displacement. France comments, "The theological question posed by this parable is therefore where the true people of God is now to be found. In speaking it 'against them' (v. 12) Jesus is implicitly claiming that it is in him, not in the old regime which they represent, that God's designs for his people will find their fulfilment."

"The choice of a vineyard as the setting for the story already suggests that it is about the long saga of God's dealings with Israel. The vine or vineyard as an image for Israel in relation to Yahweh is well known from the OT (e.g., Ps 80:8-18; Is 27:2-6; Je 2:21; 12:10; Ezk 19:10-14; Ho 10:1). But the wording of v. 1 is more specific, in that it echoes in detail the introduction to Isaiah's song of the vineyard (Is 5:1-2), an allegory, explicitly drawn out, of God's disappointment with his people. Jesus' parable does not develop the image in the same way: in Isaiah it is the vineyard which has failed, here it is the tenants; in Isaiah the vineyard is to be abandoned and devastated, here it will be entrusted to new tenants. Isaiah's message is thus one of unrelieved disaster, whereas Jesus' parable offers hope for a new beginning. But the new beginning will come only after judgment on the existing regime."

Mark 12:1

Καὶ ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς ἐν παραβολαῖς λαλεῖν· Ἀμπελῶνα ἄνθρωπος ἐφύτευσεν, καὶ περιέθηκεν φραγμὸν καὶ ὄρυξεν ὑπολήνιον καὶ ὠκοδόμησεν πύργον, καὶ ἐξέδετο αὐτὸν γεωργοῖς, καὶ ἀπεδήμησεν.

ἀρχω midd begin
λαλεω speak, talk

To the chief priests, scribes and elders. "The details of the preparation of the vineyard from ἐφύτευσεν to ὠκοδόμησεν πύργον echo directly LXX Is 5:2, though the items are not in the same order." France.

ἀμπελων, ὠνος m vineyard
φυτευω plant
περιέθηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 2 s
περιτιθημι put around
φραγμος, ου m fence, wall, hedge
ὄρυσσω dig, dig a hole in
ὑποληνιον, ου n trough placed under a wine press
οικοδομεω build
πυργος, ου m tower, watchtower

"Used for watching against thieves or animals and for shelter for the husbandmen." Cranfield.

ἐξέδετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἐκδιδομαι let out, lease, rent
γεωργος, ου m farmer, tenant farmer, vinedresser
ἀποδημεω leave (home) on a journey, go away

Mark 12:2

καὶ ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς τοὺς γεωργοὺς τῷ καιρῷ δοῦλον, ἵνα παρὰ τῶν γεωργῶν λάβῃ ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος·

ἀπέστειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
ἀποστελλω send, send out
καιρος, ου m time, appointed time, season
δουλος, ου m slave, servant
καρπος, ου m fruit, harvest

"The normal method of payment for the tenancy was for an agreed proportion of the crop to be surrendered to the owner. In the case of a new vineyard it would be at least four years before a crop would be harvested, so that there is a long interval between the beginning of the tenancy and the καιρος for the sending of the collector; the tenants have had time to feel securely entrenched." France.

Mark 12:3

καὶ λαβόντες αὐτὸν ἔδειραν καὶ ἀπέστειλαν κενόν.

ἔδειραν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl δερω beat, strike, hit
κενος, η, ου empty

I.e. empty-handed.

Mark 12:4

καὶ ἄλιν ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἄλλον δοῦλον· κάκεῖνον^f ἐκεφαλῶσαν καὶ ἠτίμασαν.

παλιν again, once more
ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
κάκεινος, η, ο contraction of καὶ ἐκεῖνος and that one, and he, that one also, he also
κεφαλῶσω beat over the head

The meaning of this verb is uncertain. It is not otherwise known. France says the verb "is assumed to mean 'hit on the head' (though it could mean 'decapitate': is there an allusion here to John the Baptist?)"

ἀτιμάζω treat shamefully, dishonour

Mark 12:5

καὶ ἄλλον ἀπέστειλεν· κάκεῖνον ἀπέκτειναν, καὶ πολλοὺς ἄλλους, οὓς μὲν δέροντες οὓς δὲ ἀποκτένοντες.

ἀποκτεινω and ἀποκτενω, -ννω kill, put to death
δερω see v.3

Mark 12:6

ἔτι ἓνα εἶχεν, υἱὸν ἀγαπητόν· ἀπέστειλεν αὐτὸν ἔσχατον πρὸς αὐτοὺς λέγων ὅτι Ἐντραπήσονται τὸν υἱὸν μου.

ἔτι still, yet, moreover
εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

εἶχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s έχω

"The position of ένα before the verb and separated from υἱὸν ἀγαπητὸν adds emphasis both to the finality of this expedient (there is only one person left to send) and, theologically, to the uniqueness of the son over against the numerous slaves." France.

ἀγαπητός, η, ον beloved

Recalls the voice from heaven in 1:11 and 9:7 and echoes Abraham's sacrifice of his son as recorded in LXX Gen 22:2.

ἔσχατος, η, ον adj last, final

ἐντραπήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl

ἐντρεπω make ashamed; pass respect, regard

Mark 12:7

ἐκεῖνοι δὲ οἱ γεωργοὶ πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς εἶπαν ὅτι Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ κληρονόμος· δεῦτε ἀποκτείνωμεν αὐτόν, καὶ ἡμῶν ἔσται ἡ κληρονομία.

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those

Here has a disparaging sense. It "points back to the picture already drawn of the men: 'those husbandmen, being such as we know they were'." Swete.

ἑαυτος, εαυτη, εαυτον him/her/itself

κληρονόμος, ου m heir

δευτε adv. come (of command or exhortation)

"The same words [δευτε ἀποκτείνωμεν αὐτόν] are used by Joseph's brothers in LXX Gen 37:20." Cranfield.

ἀποκτείνω and ἀποκτενω, -ννω kill, put to death

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

κληρονομία, ας f inheritance

Mark 12:8

καὶ λαβόντες ἀπέκτειναν αὐτόν, καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτόν ἔξω τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος.

ἐκβαλλω throw out, cast out

ἔξω adv. out, outside, away

"The throwing of the son out of the vineyard has obvious symbolic significance in relation to the rejection of Jesus, but in that case the order of death followed by throwing out is surprising (and is reversed by Matthew and Luke, reflecting the death of Jesus outside Jerusalem). At the level of the story proper the murder followed by the throwing out of the body (not even a decent burial) provides a vivid climax, and perhaps Mark intends no more." France.

Mark 12:9

τί ποιήσει ὁ κύριος τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος; ἐλεύσεται καὶ ἀπολέσει τοὺς γεωργοὺς, καὶ δώσει τὸν ἀμπελῶνα ἄλλοις.

κύριος here means 'owner'

ἐλεύσεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s

έρχομαι

ἀπολέσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἀπολλυμι

destroy, kill

ἄλλος, η, ο see v.4

"Mark's readers would have had no difficulty in identifying the ἄλλοι as the church. But Jesus' words remain uninterpreted to those who heard him in the temple." France.

Mark 12:10

οὐδὲ τὴν γραφὴν ταύτην ἀνέγνωτε· Λίθον ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας·

γραφη, ης f writing, Scripture

ἀναγινωσκω read

"The quotation is from Ps 118 (LXX: 117):22f., and follows the LXX exactly." Cranfield.

λίθος, ου m stone

ἀποδοκιμαζω reject

οικοδομεω build

ἐγενήθη Verb, aor indic, 3 s γινομαι

κεφαλη, ης f head

γωνια, ας f corner; κεφαλη γωνιας main corner stone, keystone

"It is as clear warning to the leaders of Israel that the one whom they are rejecting will be exalted by God as Jesus could possibly give without dropping altogether his messianic veiledness." Cranfield. France comments, "What the parable did not contain was any concept of the rejected son himself being vindicated and taking the supreme place; indeed the imagery of the parable did not allow it without moving outside the story situation to include the possibility of resurrection after death. It is that crucial move which this quotation allows, thus completing the total scenario by weaving in the final and hitherto neglected element of Jesus' three passion predictions. This is a creative use of Scripture which Jesus' hearers at the time could certainly not have been expected to work out for themselves, despite the rebuke implied in the opening question."

Mark 12:11

παρὰ κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη, καὶ ἔστιν θαυμαστὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν;

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι
θαυμαστος, η, ον marvellous, wonderful

"The second verse of the quotation might serve as a motto for the whole of Mark's gospel. It is the gospel of paradox, of human amazement at the unexpected work of God." France.

Mark 12:12

Καὶ ἐζήτησαν αὐτὸν κρατῆσαι, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν τὸν ὄχλον, ἐγνώσαν γὰρ ὅτι πρὸς αὐτοὺς τὴν παραβολὴν εἶπεν. καὶ ἀφέντες αὐτὸν ἀπῆλθον.

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

κρατεω hold, hold fast, sieze

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

ἐγνώσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl γινωσκω

ἐγνώσαν ... explains ἐζητουν rather than ἐφοβηθησαν.

προς here means 'with reference to'

εἶπεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s λεγω

ἀφημι leave, let go

ἀπῆλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl

ἀπερχομαι

"While this full grouping of ἀρχιερεις και γραμματεις και πρεσβυτεροι will not appear again until 14:43, the fact that no new subject is announced for the next verb, ἀποστελλουσιν, indicates that they remain active in the background." France.

Mark 12:13-17

Cf. Mt 22:15-22; Lk 20:20-26.

Mark 12:13

Καὶ ἀποστέλλουσιν πρὸς αὐτὸν τινὰς τῶν Φαρισαίων καὶ τῶν Ἡρῳδιανῶν ἵνα αὐτὸν ἀγρεύσωσιν λόγῳ.

ἀποστελλω send, send out

"The sequence of plural verbs without expressed change of subject since 11:27 leaves little doubt that the subject of ἀποστελλουσιν is still the ἀρχιερεις και γραμματεις και πρεσβυτεροι. This is an official delegation with the aim of discrediting Jesus." France.

τινας Pronoun, m & f acc pl τῖς

Ἡρῳδιανοί, ων m Herodians (partisans of the Herodian family)

Cf. 3:6.

ἀγρευω trap, catch off guard

France comments that the verb is usually used of trapping animals for food, adding that it "forms a vivid metaphor for their hostile purpose."

Mark 12:14

καὶ ἐλθόντες λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Διδάσκαλε, οἴδαμεν ὅτι ἀληθῆς εἶ καὶ οὐ μέλει σοι περὶ οὐδενός, οὐ γὰρ βλέπεις εἰς πρόσωπον ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἀληθείας τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ διδάσκεις· ἔξεστιν δοῦναι κῆνσον Καίσαρι ἢ οὐ; δῶμεν ἢ μὴ δῶμεν;

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

οἶδα know

ἀληθης, ες true, truthful, honest

Cf. Jn 7:18.

μελει impersonal verb it is of concern, it matters

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

I.e. not concerned about the opinions of men.

βλεπω see, look

προσωπον, ου n face, appearance

βλεπεις εἰς προσωπον ἀνθρώπων a Hebraism meaning to show partiality. I.e. Jesus would not be intimidated by, nor would he tailor his answer in accordance with, the nature of the questioner: he would give his honest view.

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

ὁδος, ου f way

διδασκω teach

ἔξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is lawful, it is proper

I.e. in accordance with God's law.

δοῦναι verb, aor act infin διδωμι

κηνσος, ου m tax

France comments, "All Roman taxes (customs, tolls, etc.) were unpopular, but the poll tax (κηνσος) was a particularly offensive demand for Jewish patriots. First imposed less than a generation earlier by means of Quirinius's census when Judea became a Roman province under direct rule in A.D. 6, it was immediately the cause of the revolt led by Judas of Galilee in that year (Josephus, *War* 2.118; *Ant.* 18.4-10, 23-25). That revolt had been quickly stamped out, but it remained the inspiration for subsequent patriotic leaders, culminating in the Zealot movement which precipitated the climactic revolt of A.D. 66 and the consequent siege leading to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The question was therefore an essentially political one, aimed to elicit Jesus' stance with regard to 'Zealot' ideology. As a Galilean he was not liable to pay the κηνσος, which applied only to provinces such as Judaea which were under direct Roman rule. They approach him as a 'foreign' visitor who might be expected to offer a more 'objective' judgment, but his response may be expected to be of interest to the political authorities of Judaea." France continues, "But for Judas the issue has been as much theological as political." It was his view "that allegiance to God and to Rome as a pagan occupying power are fundamentally incompatible." Cranfield adds, "The Pharisees, who were no friends of the tax, though they justified paying it, and the Herodians, who supported it, came together to ask Jesus, united by the desire to destroy him in one way or another. The question was a trap; for if Jesus said, 'Yes', he would be finished as far as the people were concerned, whereas if he said, 'No', he could at once be denounced to the Romans."

ἡ οἱ
δῶμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl δίδωμι

Mark 12:15

ὁ δὲ εἰδὼς αὐτῶν τὴν ὑπόκρισιν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·
Τί με πειράζετε; φέρετέ μοι δηνάριον ἵνα ἴδω.
εἰδὼς Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s οἶδα

Cf. 2:8; 5:30.

ὑποκρισις, εως f hypocrisy, pretence
πειράζω test, put to the test, tempt
φέρω bring
δηνάριον, ου n denarius
ἴδω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ὄραω see,
observe

Mark 12:16

οἱ δὲ ἤνεγκαν. καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Τίνος ἡ εἰκὼν
αὕτη καὶ ἡ ἐπιγραφή; οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ·
Καίσαρος.

ἤνεγκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl φέρω
εἰκὼν, ονος f likeness, image
ἐπιγραφή, ης f inscription, superscription

"The most common type of *denarius* of Tiberius has on its obverse the Emperor's bust adorned with a laurel wreath and on its reverse a representation of his mother Livia. The legend, which is abbreviated, reads (in full): *Tiberius Caesar Augusti Filius Augustus Pontifex Maximus*. Both legend and images set forth the mythology of the imperial cult and so troubled the consciences of religious Jews." Cranfield.

France comments, "By asking his questioners to show him a denarius Jesus wrong-footed them. He himself apparently did not have a denarius, but his questioners were able to produce one. They were therefore in no position to criticise Jesus for lack of patriotism or of religious scruples, if they themselves were already carrying the 'idoltrous' imperial money."

Mark 12:17

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τὰ Καίσαρος
ἀπόδοτε Καίσαρι καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῷ θεῷ. καὶ
ἐξεθαύμαζον ἐπ' αὐτῷ.

ἀποδίδωμι give, pay, render, give back

The compound verb emphasises obligation. On Jesus' attitude to the Roman Empire cf. Jer 27:5ff; 28:14; 29:7.

France comments, "The theological basis of Jesus' response is ... that the Zealot ideology underlying the supposed dilemma is false. Instead of setting loyalty to God and to Caesar in opposition to each other, the straightforward meaning of Jesus' words is that both may be maintained at the same time. He gives no specific guidance as to what is one's obligation to each party, though the implication of his ἀπόδοτε Καίσαρι following on the recognition that the denarius bears Caesar's name surely implies that the use of the denarius to pay the poll tax falls clearly within the category of Caesar's dues. His pronouncement assumes that there is no clash between the legitimate claims of Caesar and of God. It is therefore an answer no Zealot could have given. But neither is it simply pro-Roman: God also has his rights.

"Jesus' response to this question thus provides a basis for the more developed teaching of Rom 13:1-7 and 1 Pet 2:13-17, each of which simply assumes that it is possible to be loyal to the Roman government and to God at the same time and indeed goes further in grounding this instruction (which in Rom 13:6-7 includes specifically the payment of taxes) in the belief that the (pagan) civil authorities are a God-given institution. None of these passages envisages a conflict of loyalties, and therefore they offer no guidance for those situations, with which the church soon found itself only too familiar, where God and Caesar appear to be pulling in opposite directions. But it is an important starting point for debating such conflicts to recognise that for Jesus, as well as for Paul and Peter, the *normal* situation is one of compatible loyalties rather than, as the Zealots would have insisted, one of conflict between Caesar and God."

ἐκθαυμάζω be completely amazed

Mark 12:18-27

Cf. Mt 22:23-33; Lk 20:27-40. "The question from the Pharisees and Herodians was political, with a theological nuance. The Sadducees now pose a purely theological question, earthed in a specific test case. Jesus' response to this question will be a matter of complete indifference to the Roman government, but because it focuses on an area or current controversy on which the dominant 'parties' in Jerusalem were sharply divided, it carries the potential for alienating one or other faction among the listeners. In addition, since the questioners seem to assume that Jesus supports the 'Pharisaic' notion of an afterlife, it offers the opportunity to discredit him as a wise teacher by presenting him with a *reductio ad absurdum* of that position which any Pharisaic teacher might be expected to find equally embarrassing, and so making him look ridiculous before the crowd." France.

Mark 12:18

Καὶ ἔρχονται Σαδδουκαῖοι πρὸς αὐτόν, οἵτινες λέγουσιν ἀνάστασιν μὴ εἶναι, καὶ ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες·

"The Sadducees were the aristocratic party, made up of the high priestly and leading lay families of Jerusalem. They were wealthy and worldly. Their arrogance and their harshness in the administration of justice were notorious. Conservative in doctrine, they rejected what they regarded as Pharisaic innovations; but their main concern was for the maintenance of their privileges, not for doctrinal purity." Cranfield. These were probably representatives of the ἀρχιερεῖς mentioned earlier.

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅ τι
who, which
ἀναστασις, εως f resurrection, raising up

Cf. Acts 23:6-8.

ἐπερωτῶ ask, question

Mark 12:19

Διδάσκαλε, Μωϋσῆς ἔγραψεν ἡμῖν ὅτι ἐάν τινος ἀδελφὸς ἀποθάνῃ καὶ καταλίπῃ γυναῖκα καὶ μὴ ἀφῆ τέκνον, ἵνα λάβῃ ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ ἐξαναστήσῃ σπέρμα τῷ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ.

διδασκαλος, ου m see v.14

"The address διδάσκαλε (cf. v. 14) is particularly appropriate for what purports to be a serious theological question such as a rabbi might be expected to pronounce upon." France.

γράφω write

ἐάν if

ἀποθνήσκω die

καταλίπῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s καταλείπω
leave, leave behind

γυνή, αικος f woman, wife

ἀφῆ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἀφημι leave

τέκνον, ου n child; pl descendants

ἐξανίστημι have (σπέρμα) children

σπέρμα, τος n seed, offspring

Cf. Deut 25:5-10. "The levirate law is based on the assumption that a man's 'survival' is through the continuation of the family line, and for those who could see no other form of 'resurrection' this remained an important issue. The use of the verb ἐξαναστήσῃ in the echo of Gn 38:8 (LXX ἀναστήσον), following so soon after the reminder that the Sadducees do not believe in ἀνάστασις, neatly emphasises that this is the only sort of 'resurrection' they can envisage." France.

Mark 12:20

ἐπτά ἀδελφοὶ ἦσαν· καὶ ὁ πρῶτος ἔλαβεν
γυναῖκα, καὶ ἀποθνήσκων οὐκ ἀφήκεν
σπέρμα·

ἐπτά seven

πρῶτος, η, ον first

ἔλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαμβανω

ἀφήκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφιημι

Mark 12:21

καὶ ὁ δευτέρος ἔλαβεν αὐτήν, καὶ ἀπέθανεν μὴ
καταλιπὼν σπέρμα, καὶ ὁ τρίτος ὡσαύτως·

δευτέρος, α, ον second

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνησκω

καταλιπὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

καταλειπω see v.19

τρίτος, η, ον third

ὡσαύτως adv in the same way, likewise

Mark 12:22

καὶ οἱ ἐπτά οὐκ ἀφήκαν σπέρμα· ἔσχατον
πάντων καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἀπέθανεν.

ἀφήκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἀφιημι

ἔσχατον παντῶν adv last of all

Mark 12:23

ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει ὅταν ἀναστῶσιν τίνος αὐτῶν
ἔσται γυνή; οἱ γὰρ ἐπτά ἔσχον αὐτήν γυναῖκα.

ὅταν when

ἀναστῶσιν Verb, 2 aor act subj, 3 pl

ἀνιστημι trans (in fut and 1 aor act) raise;

intrans (in 2 aor & all midd) rise, come

back to life

"The clause ὅταν ἀναστῶσιν is widely attested in the versions even though missing from most early MSS, and was likely to be omitted either as apparently redundant ... or by assimilation to Matthew and Luke; there is no obvious motive for its insertion." France.

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 3 s εἶμι

ἔσχον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl ἔχω

"The intention of the Sadducees is to ridicule the Pharisaic doctrine of the resurrection accepted by Jesus." Cranfield.

Mark 12:24

ἔφη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Οὐ διὰ τοῦτο πλανᾶσθε
μὴ εἰδότες τὰς γραφὰς μηδὲ τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ
θεοῦ;

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say

πλανᾶω lead astray, mislead, deceive

εἰδότες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl οἶδα

know, understand

I.e. 'because you do not understand...' "For the Sadducees, who saw their position as based on Scripture and not on later ideas, that was a particularly wounding accusation, and one which Jesus will need to justify in vv. 26-27." France.

γραφῆ, ης f writing, Scripture

μηδε negative particle nor, and not, neither

"Those who understand the Scriptures and therefore reckon with the power of God will not deny the resurrection because they cannot comprehend the 'how' of it." Cranfield.

Mark 12:25

ὅταν γὰρ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῶσιν, οὔτε γαμοῦσιν
οὔτε γαμίζονται, ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ὡς ἄγγελοι ἐν τοῖς
οὐρανοῖς·

νεκρός, α, ον dead

οὔτε not, nor (οὔτε ... οὔτε neither ... nor)

γαμεῶ marry

γαμίζω give (a bride) in marriage

"The mention of the angels touches on another point at which the Sadducees disagreed with the Pharisees (cf. Acts 23:8)." Cranfield. France comments, "Jesus suggests that the earthly perspective, within which the exclusiveness of the marriage bond has a central place, is inappropriate to a new quality of life which is not like that of human beings on earth but of 'angels in heaven'. Earthly life is temporary, and therefore requires the procreation of further life, in the context of marriage, for its continuance, but heavenly life is eternal, and there is no place in it for procreation. Marriage and reproduction belong only to the earthly sphere (note that it is marriage, not love, which Jesus declares to be inappropriate in heaven). Angels, as eternal beings, have no need to reproduce. And in such a context the exclusiveness and jealousy which belong to marriage are no longer appropriate. Something like that seems to be the logic of Jesus' very compressed argument. It is based on a theology of angels and of heaven which is for us a matter of faith rather than experience, and as such may leave many readers less than satisfied. But its purpose is to challenge the assumption of the Sadducees that an afterlife, if it exists, must be just like this one, and can therefore be evaluated in terms of life on earth (cf. 1 Cor 15:50). That is to fail to appreciate τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ θεοῦ." France's comments, I believe, need to be nuanced a little in light of the 'earthy' character of NT hope concerning resurrection and new creation, but are nevertheless valuable.

Mark 12:26

περὶ δὲ τῶν νεκρῶν ὅτι ἐγείρονται οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ Μωϋσέως ἐπὶ τοῦ βάτου πῶς εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς λέγων· Ἐγὼ ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσαὰκ καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ἰακώβ; ἐγειρω raise

"The change from the active ἀναστῶσιν in vv. 23, 25 to the passive ἐγείρονται here may be intended to draw attention to the fact that resurrection is not automatic but is the result of God's active concern (as the argument of vv. 26-27 will assume), a demonstration of the δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 24)." France.

ἀναγινωσκω read, read in public worship
βιβλος, ου f book, record
βατος, ου m & f bush, thornbush

I.e. in the passage relating the story of the burning bush. Cf. Rom 11:2, ἐν Ἠλίᾳ.

πως how(?)

"In LXX Ex. 3:6 the phrase θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ θεὸς Ἰσαὰκ καὶ θεὸς Ἰακώβ, without articles (except that LXX A has an article before the first θεὸς only), follows an introductory ὁ θεὸς τοῦ πατρός σου which is omitted in all the synoptic quotations. All three synoptic quotations show textual variations here, but it seems probable that Matthew included articles before all uses of θεός, and Luke only before the first. It is perhaps more likely that Mark agreed with Luke (and substantially with the LXX) in omitting the last two articles (and possibly the first; so D W) and that they were added by assimilation to Matthew; but the matter is of stylistic rather than exegetical interest." France.

Mark 12:27

οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς νεκρῶν ἀλλὰ ζώντων· πολὺ πλανᾶσθε.

ζωω live, be alive
πολυ adv much, greatly
πλαναω see v.24

"The fact that in Moses' time God could still call himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob implies that at that time he still remembered and cared for them, and, since he is the living, almighty and faithful God, those whom he remembers and cares for must be alive... And if they were still alive with God (for this pre-resurrection life, cf. Lk 23:43; 16:19-31; Phil 1:23...) in the time of Moses, we may be confident that at the last God will also raise up their bodies, so that they may share the final blessedness. The kernel of the argument is the faithfulness of God." Cranfield

France similarly comments, "The argument is ... a reflection on the character of the covenant God whom Moses encountered, a God who through his new name 'I AM' is revealed as the living God, the ever-present helper and deliverer of his people. If such a God chooses to be identified by the names of his long-dead servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom his covenant was made, and whom he committed himself to protect, they cannot be simply dead and forgotten: οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς νεκρῶν ἀλλὰ ζώντων. It is a cryptic, allusive argument worthy of a rabbinic teacher, but its basis, far from being merely the tense of a verb, is in the fundamental theological understanding of Yahweh, the living God, and of the implications of his establishing an 'everlasting covenant' with his mortal worshippers."

Mark 12:28

Καὶ προσελθὼν εἰς τῶν γραμματέων ἀκούσας αὐτῶν συζητούντων, ἰδὼν ὅτι καλῶς ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς, ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτόν· Ποία ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη πάντων;

προσερχομαι come, approach
εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἐνος, μιας, ἐνος one
συζητεω argue, discuss, question
ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω see,
observe
καλως adv well

"καλῶς in this context means not just 'cleverly' (so as to escape the intended trap or even to win the argument), but that Jesus' answers have been good, wholesome, satisfying, leading the scribe to hope for an equally enlightening (not just clever) answer to his own more fundamental question; cf. the combination of καλῶς with ἐπ ἀληθείας in v.32." France.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply

"Whereas other questions have been posed by groups, giving the impression of official delegations, this comes from an individual, and it soon becomes clear that his attitude is not that of the majority of the γραμματεῖς. He comes already favourably disposed towards Jesus, and leaves even more so. Such an open-minded enquirer prefigures the minority support which Jesus and his followers will find even in the Sanhedrin (15:43; Acts 5:33-39; cf. Jn 7:50-51; 19:38-40)." France.

ἐπερωταω see v.18
ποιος, α, ον interrog pro. what, which
ἐντολη, ης f command
πρωτος, η, ον first, leading, foremost

παντων "πασων might have been expected, as ἐντολη is feminine and is actually read by some MSS; but παντων is to be explained as a stereotyped use of the neuter genitive plural to intensify the superlative." Cranfield.
 France comments, "The question of v. 14 was primarily political with theological overtones, and that of v. 23 essentially theological. Here, as is appropriate to a question from a scribe, we move onto more legal ground. The question is familiar from scribal debates about the law. Given that there are, according to scribal reckoning, 613 separate commandments in the five Books of Moses (R. Simlai [c. 250]...), the question of priority could not be avoided. The rabbis discussed which commandments were 'heavy' and which 'light', and sometimes ranked certain categories of law as more essential than others. There was a natural desire for a convenient summary of the law's requirements, a single principle from which all the rest of the Torah was derived (the rabbis used the term *k'lal* for such a summarising principle). See *b. Sab.* 31a for the famous request to Shammai and Hillel to 'teach me the whole Torah while I am standing on one leg', and Hillel's reply, 'Do not do to your neighbour what is harmful to you; this is the whole Torah: the rest is commentary.' Jesus' own summary in Mt 7:12 is strikingly similar, and again carries the rider, 'This is the law and the prophets'."

Mark 12:29

ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι Πρώτη ἐστίν· Ἄκουε, Ἰσραήλ, κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστίν,

Jesus quotes the 'Shema', Deut 6:4f.

Mark 12:30

καὶ ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος σου.

ἀγαπήσεις Verb, fut act indic, 2 s ἀγαπαω
 love, show love for

"The love here commanded is the response of a man in the totality of his being to the prior love of God. The whole man is the object of the divine love and the whole man is thereby claimed by God for himself." Cranfield.

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire
 καρδια, ας f heart
 ψυχη, ης f self, inmost being, life, 'soul'
 διανοια mind, understanding
 ισχυς, υος f strength

"In place of δυνάμεως in the final phrase Mark has ἰσχύος; there is no great difference in meaning, and ἰσχύος (Luke uses the same noun) may well reflect an alternative Greek version which was in common use... The other difference from the LXX is that Mark has added the phrase καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου, thus giving four phrases where Deuteronomy has only three. There is some variation in the three nouns in the LXX versions of Deut 6:5 and of the related text 2 Ki 23:25, all four of Mark's nouns being represented among the variants, but with the exception of the Lucian revision (presumably influenced by NT texts) no LXX version has more than the three nouns of the Hebrew. Mark and Luke, however, according to the best represented text, each have four nouns, though Mark reverts to only three in the scribe's resume in v. 33. Matthew, like Dt 6:5, has only three nouns, but by retaining Mark's additional διάνοια and omitting ἰσχύς he has left himself without an equivalent to the third Hebrew noun... These variations indicate a text in regular liturgical or catechetical use. They do not greatly affect the overall sense of the pronouncement, but the NT expansion from three nouns to four seems to be a distinctive feature of Jesus' use of it. It is difficult to differentiate clearly between the force of καρδία, ψυχή and διάνοια in the context of Hebrew thought, but the addition of διάνοια ... may suggest a deliberate extension of the familiar text to emphasise the intellectual faculty as a key element in God's service." France.

Mark 12:31

δευτέρα αὕτη· Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν. μείζων τούτων ἄλλη ἐντολὴ οὐκ ἔστιν.

δευτερος, α, ον second

Though asked for the single greatest commandment, Jesus adds a second in his reply, since the two are inseparable (cf. 1 Jn 4:19,20). For Jesus' "explicit linking together of these two very familiar OT texts we have no Jewish precedent... The two are linked both by the key verb ἀγαπήσεις and by the fact that they represent respectively the first and second parts of the decalogue." France.

πλησιον i) prep with gen near; ii) ὁ π.
 neighbour, fellow man.
 σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself

The quotation is from Lev 19:18 (cf. Rom 13:10; Jas 2:8). "The command to love one's neighbour as oneself does not in any way legitimise self-love (as has sometimes been thought); but in it God addresses us as the men we actually are, sinners who love ourselves, and claims us *as such* for love to our neighbours." Cranfield.

μειζων, ον greater, greatest
 άλλος, η, ο another, other

Mark 12:32

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ γραμματεὺς· Καλῶς, διδάσκαλε, ἐπ' ἀληθείας εἶπες ὅτι εἷς ἔστιν καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος πλὴν αὐτοῦ·

καλως may be taken with εἶπες: 'Truly Master, you have well said ...'. "But it is perhaps better taken by itself as an exclamation." Cranfield. France agrees, saying, "For καλῶς as an exclamation in response to someone else's statement ('Well said', 'Hear, hear!') cf. Rom 11:20."

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher
 ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality; ἐν ἀ. truly
 εἶπες Verb, aor act indic, 2 s λεγω
 πλην prep with gen. except, besides

Cf. Deut 4:35; Is 45:21; Ex 8:10.

Mark 12:33

καὶ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν αὐτὸν ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς συνέσεως καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος καὶ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν τὸν πλησίον ὡς ἑαυτὸν περισσώτερόν ἐστιν πάντων τῶν ὀλοκαυτωμάτων καὶ θυσιῶν.

συνεσις, εως f understanding, insight

"The substitution of συνεσις for διανοια in v.30 introduces a little variety, but makes no appreciable difference to the sense." Cranfield. France comments, "Its meaning is not far from that of διάνοια and has a similarly 'intellectual' tone."

όλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire
 περισσοτερος, α, ον greater, much more
 ὀλοκαυτωμα, τος η whole burnt offering
 θυσια, ας f sacrifice, victim

"ὀλοκαυτωμα represents the Hebrew *olah* and denotes sacrifice in which the flesh was not eaten, but the whole victim was burnt. Θυσια generally represents *zebah*, which is the ordinary word for a sacrifice in which the flesh was eaten by the worshippers." Cranfield.

France comments, "The sweeping 'demotion' of the whole system of temple sacrifice on the part of a scribe (much of whose professional concern focused around sacrificial regulations) is remarkable, though it may be paralleled by the summaries of the law attributed to both Hillel and Akiba... Its terms strongly recall Ho 6:6, where in the LXX the same two nouns, θυσια and ὀλοκαυτωματα are subordinated to ἔλεος (towards other people?) and ἐπίγνωσις θεοῦ. It does not of course, any more than did Ho 6:6 (and cf. e.g., 1 Sa 15:22; Is 1:10-17; Je 7:22-23), imply any doubt as to the validity of the sacrificial system; the point is its relative importance."

Mark 12:34

καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ὅτι νουνεχῶς ἀπεκρίθη εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Οὐ μακρὰν εἶ ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ. καὶ οὐδεὶς οὐκέτι ἐτόλμα αὐτὸν ἐπερωτῆσαι.

ιδων see v.28

"The omission of αὐτόν by κ D W Θ and many other MSS is an obvious correction to the redundancy of Mark's grammar; its omission in most OL and some other versions is naturally explained as a matter of idiomatic translation rather than of textual difference." France.

νουνεχως wisely, sensibly
 ἀπεκρίθη see v.28
 μακραν far, far off
 βασιλεια, ας f kingdom

"Could the scribe but come to realise it, he was indeed not far from the kingdom of God; for he was actually in the presence of, and already apparently to some extent drawn towards, him in whose person and activity that Kingdom had come near to men, the one who is himself the αὐτοβασιλεια (see on 1:15)." Cranfield.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing
 οὐκετι adv no longer, no more
 τολμαω dare, be brave
 ἐπερωταω ask, question

"After such an encouraging comment it is surprising to read that no one dared ask any more questions. Does Mark intend us to think back to the discomfiture experienced by the earlier questioners, or are we to assume that the 'good sense' displayed by this man is so exceptional, and the implications of his statement so radical, that others are wary of associating with him? But perhaps it is more likely that Mark intends no such direct link with the immediately preceding pericope, and that the final clause of v. 34 is simply a bridge passage to prepare for the new pattern from v. 35 where it is Jesus himself who poses the question or speaks on his own initiative." France.

Mark 12:35-37a

Cf. Mt 22:41-46; Lk 20:41-44.

Mark 12:35

Καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔλεγεν διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ· Πῶς λέγουσιν οἱ γραμματεῖς ὅτι ὁ χριστὸς υἱὸς Δαυὶδ ἐστίν;

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply, say
διδασκω teach
ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

"As a passover visitor, with no place of his own in Jerusalem, he has made the public arena of the court of the Gentiles his base of operations since his arrival, and is by now presumably becoming a familiar figure there."

πως how(?)

Cranfield thinks this question was probably a response to a trick or trap question put to him. France comments, "In the narrative context ... it is hardly likely that those who were aware of Jesus' ostentatiously royal ride to the city, with the shouts of Hosanna and the invocation of the coming kingdom of David, could have seen this question as having no relevance to Jesus' own identity and status, even though its 'academic' presentation prevents it from being used against him as a messianic claim."

Mark 12:36

αὐτὸς Δαυὶδ εἶπεν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ· Εἶπεν κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου· Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν σου.

Ὀν ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι τῷ Ἁγίῳ cf. Acts 1:16; 28:25; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21. Jesus asserts both the Davidic and Divine authorship of Ps 110. France, however, comments, "no one at that time would have doubted that a psalm which begins with the formula *David mizmor* was written by David... I would not be so confident as thirty years ago [R T France, *Jesus and the OT*] ... in the ... contention that the interpretation which was agreed in the first century is necessarily a better guide to the historical origin and exegetical sense of the psalm than the views of most modern scholarship. It may be so, but the argument was not mounted for the sake of twentieth-century critics and does not have to pass their scrutiny to be effective. As a rhetorical question launched by Jesus in the Temple it achieves its purpose."

κάθου Verb, pres midd/pass dep imperat, 2 s
καθημαι sit, sit down
δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξια right hand
ἕως ἂν until
θῶ Verb, aor act subj, 1 s τιθημι place, set, appoint
ἐχθρός, α, ον enemy, one hated
ὑποκατω prep with gen under, beneath
πους, ποδος m foot

"The quotation follows the LXX of Ps 110 (LXX 109):1 closely, though ὑποκατω is substituted for ὑποποδιον and the article is omitted before κύριος (the majority of MSS do however have a text assimilated to the LXX)." Cranfield. France comments, "It is perhaps more likely that Mark followed the LXX at this point ... (as in a wide range of MSS and versions), and the text was later assimilated to Matthew. But the authorities for ὑποκάτω, though not numerous, are also impressive."

Mark 12:37

αὐτὸς Δαυὶδ λέγει αὐτὸν κύριον, καὶ πόθεν αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν υἱός; καὶ ὁ πολὺς ὄχλος ἤκουεν αὐτοῦ ἠδέως.

λεγειν with double accusative used to refer to calling *someone something* (cf. 10:18).

ποθεν from where(?), how(?), why(?)

"While in itself this conclusion is christologically unsatisfying, it leaves the way open for a more adequate christology to be put in place of 'Son of David'. Mark (unlike Matthew) does not guide the reader as to what that christology should be, but probably by the time his gospel was written he hardly needed to. It is most likely, both in the light of the christological emphasis of the rest of the gospel, and perhaps also because the discarded title has introduced the idea of sonship, that readers would think of the title 'Son of God'." France.

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου
much, many

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

ὁ πολυς ὄχλος "Possibly 'the great crowd', but more probably 'the mass of people' (so Moffatt) or 'the common people' (AV, RV)." Cranfield.

ἠδεως gladly

Cranfield thinks that the latter half of the verse is better taken with what follows rather than what precedes – "a general statement introducing vv.38-40."

Mark 12:38-40

Cf Lk 20:45-47, also Mt 23 and Lk 11:37-12:1.

Mark 12:38

Καὶ ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ ἔλεγεν· Βλέπετε ἀπὸ τῶν γραμματέων τῶν θελόντων ἐν στολαῖς περιπατεῖν καὶ ἀσπασμοὺς ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς

διδαχη, ης f teaching, what is taught
βλεπω see, beware of

Cf. 8:15.

θελω wish, will

Used here in the sense 'like,' or perhaps rather stronger, 'take pleasure in.'

στολη, ης f robe, long robe

A particular kind of cloak that was "the insignia of the learned" Cranfield – their academic gowns.

περιπατεω walk, walk about, live
ἀσπασμος, ου m greeting

Deferential salutations.

ἀγορα, ας f market place

Mark 12:39

καὶ πρωτοκαθεδρίας ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ πρωτοκλισίας ἐν τοῖς δείπνοις,

πρωτοκαθεδρια, ας f place of honour

"The bench in front of the ark (containing the scriptures) and facing the people." Cranfield.

συναγωγη, ης f synagogue, congregation, assembly

πρωτοκλισια, ας f place of honour

δειπνον, ου n feast, banquet

Cf. Lk 14:7-10, also Jn 13:1-17 "for a graphic repudiation of a similar preoccupation with status and reputation among Jesus' own disciples." France.

Mark 12:40

οἱ κατεσθιοντες τὰς οἰκίας τῶν χηρῶν καὶ προφάσει μακρὰ προσευχόμενοι· οὕτοι λήμψονται περισσότερον κρίμα.

κατεσθιω and κατεσθω eat up, devour, prey upon

οικια, ας f house, home, household

χηρα, ας f widow

"The vulnerability of widows is a recurrent theme in biblical literature, so that to defraud them is particularly despicable. κατεσθιοντες τὰς οἰκίας is a vivid phrase for taking material advantage of them (like our 'eat someone out of house and home'); cf. καταφαγων σου τὸν βίον (Lk 15:30). How the scribes were alleged to do this can only be a matter of speculation. It could be through excessive legal fees, through mismanaging to their own advantage an estate of which they were made trustees, through taking their houses as pledges for unpayable debts, through promoting the temple cult which 'eats up' the resources of the pious poor, or more generally through exploiting their hospitality and trust." France.

προφασις, εως f false motive, pretence

μακρος, α, ον long

προσευχομαι pray

Cf. Mt 6:5.

λήμψονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl
λαμβάνω

περισσοτερος, α, ον adj more, greater

κριμα, τος n judgement, condemnation, punishment

Cf. Jas 3:1. "It is better in context to take the comparative not of varying levels of condemnation or punishment, but rather of the more obvious guilt of these people than of other less blatant sinners." France.

Mark 12:41

Καὶ καθίσας κατέναντι τοῦ γαζοφυλακίου ἐθεώρει πῶς ὁ ὄχλος βάλλει χαλκὸν εἰς τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον· καὶ πολλοὶ πλούσιοι ἔβαλλον πολλὰ·

καθίζω sit down, sit

κατεναντι prep with gen opposite, before

"There is no difference in meaning between κατέναντι and ἀπέναντι, and both are adequately represented in the NT. Since Mark uses the former in 11:2 and 13:3, it is more likely his stylistic preference. The inclusion of the name of Jesus in order to clarify the subject (which is clear from the context but not specified in this pericope) is probably a later addition." France.

γαζοφυλακιον, ου η Temple treasury, offertory box

"What exactly is meant is not certain: possibly the thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles which, according to Mishnah, were placed against the wall of the Court of the Women, or the Treasury itself, or perhaps we should think of a receptacle for gifts placed in the Treasury but having an opening on the outside of the Treasury. The first or the last of these suggestions would seem to fit the narrative better than the second." Cranfield.

θεωρω see, watch, observe, notice
βαλλω throw, place
χαλκος, ου η copper, copper coin

Here meaning any form of money.

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου much, many
πλουσιος, α, ου rich, well-to-do

Mark 12:42

καὶ ἔλθοῦσα μία χήρα πτωχὴ ἔβαλεν λεπτὰ δύο, ὃ ἐστὶν κοδράντης.

ἐλθοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s ἐρχομαι
εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one, a
χήρα, ας f widow
πτωχος, η, ου poor, pitiful
λεπτον, ου η lepton (copper coin worth 1/2 quadrans or 1/128 denarius)
δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two
κοδραντης, ου η quadrans (Roman copper coin worth 1/4 assarion)

"Mark's use of κοδραντης supports the view that he was writing in the west, as the *quadrans* was not in circulation in the east." Cranfield. France, however, comments, "The use of the Latin term is not necessarily due to a Roman origin for the gospel, since 'Roman designations of coins were already in the first century AD more common in Palestine than the Greek and Hebrew designations still also in use' [Schurer]; Matthew also uses the term (5:26)."

Mark 12:43

καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἡ χήρα αὕτη ἢ πτωχὴ πλεῖον πάντων ἔβαλεν τῶν βαλλόντων εἰς τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον·

προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m
nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself
πλειων, πλειον οη πλεον more

"Just possibly means 'more than any of those who ...'; more probably 'more than all of those put together who ...'." Cranfield.

Mark 12:44

πάντες γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ περισσεύοντος αὐτοῖς ἔβαλον, αὕτη δὲ ἐκ τῆς ὑστερήσεως αὐτῆς πάντα ὅσα εἶχεν ἔβαλεν, ὅλον τὸν βίον αὐτῆς.

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας
περισευω be left over, be more than enough, have plenty

Participle here meaning 'their excess.'

ὑστερησις, εως f need, want, poverty

"Used also in Phil 4:11 in the sense of 'want', 'need'." Cranfield.

ὁσος, η, ου as much as; pl. all
εἶχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἔχω
ὅλος, η, ου whole, all, entire
βιος, ου η life, living, possessions

Here means 'livelihood'.

"It is natural to assume that large gifts are of more value to God than small ones (cf. 10:26!) – after all more can be done with them. But Jesus here calls in question this complacent assumption of conventional piety (cf. the somewhat similar significance of 13:1-2). The gifts of the rich, though large, were easy gifts: the widow's gift, though tiny, meant a real surrender of herself to God and trust in him, and therefore is honouring God *as God*, as one to whom we belong wholly and who is able to care for us." Cranfield.

Mark "turns upside down the normal human valuation of people. What matters in God's sight is not what a person has (and therefore is able to give without pain) but the devotion which causes her to give even at great personal cost, even though the amount of the gift may be completely negligible in comparison with the enormous wealth of the temple. The gift does not matter to God so much as the giver. And, it is implied, this should also be the basis of his people's valuation. By such a criterion the first will often be last, and the last first." France.

Mark 13:1-37

Cf. Mt 24:1-36; Lk 21:5-36.

Mark 13:1-2

Of 13:1-2 France writes, "Here is another misleading chapter division. While 13:1-2 is the setting for the question (13:3-4) which in turn provokes the discourse of 13:5-37, it functions also, and no less importantly, as the culmination of the lengthy section of Jesus' confrontation with the authorities in the temple which began in 11:27, following from his provocative acts in 11:11-25. Without 13:1-2 the sequence of dialogues in chapters 11-12 is left without a conclusion... It is thus appropriate that the whole episode ends not with the authorities taking action against Jesus (that will come later), but with Jesus, now the unquestioned winner in the contest, himself severing the connection by leaving the temple and pronouncing its downfall.

"The unnamed disciple's superficial admiration for the magnificence of the buildings, contrasted with Jesus' declaration of their ultimate bankruptcy, furnishes yet another example of the reorientation to the new perspective of the kingdom of God to which the disciples are committed but which they remain slow to grasp, and which Mark expects his readers to embrace. The old structure of authority in which God's relationship with his people has hitherto been focused, is due for replacement. The language of a ναὸς ἀχειροποίητος to replace the existing man-made structure (14:58), while it is not explicit at this point, is clearly implied. As Mt 12:6 has it, 'Something greater than the temple is here'. The discourse which will follow in vv. 5-37 will fill out the nature of that 'something greater'."

France continues by stating that Jesus' prediction of the destruction of the temple "is the only basis recorded by Mark for the charge which was to be brought against Jesus at his trial (14:57-58) and would remain in the minds of those who mocked him on the cross (15:29-30)."

Mark 13:1

Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ λέγει αὐτῷ εἰς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ· Διδάσκαλε, ἴδε ποταποὶ λίθοι καὶ ποταπαὶ οἰκοδομαί.

ἐκπορευομαι go or come out
ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

"While ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ is not in itself a highly coloured phrase, its wider context suggests that Mark intended it to be noticed. Jesus has been in the temple continuously since 11:27; now he leaves it, and will not return again in Mark's narrative. The only other thing we hear of the temple (apart from the charge at Jesus' trial and on the cross) will be the tearing of its curtain as Jesus dies. Moreover, he goes from the temple onto the Mount of Olives (v. 3), presumably leaving by the east gate. It does not take a very profound knowledge of the book of Ezekiel to recall the dramatic description of God's abandonment of his temple as the chariot throne of God's glory rises up from inside the temple, pauses at the east gate, and comes to rest on 'the mountain east of the city' (Ezk 10:18-19; 11:22-23). So now again the divine presence is withdrawn from the temple, and it is left to its destruction." France.

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher
ποταπος, η, ου what kind, what wonderful
λιθος, ου m stone
οικοδομη, ης f building, structure

"The disciple's amazement is shared even by modern visitors who see the huge ashlar blocks in the remaining Herodian walls, and these were only the substructure, not the temple proper." France.

Mark 13:2

καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Βλέπεις ταύτας τὰς μεγάλας οἰκοδομάς; οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῆ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὃς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῆ.

βλεπω see, look
μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great
ἀφεθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s ἀφημι leave
ὧδε adv here, in this place

"In the NT Greek either λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον (as in Matthew) or λίθος ἐπὶ λίθῳ (as in Luke) would be idiomatically acceptable, but the strong predominance of the former in MSS of Mark suggests that the latter is a scribal correction to Luke's more 'classical' use; the sense is not affected. ὧδε is also strongly represented, but would be a natural 'clarification' of a sense which is otherwise indicated (as in Luke) only by the context, so it may well be due to assimilation to Matthew." France.

καταλυθῆ Verb, aor pass subj καταλυω
destroy, tear down

Jesus' prediction was fulfilled in a remarkably literal fashion: "Josephus (*War* 7:1-3) records the temple's being levelled to the ground, after previously being burned (*War* 6.249-66). Even the now-sacred Western Wall was not part of the temple but only the supporting structure for the platform on which it was built." France.

For Jesus' predictions of the destruction of the Temple, cf. 14:58; 15:29; Jn 2:19; Mt 23:38. "In so doing he was following in the steps of the prophets (cf. Jer 7:1-15; 26:1-24; Mic 3:10-12)." Cranfield.

Cranfield connects Jesus' prediction of this destruction with:

- i) The fact that with his coming the temple is superseded (cf. Mt 12:6);
- ii) It had become a stumblingblock to the Israelites;
- iii) The words of the disciples in the previous verse make it clear that it was proving a stumblingblock to them also.

Mark 13:3-37

Of the discourse of verses 3-37, France writes "The prediction of the destruction of the temple from which it takes its cue is plain enough, but as the discourse develops its language becomes increasingly allusive, drawing on themes of OT apocalyptic and political prophecy which are not as familiar to most modern readers as they would have been to at least a proportion of Mark's original readers. As a result, widely divergent interpretations of the discourse have been proposed, and it remains the most disputed area in the study of Mark's gospel. In the account which follows I intend to keep clearly in view the context in which it is set, and the questions to which therefore it may be expected to provide answers. The disciples' question with which it begins seeks elucidation of Jesus' pronouncement about the destruction of the temple, and it is this question which must set the agenda for our interpretation of the discourse which follows. It is about 'the end of the old order'."

France resists the category of 'apocalypse' for this passage and comments that the "focus is as much on the pastoral need to prepare disciples for difficult times ahead as it is to explain the future course of events. A discourse which is constructed primarily around second-person imperatives addressed to the disciples does not look like what is normally understood by 'apocalyptic'."

France continues, "The view that the whole discourse is to be understood as relating to the temple's destruction and contains no parousia reference at all has the merit of simplicity and of respecting the narrative context in which it is set, but remains a minority view. It is now perhaps best exemplified by the work of N. T. Wright... Wright's interpretation agrees for the majority of the discourse with the view adopted in this commentary, but differs from it primarily in not recognising a clear break and change of subject matter in v. 32. For the crucial verses 24-27 this view corresponds with my own conviction that the apocalyptic language of these verses, drawn almost entirely from identifiable OT texts, relates, as did those texts in their own contexts, not to the collapse of the physical universe and the end of the world but to imminent and far-reaching political change, in the context of the predicted destruction of Jerusalem. On this view the 'coming of the Son of Man' is language not about an eschatological descent of Jesus to the earth but, as in the vision of Daniel from which it derives, about the vindication and enthronement of the Son of Man at the right hand of God, to receive and exercise supreme authority. In other words, what is being described in vv. 24-27, as in the OT passages from which their language is drawn, is a change of government: the temple and all that it stood for is out, and the Son of Man is in. The same theme will be picked up, in similar language, in the climactic declaration of Jesus' sovereignty in 14:61-62. I shall defend this exegesis below. For now it is necessary only to note that its effect is to remove at a stroke the single most embarrassing feature of chapter 13 for traditional Christian interpretation, the unequivocal and very emphatic statement in v. 30 that the events just described will take place before this generation has passed. They did! "Why then am I not content, with Wright, to remove the parousia altogether from Mark 13? First of all, there is a marked change of subject in v. 32. It is not merely that *περὶ δέ* frequently has this function elsewhere in the NT, but also that whereas in the discourse up to that point Jesus has spoken of 'days' which are coming and of events summarised as *ταῦτα (πάντα)*, v. 32. speaks instead of *ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη*. No such (singular) day has been mentioned so far, and there is a marked contrast between the certainty of the temporal prediction with regard to the date at which *ταῦτα πάντα* will occur (v. 30) and the ignorance of even the Son concerning the 'day and hour' now envisaged."

France provides an analysis of indicators of time and sequence in Mark 13 to add support to his conclusion that v. 32 marks a shift in focus from the imminent to the more distant.

Mark 13:3

Καὶ καθημένου αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἐπηρώτα αὐτὸν κατ' ἰδίαν Πέτρος καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ Ἀνδρέας·

καθημαι sit, sit down

ὄρος, οὗς n mountain, hill

ἐλαια, ας f olive tree

κατεναντι prep with gen opposite, before

"κατέναντι need be no more than a note of location, giving a viewpoint over the temple just as in 12:41 Jesus had a viewpoint over the treasury; as such it is a narrative prompt to the reader to recognise that the following discourse relates to the fate of the temple, which dominates the view as Jesus speaks. But following on his abandonment of the temple and prediction of its destruction κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ may also be intended to underline that Jesus is 'over against' the temple in a more profound sense as well (ἐναντίος means 'opponent')." France.

ἐπηρώτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s

ἐπερωτω ask, question

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own; κατ' ἰδίαν privately

Mark 13:4

Εἰπὸν ἡμῖν πότε ταῦτα ἔσται, καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα.

πότε interrog adv. when?

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἰμι

σημειον, ου n sign

ὅταν when

μέλλω (before an infin) be going, be about, be destined

συντελεῖσθαι Verb, pres pass infin συντελεω end, complete, bring about

"It would be natural for the disciples to assume that the destruction of the Temple would be part of a complex of events leading to the End... The disciples, excited and disturbed by Jesus' prediction, want to know when the Temple is to be destroyed and what is the sign by which they may know that the final consummation is approaching. Their question is one that pervades all biblical and extra-biblical apocalyptic. They want to be told what will be the 'sign' – that is, they want an infallible means of recognising the approach of the End; they want in fact to be relieved from having to 'watch'. But instead of a single sign Jesus gives them a baffling multiplicity of signs. The purpose of his reply is not to impart esoteric information but to strengthen and sustain faith." Cranfield.

France comments, "The persistent view that the second half of the question has a more 'eschatological' reference than the first half, while it is primarily due to a prior judgment about the subject matter of the discourse that follows, is also sometimes supported by Mark's use of the verb συντελεῖσθαι, which recalls Matthew's extension of the question to cover also the συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος." France thinks the question is entirely about the destruction of the temple, 'when will it happen, and how will we know that it is due?'

Mark 13:5-37

Cranfield divides this discourse into three parts:

- i) vv 5-23 *The End is not yet*, in which Jesus outlines characteristics which will mark the whole period between the Incarnation and Parousia – which are also signs which point to the End;
- ii) vv 24-27 *Cosmic signs* immediately heralding the Parousia;
- iii) vv. 28-37. *Watch therefore!*

Compare France's comments before verse 3.

Mark 13:5-8

"The discourse begins on a note which is one of its most persistent characteristics, the warning against premature expectation. It begins with an imperative, βλέπετε, which will be repeated in vv. 9, 23, and 33. The disciples, and those who following them will read these words, are called to discernment and warned against the sort of superficial impressions of 'fulfilment' which have been the bane of students of apocalyptic and eschatological literature ever since." France.

Mark 13:5

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἤρξατο λέγειν αὐτοῖς· Βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς πλανήσῃ·

ἀρχω rule, govern; midd begin

"As in 4:1 ἤρξατο λέγειν alerts the reader to expect a substantial discourse." France.

βλεπω see, look, be able to see, beware of
πλαναω lead astray, mislead, deceive

"The first of the signs of the End is the presence of deceivers." Cranfield.

Mark 13:6

πολλοὶ ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου λέγοντες ὅτι Ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ πολλοὺς πλανήσουσιν.

ἐλεύσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl
ἐρχομαι
ὄνομα, τος n name

Either 'claiming to be sent by me' or 'arrogating to themselves the title of Messiah which by right belongs to me'. On the first interpretation, the ἐγώ εἰμι would mean that they would claim that Jesus had come. France thinks that the warning is directed against the kind of 'messianic' leaders who emerged between Jesus' ministry and the Jewish war.

Mark 13:7

ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε πολέμους καὶ ἀκοὰς πολέμων, μὴ θροεῖσθε· δεῖ γενέσθαι, ἀλλ' οὕτω τὸ τέλος.

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as
πολεμος, ου m war, battle, conflict

The second characteristic of the 'last times' is conflict and suffering.

ἀκοη, ης f report, news

θροεῖσθε Verb, pres pass imperat, 2 pl
θροεομαι be alarmed or startled

Cf. Jer. 51:46.

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must

"Wars are sure to happen, and their occurrence is *not* to be seen as having any eschatological significance." France.

οὕτω not yet

τελος, ους n end, conclusion, termination

"Here is another word which seems to some to suggest a reference to the end of the world, but τέλος is a very general word for 'end', the completion of a process (e.g., 3:26; Mt 26:58; Lk 1:33), and the nature of that 'end' depends on the context. Here there has been no word of any 'end' other than that of the temple's destruction, for which in this context τὸ τέλος is the obvious term to use. The disciples have asked when the catastrophic event predicted by Jesus will be accomplished (συντελέω), and he replies by speaking first of when that completion (τέλος) is *not* to take place." France.

Mark 13:8

ἐγερθήσεται γὰρ ἔθνος ἐπ' ἔθνος καὶ βασιλεία ἐπὶ βασιλείαν, ἔσονται σεισμοὶ κατὰ τόπους, ἔσονται λιμοὶ· ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα.

ἐγειρω raise

ἔθνος, ους n nation, people

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἰμι

σεισμος, ου m earthquake

τοπος, ου m place; κατα τοπος 'from place to place', 'in various places'

λιμος, ου m & f famine, hunger

"The addition of καί before ἔσονται (or in some witnesses its substitution for ἔσονται) is a natural 'improvement' to the awkward asyndeton of ἔσονται λιμοί, as a second and shorter ἔσονται clause. The addition of λοιμοί in a few texts may be accounted for both by assimilation to Luke and by the similarity in sound and appearance to λιμοί, and both that addition and the more common insertion of καὶ παραχαί [παραχος = 'confusion', 'disturbance'] would help fill out the very meagre clause ἔσονται λιμοί. The inclusion of παραχαί is widely attested, and is not due to assimilation to another version, and so has more claim to be original than λοιμοί; but it might also be the result of a careless scribe misreading the following ἀρξή. The text seems to have been subject to imaginative expansion." France.

"First century earthquakes might include one experienced at Jerusalem in AD 67 (Josephus, *War* 4.286-87; cf. 1.370 for an earlier earthquake in Palestine), and further afield Acts 16:26 mentions an earthquake in Philippi, while news of the partial destruction of Pompeii by an earthquake in AD 62 or of a major earthquake in Asia Minor in AD 61 would probably have reached Palestine. There was a major famine in the reign of Claudius, c. AD 46 (Acts 11:28; Josephus, *Ant* 3.320; 20.101...)." France.

ἀρχη, ης f beginning

"implies that there is plenty more to follow and that the sufferings will get worse." Cranfield.

ὠδίν, ἴνος f birth-pains, suffering

"The Rabbinic expression 'the birth-pangs of the Messiah' (meaning not the sufferings of the Messiah but the sufferings expected to precede his coming) was probably already current in the time of Jesus ... The origin of the expression is perhaps to be seen in such passages as Isa 26:17; 66:8; Jer 22:23; Hos 13:13; Mic 4:9f. For the use of the image in the NT, cf. Jn 16:21; 1 Thess 5:3, the first of which well illustrates the meaning here."

Cranfield. France comments that "This range of usage suggests a 'live' metaphor, capable of being adapted to a wide variety of uses, not a technical term in the later rabbinic sense which would therefore carry its own ready-made eschatological application."

Mark 13:9

βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτοὺς· παραδώσουσιν ὑμᾶς εἰς συνέδρια καὶ εἰς συναγωγὰς δαρήσεσθε καὶ ἐπὶ ἡγεμόνων καὶ βασιλέων σταθήσεσθε ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς.

βλεπω see v.5

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

"The sufferings referred to in vv 9-13 are sufferings peculiar to disciples – persecution." Cranfield. France comments, "The warning is not so that they should try to escape persecution, but to prepare them to endure it faithfully."

παραδώσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl
παραδιδωμι hand over, deliver up

"The choice of this verb, with its echoes of 9:31; 10:33, suggests a link between their treatment and that of Jesus himself." France.

συνεδριον, ου n Sanhedrin; pl local city councils

Cranfield argues that εἰς συναγωγὰς is better taken with δαρήσεσθε than with παραδώσουσιν (the εἰς being equivalent to ἐν). Jesus is telling them that his disciples will be viewed as heretics by the Jews.

δαρήσεσθε Verb, fut pass indic, 2 pl δερω
beat, strike

ἡγεμων, ονος m governor, ruler

βασιλευς, εως m king

σταθήσεσθε Verb, fut pass indic, 2 pl ἱστημι
set, place

ἕνεκα (ἕνεκεν and εἵνεκεν) prep with gen
because of, for the sake of

μαρτυριον, ου n testimony, witness

The meaning is illustrated from the book of Acts and particularly the commission given by the risen Christ to Paul, Acts 9:15,16.

Mark 13:10

καὶ εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη πρῶτον δεῖ κηρυχθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον.

ἔθνη see v.8

"Jesus' excursions into Gentile territory (5:1-20; 7:24-8:10) and his Gentile following in 3:8 have begun to prepare us for this vision, and we have seen in 7:24-8:10 a deliberate extension of the blessings of Israel's Messiah to the surrounding peoples. It is possible that the explicit inclusion of πάντα τὰ ἔθνη in the Isaiah quotation in 11:17 is a further pointer in this direction, even if that is not the main thrust in context. Later the confession of Jesus as Son of God by a Gentile officer will be foretaste of the universal church (15:39). But this verse, and by implication 14:9) is the most explicit indication in Mark's gospel of the universal scope of the good news and therefore of the Christian mission, as it will be spelled out in Matthew's final commission (28:19-20) and in the whole narrative of Luke's second volume. In v. 27, as we shall see, that vision will be further developed." France.

πρωτον adv. first

I.e. before the End.

δει see v.7

κηρυχθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin κηρυσσω
preach, proclaim

εὐαγγελιον, ου n good news, gospel

"It is part of God's eschatological purpose that before the End all nations shall have an opportunity to accept the gospel. The interval is the time of God's patience during which men are summoned to repentance and faith; it has for its content the Church's mission to the world. That does not mean that the world will necessarily get steadily more Christian or that the End will not come till all men are converted. It is a promise that the gospel will be preached, not that it will necessarily be believed. The disciples' witness is another characteristic of the last times." Cranfield.

France, however, comments, "The proclamation of the gospel to all nations is the precursor to the events which the disciples have asked about, and that, we have argued, is the destruction of the temple. In that case, here is another 'sign'. The temple will not be destroyed (and with it the central role of Israel in God's purposes come to an end) until the good news has already gone out beyond Israel to πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, and so the new 'temple' which replaces the physical building will not be a solely Jewish institution. We shall see this vision expressed in v. 27 in the gathering of the elect from all over the world into the newly established sovereignty of the Son of Man. The proclamation of the εὐαγγέλιον is the means by which this ingathering will be accomplished, and the scope of that proclamation must therefore be universal. Moreover, it must be carried out πρώτον, so as to be the basis of that new beginning which follows from the end of the old order (and of the temple which symbolises it). So before the temple is destroyed, the good news must be proclaimed to all the nations." Drawing attention to Rom 15:19, 23 and also Rom 16:26; Col 1:6, 23, France continues, "From that point of view Mark, writing in Rome some time later, would have found no difficulty in perceiving that the good news had indeed been proclaimed to πάντα τὰ ἔθνη while the temple was still standing. There was already in existence an international people of God even if not every nation on earth had yet heard the good news (or indeed was even known to exist at that time)."

Mark 13:11

καὶ ὅταν ἄγωσιν ὑμᾶς παραδιδόντες, μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε τί λαλήσητε, ἀλλ' ὃ ἐὰν δοθῇ ὑμῖν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦτο λαλεῖτε, οὐ γὰρ ἐστε ὑμεῖς οἱ λαλοῦντες ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον.

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as
ἄγωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ἄγω bring
προμεριμναῶ worry ahead of time
λαλεῶ speak, talk

"The promise that words will be supplied is for hard-pressed disciples on trial, not for lazy preachers!" France.

ὃ ἐὰν whatever
δοθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3s δίδωμι
ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that
ὥρα, ας f hour, moment
ἅγιος, α, ον holy

"In their hour of need God ... will give them the word to speak (cf. Ex 4:12; Jer 1:9)." Cranfield. France comments, "Luke enthusiastically records the fulfilment of this promise (Lk 12:11-12; 21:12-15; in the latter it is Jesus himself rather than the Spirit who will supply the words) in the narratives of Acts 4:8, 31; 5:32; 6:10; 13:9 etc."

Mark 13:12

καὶ παραδώσει ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφὸν εἰς θάνατον καὶ πατὴρ τέκνον, καὶ ἐπαναστήσονται τέκνα ἐπὶ γονεῖς καὶ θανατώσουσιν αὐτούς·

παραδώσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s
παραδίδωμι
θάνατος, ου m death
τέκνον, ου n child
ἐπαναστήσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3
pl ἐπανισταμαι turn against, rebel
against
γονεὺς, εως m parent
θανάτω kill, put to death

"will deliver them to death', 'bring about their death', rather than 'kill them'." Cranfield. Cf. Mt 10:35f = Lk 12:52f.; also Mic 7:6.

Mark 13:13

καὶ ἔσεσθε μισούμενοι ὑπὸ πάντων διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου. ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται.

ἔσεσθε Verb, fut indic, 2 pl εἶμι
μισεῶ hate, despise
ὄνομα, τος n name

Cf. Mt 24:9; Lk 21:17 also Mt 10:22; 5:11; Jn 15:18-20; 1 Jn 3:13.

ὑπομείνας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
ὑπομενω endure, remain
τέλος, ους n end

here means 'to the end' rather than 'to the End', cf. Jn 13:1; 1 Thess 2:16; 2 Chron 31:1.

"There is no expectation that this hostility will be overcome, only that it must be endured." France.

σωθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s σωζω
save

Mark 13:14-20

In the light of the identification of 'the abomination of desolation' with Antichrist in 2 Thess 2:3-10, Cranfield argues that in verses 14-20 there is a "double reference". Jesus is speaking both of the destruction of Jerusalem, and particularly of the Temple, but also of things that will accompany the End." France, however, writes, "The mention of a βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως focuses our attention again on the temple, in which Daniel had originally spoken of the unwelcome presence of such a βδέλυγμα (Dn 9:27; 11:31; 12:11)." He argues that Jesus' words are to be understood as referring entirely to the destruction of Jerusalem.

Mark 13:14

Ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ, ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη,

ὅταν when

ἴδητε Verb, aor act subj ὄραω see
βδέλυγμα, τος n something detestable
ἐρημωσις, εως f desolation, destruction

"Occurs in the LXX version of Daniel 12:11 where it represents *sikkus somem*. The basic idea in *sikkus* is that of being detestable to, and rejected by God: it is particularly used of heathen gods and articles connected with them. The significance of the Hebrew participle *somem* (rendered by τῆς ἐρημώσεως) is that the abominable thing causes the Temple to be deserted, the pious avoiding the Temple on its account. That in Dan 12:11 the reference is to the heathen altar set up by Antiochus Epiphanes over the burnt-offering in the Temple in 168 BC is generally agreed ... Jesus' use of the phrase implies that for him the meaning of the prophecy was not exhausted by the events of the Maccabean times; it still has a future reference. The Temple of God must yet suffer a fearful profanation by which its whole glory will perish." Cranfield.

ἐστηκότα Verb, perf act ptc, n nom/acc s
ἵστημι stand

"The masculine suggests that what is meant by βδέλυγμα is no mere idolatrous object but Antichrist himself." Cranfield. France, however, comments, "When Antiochus's emissaries desecrated the temple by setting up a pagan altar, they also designated it the temple of Ζεὺς Ολύμπιος (2 Macc. 6:2) and installed a statue of its new god; if Mark had in mind a counterpart to such a statue of the (male) god Zeus, he might well have spoken of 'him' standing (masculine) in the temple."

ὅπου adv. where

δεῖ impersonal verb must, should, ought

I.e. ἐν τοῦ ἀγίῳ – see Mt 24:15.

ἀναγινώσκω read

νοεῶ understand, discern, consider

Either Jesus' words meaning, 'let the reader of Daniel understand' or, more probably, a comment inserted by Mark. The reference of Jesus' words will need to be discerned in the light of events.

τότε then, at that time

I.e. do not then delay.

φευγῶ flee, run away (from)

ὄρος, ος n mountain, hill

"The words suggest a reference to a state of war, the mountainous regions being obvious places of refuge." Cranfield.

Mark 13:15

ὁ ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος μὴ καταβάτω μηδὲ εἰσελθάτω τι ἄραι ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ,

δωμα, ατος n roof, housetop

I.e. the flat roof which was accessed by an external staircase.

καταβάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s

καταβαινω come down, descend

μηδε negative particle nor, and not, neither

εἰσελθάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in

ἄραι Verb, aor act infin αἶρω take, take up, take away

Emphasises the urgency and need for great haste.

Mark 13:16

καὶ ὁ εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν μὴ ἐπιστρεψάτω εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω ἄραι τὸ ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ.

ἀγρος, ου m field, farm, countryside

ἐπιστρεψάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s

ἐπιστρεφω turn back, return

ὀπισω prep and adv back, behind

εἰς τα ὀπίσω 'to the things behind [him]'

αἶρω take, take up, take away, set aside, raise

ἱματιον, ου n garment, robe

"The outer garment that would not be required for work in the field, but would be highly desirable at night." Cranfield.

Mark 13:17

οὐαὶ δὲ ταῖς ἐν γαστρὶ ἐχούσαις καὶ ταῖς θηλαζούσαις ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις.

οὐαι interj. woe! how horrible it will be!

γαστρί Noun, dat s γαστηρ, τρος f womb;

ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχω be pregnant

θηλαζω nurse (of a mother feeding her child at the breast)

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that

Cf. Lk 23:29.

Mark 13:18

προσεύχεσθε δὲ ἵνα μὴ γένηται χειμῶνος·

προσευχομαι pray

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

χειμῶν, ὄνος m winter, storm, bad weather

"When the heavy rains would have made the wadis difficult to cross." Cranfield.

Mark 13:19

ἔσονται γὰρ αἱ ἡμέραι ἐκεῖναι θλίψις οἷα οὐ γέγονεν τοιαύτη ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἢν ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς ἕως τοῦ νῦν καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται.

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἰμι

θλίψις, εως f trouble, suffering

οἷος, α, ον relative pronoun such as, of what kind

γένονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s γινομαι

τοιούτος, αὐτη, οὐτον correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind

ἀρχη, ης f beginning, origin

κτισις, εως f creation

κτιζω create, make

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

"For the language cf. Dan 12:1; also Jer 30:7 ... It seems likely that the thought is eschatological, the final tribulation of history being in view." Cranfield. France believes that the reference is to "the siege of Jerusalem, whose horrors Josephus so graphically describes" (*War* 5.424-38, 512-18, 567-76; 6.193-313). France continues by saying of οἷα οὐ γέγονεν τοιαύτη ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἢν ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς ἕως τοῦ νῦν καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται, "These are apparently stock expressions for unparalleled suffering, and are not to be pressed literally (e.g. by asking whether the Holocaust was not worse than the Jewish War). It should be noted, however, that καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται sits very uncomfortably with any interpretation which understands these words to be describing the end of history."

Mark 13:20

καὶ εἰ μὴ ἐκολόβωσεν κύριος τὰς ἡμέρας, οὐκ ἂν ἐσώθη πᾶσα σὰρξ. ἀλλὰ διὰ τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς οὗς ἐξελέξατο ἐκολόβωσεν τὰς ἡμέρας.

κολοβοω shorten, cut short

"The siege of Jerusalem. though terrible, lasted only five months, and that relatively short period is attributed to God's concern for his ἐλεκτοί (though πᾶσα σὰρξ would benefit)." France.

ἂν particle indicating contingency

σωζω save, rescue

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human being

ἐκλεκτος, η, ον chosen

ἐξελέξατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἐκλεγομαι choose

Cf. 2 Sam 24:16; Is 65:8.

Cranfield considers the fulfilment of these verses to be past, present and future.

Mark 13:21

καὶ τότε ἐάν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ· Ἴδε ὧδε ὁ χριστός, Ἴδε ἐκεῖ, μὴ πιστεύετε·

τοτε then

ἐάν if

ἴδε behold, see

ὧδε adv here, in this place

ἐκεῖ there, in that place

πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)

Cf. v.5.

Mark 13:22

ἐγερθήσονται γὰρ ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται καὶ δάσουσιν σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πρὸς τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν εἰ δυνατὸν τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς·

ἐγειρω raise

ψευδοχριστος, ου m false Christ, one who falsely claims to be the Christ

ψευδοπροφητης, ου m false prophet

δωσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl δίδωμι

σημειον, ου n miraculous sign, sign, miracle

τερας, ατος n wonder, object of wonder

Cf. Dt 13:1-3 LXX.

ἀποπλανᾶν Verb, pres act infin ἀποπλαναω mislead, deceive

δυνατος, η, ον possible

Deceivers will seek to exploit the 'apocalyptic' nature of the Jewish War to persuade the Christian community into thinking that the End has come. "The addition of εἰ δυνατόν, however, conveys an optimistic expectation that their faith will prove equal to the test." France.

Mark 13:23

ὁμοίως δὲ βλέπετε· προεῖρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα.

βλεπω see, beware of

προεῖρηκα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s προλεγω say beforehand, warn in advance

Mark 13:24-27

Cranfield says that these verses speak of "Cosmic signs immediately heralding the Parousia. The ideas and language are derived from the OT." France disagrees. He writes, "It is especially in these verses that the interpretation of the discourse adopted in this commentary differs from the majority view... The disciples' question (vv 3-4) concerned the destruction of the temple which Jesus predicted in v. 2. They wanted to know when it would be and what sign would herald it... So far everything has fallen short of the full answer, but ἀλλά at the beginning of v. 24 alerts us to a new stage of fulfilment. The setting remains ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις, but now we are moving beyond the θλίψις of v. 19 to what must immediately follow it. And so we reach at last the destruction of the temple, described not in the prosaic terms of v.2 but in the richly coloured and evocative language of OT prophecy. Almost every word of vv 24b-27 is drawn from the prophets, and we shall examine the specific echoes in the notes below. The passages cited in vv 24b-25 use the language of cosmic disintegration to denote, as often in prophecy, climactic (*not* climatic!) changes to the existing world order. The lights are going out in the centres of power, and the way is being prepared for a new world order. As in vv. 26-27 it comes: Daniel's vision of the enthronement of the Son of Man will be seen to be fulfilled, and that Son of Man will send out his angels from his heavenly throne to collect into his kingdom the ἐκλεκτοί not now of Israel only but of all nations. "With that, the question is answered. The word 'temple' has not appeared but the imagery has powerfully conveyed to those who are familiar with OT prophecy the fundamental 'change of government' which is symbolised by the destruction of that now discredited building in Jerusalem and all that it represented. From now on it will not be the national shrine which will be the focus of the people of God, but the Son of Man to whom has now been given, as Dn 7:14 predicted, an everlasting and universal dominion which embraces all nations and languages.

"And yet the question is still not fully answered. The disciples wanted to know about the time and the sign, and so vv. 28-31 finally sum up the implications of what Jesus has said from this point of view. The little parable of the fig tree reinforces the need for readiness when the disciples see ταῦτα taking place... And in v. 30 the time is finally and emphatically (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) spelled out not now in prophetic symbolism but in plain words: it will all take place within 'this generation'. And lest there be any room left for uncertainty, Jesus caps the whole predictive oracle with the assurance that his words are as sure and eternal as the word of God himself. With that, his answer to the question of v. 4 is complete. What follows in v. 32, introduced by περὶ δέ, will be on another subject."

Mark 13:24

Ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην ὁ ἥλιος σκοτισθήσεται, καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φέγγος αὐτῆς,

ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις is "an OT stereotyped expression with eschatological associations (cf. Jer 3:16, 18; 31:29; 33:15f.; Zech 8:23 etc.)." Cranfield.

θλίψις, εως f trouble, suffering

A "general recapitulation of all the evils of which Christ had previously spoken." Before the occurrence of these celestial signs the Church will have passed through the "whole course of its tribulation". Calvin.

ἥλιος, ου m the sun

σκοτισθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s

σκοτιζομαι be or become darkened

σεληνη, ης f moon

φεγγος, ους n light

"The language of v. 24b is paralleled at several points in the prophetic literature (Ezk 32:7; Jo 2:10, 31; 3:15; Am 8:9) but is verbally most closely related to Is 13:10, part of the oracle against Babylon, σκοτισθήσεται τοῦ ἡλίου ἀνατέλλοντος, καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φῶς αὐτῆς. In v 25 the closest verbal link is with LXX Is 34:4, part of the oracle against 'all nations' but with special reference to Edom, καὶ τακίησονται πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν ... καὶ πάντα τὰ ἄστρα πεσεῖται ..., where the 'powers of the heavens' are probably to be understood as a poetic synonym for the stars. In most of these passages the immediate reference is to the imminent downfall of specific nations (Egypt, Babylon, Edom, Israel, and Judah), though in Jo 3:15 there is a more universal perspective (all the nations gathered for judgment before Jerusalem). In the original prophetic context, therefore, such 'cosmic' language conveys a powerful symbolism of political changes within world history, and is not naturally to be understood of a literal collapse of the universe at the end of the world. It is, in the words of Wright, 'typical Jewish imagery for events within the present order that are felt and perceived as "cosmic" or, as we should say, "earth-shattering".' The events so described are catastrophic for the nations concerned, and to use such language adds a heavy ideological loading of divine judgment. God is redrawing the map of world politics, and the familiar structures of international affairs will never be the same again. But the dramatic collapse of the power structures is not the end of world history, but the beginning of a new and better phase, in which God's purpose will be worked out... What is startling about the use of such language by Jesus in this context is not that he uses the same imagery as the prophets, but that he uses it with regard to the fate of *Jerusalem* and its temple." France.

Mark 13:25

καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες ἔσονται ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πίπτοντες, καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς σαλευθήσονται.

ἀστηρ, ερος m star
 ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι
 οὐρανός, ους m heaven
 πίπτω fall, fall down
 οὐρανός, ους m heaven
 σαλευθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl
 σαλευω shake, disturb

Mark 13:26

καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλαις μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης·

"If vv 24b-25 have portrayed the negative side of Jesus' prediction, the end of the old order, in vv 26-27 we turn to the positive, the new order which is to take its place." France.

τοτε then, at that time
 ὄψονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl ὄρω
 see

"All men, not just disciples, are presumably included in this indefinite plural." Cranfield.

νεβηλη, ης f cloud
 πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ους i)
 much
 δοξα, ης f glory, splendour

Cf. Dan 7:13f. "Daniel's vision, as we have seen at 8:38, is one of enthronement, of the 'one like a son of man' coming before the throne of God to be given universal and everlasting dominion. It is the imagery of setting up a new kingdom to replace the failed regimes of previous empires, and it is located not on the earthly scene but in the presence of God in heaven. Here then is the ultimate divinely sanctioned authority, to which 'all peoples, nations and languages' must now be subject... Here is an even more telling counterpart to the irony of vv 24-25. There prophetic visions of the downfall of Israel's enemies were drawn on to depict God's judgment on Israel herself as represented in the temple. Here a vision of Israel's triumph is transferred to a 'Son of Man' whose authority is to supersede that which Jerusalem's temple has hitherto represented. Here, for those who appreciate the nuances of OT language, is a startling statement of the idea that Jesus himself, and derivatively the church, the international body of people who acknowledge his sovereignty, is now to be understood as the true Israel, the people of God through whom God's earthly agenda, hitherto focused on Jerusalem and its temple, is now to be carried forward... This is what Daniel's vision is all about, the transcendent power of God which has put an end to usurping human 'powers' and has established the final, universal sovereignty of the Son of Man. So also when the temple is destroyed the existing δυνάμεις σαλευθήσονται (v. 25), while by contrast the newly established 'power and glory' of the Son of Man will be there for all to see." France.

Mark 13:27

καὶ τότε ἀποστελεῖ τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ ἐπισυνάξει τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων ἀπ' ἄκρου γῆς ἕως ἄκρου οὐρανοῦ.

ἀποστελεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἀποστελλω
send, send out

ἐπισυναγω gather, gather together
ἐκλεκτος, η, ον chosen

The growing community of Jesus' disciples, cf. v.20. "Their 'gathering' (ἐπισυνάξει), echoes OT predictions of the 'gathering' of the Jewish exiles back to their land, primarily Dt 30:4 (LXX συνάξει) and Zc 2:10 (EVV 2:6; LXX συνάξω), both of which also speak of gathering from the ends of the earth (Dt 30:4, ἀπ' ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἕως ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; Zc 2:10, ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ); the main point of v. 27 looks like a combined allusion to these two texts. Cf. also Ps 147:2 (τάς διασποράς Ἰσραὴλ ἐπισυνάξει). Here again is an ironical reversal of the sense of the OT language used; the gathering of the ἐκλεκτοί of the Son of Man will be from the whole world not by extracting Jewish exiles from their places of captivity, but by including people of all nations in what have been hitherto the Jewish community of the people of God. This is the fulfilment of the vision of v. 10, that the εὐαγγέλιον will be proclaimed to all nations...

"In view of the association of angels with the enthroned Son of Man in 8:38, and in the absence of any clear indication that the normal meaning of ἄγγελος is inappropriate here, I ... think it ... likely that angels are here credited with a 'missionary' role in the ingathering of God's people; cf. the description of angels in Heb. 1:14 as λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν." France.

τεσσαρες neut τεσσαρα gen τεσσαρων four
ἀνεμος, ου m wind

ἄκρον, ου n boundary, extreme limits

γῆ, γῆς f earth

ἕως to, up to, as far as

Cf. Deut 30:3f; Jer 32:37; Ezek 34:13; 36:24; Zech 2:6.

"Though the Church be now tormented by the malice of men, or even broken by the violence of the billows, and miserably torn in pieces, so as to have no stability in the world, yet we ought always to cherish confident hope, because it will not be by human means, but by heavenly power, which will be far superior to every obstacle, that the Lord will *gather* his Church." Calvin.

Mark 13:28

Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς συκῆς μάθετε τὴν παραβολήν· ὅταν ἦδη ὁ κλάδος αὐτῆς ἀπαλὸς γένηται καὶ ἐκφύῃ τὰ φύλλα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγύς τὸ θέρος ἐστίν·

συκη, ης f fig tree

μάθετε Verb, 2 aor act imperat, 2 pl μανθανω
learn, find out

ὅταν when, whenever

ἦδη adv now, already

κλάδος, ου m branch

ἀπαλος, η, ον putting out leaves

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

ἐκφύω put out (leaves)

φυλλον, ου n leaf

ἐγγύς adv near

θερος, ους n summer

Mark 13:29

οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα γινόμενα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγύς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις.

οὕτως and οὕτω adv. thus, in this way

ἴδητε Verb, aor act subj ὄραω v.26

ταῦτα must refer to the signs mentioned

θύρα, ας f door, gate

France writes of "the quite unjustified tendency of some to translate it as '*he* is near' (RV, RSV, NRSV, JB, NJB). ἐγγύς is an adverb, not a masculine adjective, so that the phrase means 'he/she/it is near', leaving the identity of the 'he/she/it' to be determined by the context. And here the context leaves little room for doubt. The disciples had asked when the temple would be destroyed and how they would know the time. Jesus' reply, with the focus shifting emphatically back to the disciples again (καὶ ὑμεῖς ... γινώσκουσθε), now homes in directly on the latter part of their question: *this* is how you will know that it (the destruction of the temple, the subject of the question and of the whole discourse so far) is near; this is the σημεῖον you asked for...

"ταῦτα must therefore refer to the matters set forth in vv. 14-22, after which the destruction of the temple will follow quickly and inevitably; there will be little time to get away. It is therefore quite inappropriate to the flow of the discourse to understand v. 29 as referring to anything subsequent to the destruction of the temple. That would make it useless as a sign in response to the disciples' question, as well as introducing a quite unnecessary tension with the clear temporal limit set in v. 30. Verse 29 thus sums up all that Jesus has just spelled out in vv 14-27, the preliminaries in verses 14-22 (ταῦτα γινόμενα) and the climax itself in vv 24-27 (ἐγγύς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις)."

Mark 13:30

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη μέχρις οὗ ταῦτα πάντα γένηται.

οὐ μὴ adds decisiveness.

παρέλθῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s παρερχομαι
pass, pass away
γενεα, ας f generation, age
μεχρι and μεχρις prep with gen until
οὗ adv where; μεχρι οὐ until
γένηται see v.28

Cranfield lists a variety of interpretations of this verse:

- i) ἡ γενεα ἢ αὕτη means mankind in general;
- ii) means the Jewish people;
- iii) means Christians;
- iv) means 'people of this sort' – meaning, 'there will be unbelievers until the end'.
- v) ταῦτα παντα refers to the destruction of the Temple;
- vi) refers to Christ's Passion and Resurrection;
- vii) refers to the signs of the End mentioned in vv.5-23.

Cranfield himself argues that we need to understand that the Incarnation-Crucifixion-Resurrection-Ascension, on the one hand, and the Parousia on the other, belong essentially together and are in a real sense one Event, one divine Act, being held apart only by the mercy of God who desires to give men opportunity for faith and repentance." He says of Jesus' words in this verse, "The meaning then is that the signs of the End which Jesus has described in vv 5-23 will not be confined to a remote future: his hearers must themselves experience them, for they are characteristic of the whole period of the Last Times."

France comments, "There is a clear continuity between the question [in v 4] when μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα γένηται and the answer that this generation will not pass away until πάντα γένηται. If the former phrase referred to the destruction of the temple (and, as we have seen, nothing in its context suggests any other reference), then so must the latter. ταῦτα παντα in this context must therefore refer to the whole complex of events Jesus has just been predicting in vv. 14-27. The answer to the disciples' question is thus comprehensively rounded off by as plain and definite a time scale as they could have wished for."

Mark 13:31

ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσονται, οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρελεύσονται.

παρελεύσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl
παρερχομαι

"The words are remarkable, in that they echo the declaration of Is 40:7-8, that while grass and flowers may wither, God's word stands forever. The reliability of the word of Jesus is no less than that of the word of God himself... In Mt 5:18; Lk 16:17 the same imagery is used of the permanent validity of the law; Jesus' λόγοι are thus put on a par with the Torah in terms of authority and permanence." France.

Mark 13:32

Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας οὐδεὶς οἶδεν, οὐδὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι ἐν οὐρανῷ οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός, εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ.

"Περὶ δὲ ... as the opening phrase of a paragraph signals a change of subject. It is used several times in this way in 1 Corinthians as Paul moves from answering one question to the next, and we have seen it used by Mark in this way already in 12:26, where Jesus turns from the specific issue of the place of marriage in the resurrection life to the more general issue of the validity of the resurrection belief itself. Here it naturally suggests a similar shift to a new topic, and the more so because the dependent genitive consists of a pair of phrases (τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας) which are here introduced into the discourse for the first time. While the plural αἱ ἡμέραι (ἐκεῖναι) has been used several times to describe the period of the siege of Jerusalem (vv 17, 19, 20, 24), no singular day has been mentioned which provides a suitable antecedent to ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη in v. 32. Moreover, the statement of ignorance concerning this 'day and hour' contrasts strongly with the resounding certainty (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) of Jesus' pronouncement of the time within which the ταῦτα described in the previous verses will occur (v. 30). We have moved emphatically from the known to the unknown." France.

France argues that the new subject, spoken of here as τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης, is the parousia – the same subject as in Mt 24:36f. He writes, "The phrase ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη has this sense in a number of places in the NT where an explicit antecedent is equally lacking. In Mt 7:22 and Lk 10:12 the context requires that it refer to the day of judgment, but the identity of the 'day' is no more explicit in those passages than here. The same reference to the day of judgment is clearly intended in 2 Tim 1:12, 18; 4:8, though again no antecedent is expressed in these contexts. In 1 Cor 3:13 ἡ ἡμέρα alone suffices to convey the same reference. It seems, then, that in early Christian parlance 'that day' or even 'the day' was in itself a recognised eschatological term where the context allowed it to be so understood. Mark could thus expect his readers to detect in the use of this phrase a shift from the historical events of the Jewish War to a more ultimate perspective, without having to spell this out. Any readers/hearers who managed to miss the idiom would quickly realise the change of subject when they heard in vv. 33-37 what the coming of ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη was to be like."

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο see v.17

ἡ or

ώρα, ας f hour, moment

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

οἶδα know

οὐδε and not; οὐδε ... οὐδε neither ... nor

"The full reality of the Incarnation involved such ignorance on the part of Jesus during his earthly life. Calvin goes to the heart of the matter when he speaks of the Son of God 'enduring' it 'on our account' and connects it with his 'discharging the office of Mediator'. A clearer warning against all speculation about the *when* of the Parousia could hardly be imagined." Cranfield.

"And surely that man must be singularly mad, who would hesitate to submit himself to the ignorance which even the *Son of God* did not hesitate to endure on our account." Calvin.

Mark 13:33

βλέπετε ἀγρυπνεῖτε, οὐκ οἶδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ καιρός ἐστίν·

βλεπω see, look, beware of

ἀγρυπνεω be alert, watch over

The converse is the danger of being caught asleep (v. 36).

Some MSS add και προσευχεσθε. France comments, "Prayer is more likely to have been added than omitted, as a conventional expression of the exhortation to watch, especially in the light of 14:38 (cf. with ἀγρυπνέω, Lk 21:36; Eph 6:18), but is less appropriate here, especially as it produces an awkward series of three unconnected imperatives."

πότε interrog adv. when?

καιρος, ου m time, appointed time

The disciples' ignorance of the date of the Parousia is not an excuse for being unprepared, but a reason (γὰρ) for increasing vigilance." Cranfield.

Mark 13:34

ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἀπόδημος ἀφείς τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ δοὺς τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐξουσίαν, ἐκάστω τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ, καὶ τῷ θυρωρῷ ἐνετείλατο ἵνα γρηγορή.

ἀποδημος, ον away from home, on a journey

ἀφείς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἀφιμι leave

οἰκια, ας f house, home, household

δοὺς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s διδομι

δουλος, ου m slave, servant

ἐξουσια, ας f authority, right, power

ἐκαστος, η, ον each, every

θυρωρος, ου m & f door keeper

ἐνετείλατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἐντελλομαι command, order

γρηγορεω be or keep awake, be alert

"The motif of the absentee householder is familiar in the gospel tradition, not only in Matthew's parousia parables (24:45-51; 25:14-30) and Luke's related parables of the watching slaves (12:35-38; cf. 12:42-48) and the pounds (Lk 19:11-27), but also already in Mark with a different setting in the parable of the tenants of the vineyard (12:1-12)." France.

Mark 13:35

γρηγορεῖτε οὖν, οὐκ οἶδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας ἔρχεται, ἢ ὄψε ἢ μεσονύκτιον ἢ ἀλεκτοροφωνίας ἢ πρωῖ,

ὄψε adv. late in the day, evening

μεσονυκτιον, ου n midnight

ἀλεκτοροφωνια, ας f before dawn (lit cockcrow, the watch from midnight to 3 a.m.)

πρωῖ adv early morning, in the early morning, morning

"The four watches correspond with Roman usage." Cranfield.

Mark 13:36

μη ἐλθὼν ἐξαίφνης εὕρη ὑμᾶς καθεύδοντας·

ἐξαίφνης suddenly, unexpectedly
εὕρη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s εὕρισκω
καθευδω sleep

"The Christian disciple, it seems, is never off duty." France.

Mark 13:37

ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω πᾶσιν λέγω· γρηγορεῖτε.

"... sums up vv.33-6 and also the whole discourse from v.5 onwards. The command to watch is addressed not only to the four, but also to the rest of the Twelve, to Mark's readers in the Church of Rome, and to the whole Church throughout the Last Times. The meaning of this watching for the returning Lord, which may be said to be the whole duty of Christians, is drawn out by the three parables of Mt 25. To watch for him is to make sure that our faith is no counterfeit which at the last crisis will vanish, but that true faith which will enable us to take our place beside him. It is to use the time that remains before his coming in the work of winning others for him. It is to recognise him gratefully in his intermediate comings in the persons of the least of his brethren." Cranfield.

Mark 14:1-2

Cf. Mt 26:1-5; Lk 22:1-2. "The time for talking is over, and it is time for the events to unfold which Jesus has insistently predicted since Caesarea Philippi, and which will set in train the scenario so vividly sketched in chapter 13." France.

Mark 14:1

Ἦν δὲ τὸ πάσχα καὶ τὰ ἄζυμα μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας. καὶ ἐζήτουν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς πῶς αὐτὸν ἐν δόλῳ κρατήσαντες ἀποκτείνωσιν,

πασχα n Passover

ἄζυμος, ον without yeast; unleavened; τα
ἄζυμα Jewish Feast of Unleavened Bread

"The Passover (τὸ πάσχα) refers to the events of a roughly twelve-hour period which spanned two Jewish days – the Jewish day began at sunset, not at midnight as we (and the Romans) reckon. On Nisan 14, during the afternoon, the lambs for the Passover meal were slaughtered in the temple. After sunset (and therefore on the next Jewish day, Nisan 15) the Passover meal was held. The Passover proper therefore spanned Nisan 14 and 15. The festival of unleavened bread (τὰ ἄζυμα), originally a separate festival, followed on directly from the Passover and lasted seven days, Nisan 15-21 (Nu 28:15-16). In practice the two festivals were treated together as a single period of celebration; either τὸ πάσχα or τὰ ἄζυμα could be used for the whole eight-day period, but the use of the two together here is more precise." France.

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

The imperfect indicates "a purpose entertained for some time." Taylor.

ἀρχιερεως, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family

γραμματεως, εως m scribe, expert in Jewish law, scholar

δολος, ου m deceit

κρατήσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl κρατεω hold, seize

ἀποκτείνω and ἀποκτενω, -ννω kill, put to death

Mark 14:2

ἔλεγον γάρ· Μὴ ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ, μήποτε ἔσται θόρυβος τοῦ λαοῦ.

ἑορτη, ης f festival, feast

ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ here probably "in the presence of the festival crowd" rather than "during the festival" – so Jeremias – cf. Lk 22:6.

μηποτε conj. lest, otherwise

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

θορυβος, ου m disturbance, riot

λαος, ου m people

Mark 14:3-9

Cf. Mt 26:6-13; Jn 12:1-8 and also Lk 7:36-50. Cranfield says that "The narrative in Jn 12:1-8 is parallel to this and, though the two accounts are not easily harmonised, probably refers to the same incident... Lk 7:36ff records a different incident." For more detailed argument concerning the relationship between the various Gospel accounts, see John Wenham, *Easter Enigma*, pp. 22,23. In particular, Wenham argues:

- i) There were two anointings. The incident related by Luke is different from that recorded in the other Gospels.

ii) The same woman performed both anointings.
 iii) The second anointing can be explained as a re-enactment and completion of the first. France, having listed the similarities and differences between the various gospel accounts, similarly concludes, "This complex pattern of relationships probably indicates a separate tradition in Luke, perhaps of a different incident, though there is likely to have been some assimilation of the different stories in transmission."
 Of Mark's account of this incident, France writes, "The woman's *καλὸν ἔργον* provides a telling contrast with the limited outlook of the other guests in Simon's house. Their concern for the routine responsibility of providing for the poor, worthy as it is in itself, betrays a lack of an appropriate sense of occasion. This is Jesus' hour, the time when his predictions about his own destiny are coming to fulfilment, and his ministry is reaching its tragic yet essential climax. The poor can wait; something more vital is taking place, and the woman has proved more sensitive to it than even Jesus' closest companions. And that is why, when the story of these pivotal days comes to be told, she will have an honoured place in it. Anonymous as she is, she will be part of the good news which will soon be spread around the world, and her *καλὸν ἔργον*, even if not her name, will be remembered."

Mark 14:3

Καὶ ὄντος αὐτοῦ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ Σίμωνος τοῦ λεπροῦ κατακειμένου αὐτοῦ ἦλθεν γυνὴ ἔχουσα ἀλάβαστρον μύρου νάρδου πιστικῆς πολυτελοῦς· συντρίψασα τὴν ἀλάβαστρον κατέχεεν αὐτοῦ τῆς κεφαλῆς.

"The host, Simon, is otherwise unknown, presumably a local supporter of Jesus like Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. The fact that he could host a meal in his house indicates that his title, *ὁ λεπρός* did not literally denote his present condition. He may have been a former leper, now cured (by Jesus?), or he may have acquired his nickname by some other association which we cannot now know; the name Simon was so common a name that some distinguishing title was needed." France.

κατακειμαι recline at table, dine
ἀλάβαστρον, ου n alabaster jar
μυρον, ου n ointment, perfume, oil
ναρδος, ου f oil of nard (an aromatic plant)

"*νάρδος* specifies that this is the highly prized perfume made from spikenard, whose oil was imported from India and therefore expensive." France.

πιστικός, η, ον perhaps pure, genuine

"Various explanations: e.g. as = *πιστης* (= 'genuine') or *πιστης* (= 'liquid'), or as a scribal corruption of *σπικατον* (the name of an unguent: cf. vg *nardi spicati*); more probably, as a transliteration of Aramaic *pistaka* which denotes the ben or pistachio nut (cf. *πιστακίον*), the oil of which was used as a base for perfumes." Cranfield.

πολυτελοῦς Adjective, gen s *πολυτελης, ες*
 expensive, costly; of great value
συντρίψασα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s
συντριβω break in pieces, shatter

"Gundry ..., following Cranfield, believes ... that by breaking the flask she 'makes it henceforth unusable', thus demonstrating the completeness of the sacrifice, but this is perhaps too cerebral an account of a rash and instinctive action. It was a dramatic and impulsive gesture rather than a planned visual aid." France.

κατέχεεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s *καταχεω*
 pour out
κεφαλή, ης f head

Cf. Ex 29:7; 1 Sam 10:1; 2 Kings 9:3,6; Ps 133:2.

"It is not likely that the woman thought of herself as anointing the Messiah, but Mark doubtless intended his readers to recognise the messianic significance of his action – though another significance of it is indicated by Jesus in v.8. He who had been anointed by the Spirit at his baptism is now fittingly anointed with oil." Cranfield.

Mark 14:4

ἦσαν δὲ τινες ἀγανακτοῦντες πρὸς ἑαυτούς· εἰς τί ἡ ἀπόλεια αὕτη τοῦ μύρου γέγονεν; ἀγανακτεω

be indignant, be angry
 "The phrase *ἀγανακτοῦντες πρὸς ἑαυτούς* suggests not so much silent (internalised) indignation as the expression of that indignation to one another within the group; cf. the other uses of *πρὸς ἑαυτούς* for shared emotions or deliberative consultations in 1:27; 10:26; 11:31; 12:7; 16:3." France.
 Cf. Mt who makes it clear that those angered by this event included the disciples.

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

The addition of *καὶ λεγοντες* before or after *πρὸς ἑαυτούς* appears to be a scribal 'improvement'.

ἀπόλεια, ας f destruction, waste
γέγονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s *γινομαι*

Mark 14:5

ἡδύνατο γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ μύρον πραθῆναι ἐπάνω
δηναρίων τριακοσίων καὶ δοθῆναι τοῖς
πτωχοῖς· καὶ ἐνεβριμῶντο αὐτῇ.

ἡδύνατο Verb, imperf midd/pass indic, 3 s
δυναμαι can

πραθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ππρασκω
sell

ἐπάνω prep and adv. over, more than

Cranfield considers ἐπάνω here an adverb and
δηναρων τριακοσιων a genitive of price.
"The omission of ἐπάνω in a few texts
assimilates to the specific figure given in Jn
12:5; it may also be due to dislike of Mark's
idiom (BDF, 185[4], describe ἐπάνω as 'a
vulgar substitute for πλείων')." France.

δηναριον, ου η denarius

τριακοσιοι, αι, α three hundred

δοθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin διδωμι

πτωχος, η, ον poor, pitiful

ἐμβριμαομαι speak harshly to; criticize
harshly

"The dative following ἐνεβριμῶντο indicates
(as in 1:43) that there hostility was openly
directed against the woman." France.

Mark 14:6

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· Ἄφετε αὐτήν· τί αὐτῇ
κόπους παρέχετε; καλὸν ἔργον ἠργάσατο ἐν
ἐμοί·

ἀφιημι leave

Here, 'leave her alone', 'don't give her a hard
time'.

κοπος, ου η labour, trouble

παρεχω act & midd cause, bring about

For this idiom, cf. Lk 11:7; 18:5; Gal 6:17.

καλος, η, ον good, right, beautiful

ἠργάσατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἐργαζομαι work, do, perform

Mark 14:7

πάντοτε γὰρ τοὺς πτωχοὺς ἔχετε μεθ' ἑαυτῶν,
καὶ ὅταν θέλητε δύνασθε αὐτοῖς εὖ ποιῆσαι,
ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε·

παντοτε always

ὅταν when, whenever

θελω wish, will

εὖ adv well

ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιω

ἐμὲ Pronoun, acc s ἐγω

Cranfield says that this verse provides
important evidence against the view of some
"that Jesus did not envisage any significant
interval between his death and his Parousia; for
it implied that there will be a time during
which the disciples will be in a position to do
good to the poor, but not to Jesus."

France comments, "The concern for the poor
expressed in Dt 15:1-11 (which includes the
recognition, echoed here by Jesus, that 'the
poor will never cease out of the land') had
become the basis of an extensive and carefully
regulated system of donation to poor relief,
which included the mandatory 'tithe for the
poor' as well as numerous opportunities for
personal charity. The point is not that you may
neglect the needs of the poor, but that they can
be catered for at any time: the opportunity will
not go away."

Mark 14:8

ὁ ἔσχεν ἐποίησεν, προέλαβεν μυρίσαι τὸ σῶμά
μου εἰς τὸν ἐνταφιασμόν.

ἔσχεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἔχω

"ὁ ἔσχεν ἐποίησεν is a compressed expression,
with ἔχω used probably in the sense of 'be
able'... The use of ἔχω rather than δύναμαι may
be due to the thought of the perfume which the
woman already possessed, and therefore was
now able to put to this special use." France.

προέλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

προλαμβάνω do (something) ahead of
time

μυρίζω pour perfume on

σωμα, τος η body

ἐνταφιασμος, ου η preparation for burial,
burial

"The phrase indicates not her conscious
intention, but the purpose which her action will
actually serve." Cranfield.

Mark 14:9

ἀμὴν δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, ὅπου ἐὰν κηρυχθῇ τὸ
εὐαγγέλιον εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ὁ
ἐποίησεν αὕτη λαληθήσεται εἰς μνημόσυνον
αὐτῆς.

ὅπου adv. where; ὅπου ἂν οἱ ὅπου ἐὰν
wherever, whenever

κηρυχθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s κηρυσσω
preach, proclaim

"As in 13:10, the εὐαγγέλιον, which earlier in
the gospel denoted the message preached by
Jesus, has now become a message *about* Jesus,
and here includes specifically the narrative of
his last days... Mark wants us to have no doubt
that Jesus knows where he is going, and
already views his approaching passion in the
framework of God's redemptive purpose, the
εὐαγγέλιον." France.

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

κοσμος, ου η world

λαληθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s λαλω
speak, talk

μνημοσυνον memorial

Mark 14:10-11

Mt 26:14-16; Lk 22:3-6. France comments, "Why did the priests need Judas? After several days of public exposure in the temple area there could hardly have been any problem in identifying Jesus even in a crowd (though apparently the men sent to arrest Jesus in the garden at night did need such identification, v. 44). A more likely reason has been indicated in vv. 1-2: in order to avoid popular resistance they needed to secure Jesus in a less public location than the temple area, and for that they needed someone who could inform them of his movements, in particular of where he might be found at night. Only a member of the group who lived with Jesus could provide such information, hence the delight of the priests at Judas' offer. It is as a guide to the arresting party that he will reappear in 14:43-44. "When Jesus is brought to trial in 14:53-65, we shall find the High Priest well informed about the supposed claims of Jesus (14:61). According to Mark's record Jesus has not publicly claimed to be the Messiah (indeed, he has specifically prohibited public use of such language, 8:30), though his actions have at several points implied such a claim; and his one public statement implying that he is the Son of God takes the veiled form of a character in a parable (12:6-8). It is within the disciple group that such language has been more openly used, and another part of Judas' service to the priests may have been to fill out a dossier of Jesus' words and actions which could be used against him at his trial, to prove that the incautious words of his followers (11:9-10) had not been unfounded."

Mark 14:10

Καὶ Ἰούδας Ἰσκαριῶθ ὁ εἷς τῶν δώδεκα ἀπῆλθεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς ἵνα αὐτὸν παραδοῖ αὐτοῖς.

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
δωδεκα twelve
παραδοῖ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s παραδιδωμι
hand, deliver up

Mark 14:11

οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες ἐχάρησαν καὶ ἐπηγγείλαντο αὐτῷ ἀργύριον δοῦναι. καὶ ἐζήτηι πῶς αὐτὸν εὐκαίρως παραδοῖ.

χαίρω rejoice, be glad
ἐπηγγείλαντο Verb, aor midd/pass dep indic,
3 pl ἐπαγγελλομαι promise
ἀργύριον, ου n silver coin, money
δοῦναι verb, aor act infin δίδωμι
ζητεῶ seek, search for, look for
πῶς how(?)
εὐκαιρως when the time is right

Mark 14:12-16

Cf. Mt 26:17-19; Lk 22:7-13.

Mark 14:12

Καὶ τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν ἄζύμων, ὅτε τὸ πάσχα ἔθουον, λέγουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ· Ποῦ θέλεις ἀπελθόντες ἐτοιμάσωμεν ἵνα φάγης τὸ πάσχα;

πρῶτος, η, ον first
ἄζυμος, ον see v.1
ὅτε conj when, at which time
πασχα n Passover, Passover meal,
Passover lamb
θῶ slaughter, sacrifice, kill
ποῦ interrogative adverb where
θελῶ wish, will
ἀπελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
ἀπερχομαι
ἐτοιμάσωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl
ἐτοιμαζῶ prepare, make ready
φάγης Verb, aor act subj, 2 s ἐσθίω eat

A problem arises over dates since τῇ πρώτῃ τῶν ἄζυμων properly denotes Nisan 15th and ὅτε το πάσχα ἔθουον clearly denotes 14th. Cranfield argues that it is best to understand the first phrase as ambiguous, "its meaning being more exactly defined by the second." He thinks that the imperfect ἔθουον means "it was customary to kill"; the phrase need not imply that the killing had already begun when the disciples spoke." He concludes, "This verse clearly implies that the Last Supper was a Passover meal and that the day (reckoned from sundown to sundown) on which Jesus was arrested, condemned and crucified was Nisan 15th."

Cranfield draws attention to the problem raised by the suggestion in Jn 18:28 that Jesus died at the time that the lambs were being killed. He considers unsatisfactory the suggestion that some Jews were eating the Passover meal on the Thursday evening rather than the Friday.

France, however, believes that there is evidence outside the gospel accounts that favours the 'Johannine' dating. He writes, "Astronomical evidence strongly suggests that whereas Nisan 14 probably fell on a Friday (as the Johannine chronology requires) in AD 30 and 33, there was no date between 27 and 34 when Nisan 15 was a Friday." He concludes, "It therefore seems most likely that Jesus deliberately anticipated the official date in his anxiety to hold a Passover with his disciples while it was still possible (cf. Lk 22:15), aware that by the official date he would not be there to do so." Concerning Mark's account he writes, "When Mk 14:12, which is the key text for the supposed 'synoptic chronology', sets the time of preparation for the supper on the 'day' when the lambs were sacrificed, this would, on the normal Jewish method of reckoning days, only be on the evening *following* the sacrifice if the preparations were made before sunset. If, however, the meal was prepared (as it was certainly eaten) *after* sunset, it would be on the same 'day' as the sacrifice if it took place on the *previous* evening. On that understanding, Mark's careful note of the time in fact places the last supper, as John does, on the evening which began Nisan 14, not on that which followed it. In other words, he was as clearly aware as John was that Jesus held his Passover meal not on the official day, but deliberately one day early."

Mark 14:13

καὶ ἀποστέλλει δύο τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ὑπάγετε εἰς τὴν πόλιν, καὶ ἀπαντήσῃ ὑμῖν ἄνθρωπος κεράμιον ὕδατος βαστάζων· ἀκολουθήσατε αὐτῷ,

ἀποστελλω send, send out

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two

ὑπαγω go, go one's way

πολις, εως f city, town

ἀπανταω meet

κεραμιον, ου n jar (made of clay)

ὑδωρ, ὕδατος n water

βασταζω carry, bear

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany

"More probably a pre-arranged sign than an instance of supernatural foresight. A man carrying a pitcher would be conspicuous, since normally only women carried water in pitchers: a man would carry it in a wineskin." Cranfield.

Mark 14:14

καὶ ὅπου ἂν εἰσέλθῃ εἶπατε τῷ οἰκοδεσπότῃ ὅτι Ὁ διδάσκαλος λέγει· Ποῦ ἐστὶν τὸ κατάλυμά μου ὅπου τὸ πάσχα μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν μου φάγω;

ὅπου adv. where; ὅπου ἂν or ὅπου ἐάν wherever

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in

εἶπατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl λεγω

οἰκοδεσποτης, ου m householder

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

ποῦ interrogative adverb where

καταλυμα, τος n room, guest room

'my guest room' suggests 'the one I have booked.' France adds, "Indeed, it is not very likely, given the pressure of space in Jerusalem at Passover time, that a suitable room could have been made available without prior arrangement."

φάγω Verb, aor act indic/subj, 1 s ἐσθιω

Mark 14:15

καὶ αὐτὸς ὑμῖν δείξει ἀνάγαιον μέγα ἐστρωμένον ἑτοιμον· καὶ ἐκεῖ ἐτοιμάσατε ἡμῖν.

δείξει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s δεικνυμι show

ἀναγαιον, ου n upstairs room

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large

"The further description of the room as an ἀνάγαιον μέγα a 'large upstairs room' indicates a relatively wealthy household rather than a single-story peasant house, but any attempt to guess its location from Mark's text is futile." France.

ἐστρωμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n

nom/acc s στρωννυμι and στρωννυω

spread; ἀναγαιον ἐστρωμενον furnished

upstairs room

Cranfield thinks it refers to the "accommodation for reclining at a meal."

ἐτοιμος, η, ον ready, prepared

ἐκεῖ there, in that place

ἐτοιμαζω prepare, make ready

Mark 14:16

καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ εὔρον καθὼς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἠτοίμασαν τὸ πάσχα.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι

εὔρον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl εὕρισκω

καθως as, just as

ἐτοιμαζω prepare, make ready

Mark 14:17-21

Cf. Mt 26:20-25; Lk 22:14, 21-23.

Mark 14:17

Καὶ ὄψιας γενομένης ἔρχεται μετὰ τῶν δώδεκα.

ὄψια, ας f evening

"The Passover meal would begin at sunset, when the new Jewish day (Nisan 15th) had begun." Cranfield. In France's view, Nisan 14th (cf. note against v. 12).

Mark 14:18

καὶ ἀνακειμένων αὐτῶν καὶ ἐσθιόντων ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν παραδώσει με ὁ ἐσθίων μετ' ἐμοῦ.

ἀνακειμαι be seated at table
ἐσθιω and ἐσθω eat, consume

The Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν emphasises the enormity of the idea.

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
παραδώσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s
παραδίδωμι hand over, deliver up

On the final phrase, cf. Ps 41:9; Jn 13:18.

Mark 14:19

ἤρξαντο λυπεῖσθαι καὶ λέγειν αὐτῷ εἰς κατὰ εἷς· Μήτι ἐγώ;

ἤρξαντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl ἀρχω
midd begin

λυπεω pain, grieve; pass be sad,
sorrowful, grieve

εἷς κατὰ εἷς one by one

μητι Negative particle, used in questions
expectating a negative answer

Mark 14:20

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Εἷς τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ ἐμβαπτόμενος μετ' ἐμοῦ εἰς τὸ τρύβλιον·

ἐμβαπτω dip
τρυβλιον, ου n dish, bowl

"The τρυβλιον is probably the dish containing the sauce (*haroset*) of dried fruits, spices and wine or vinegar, in which the bitter herbs were dipped at the Passover meal." Cranfield.
"Christ, by his reply, neither removes their doubt, nor points out the person of Judas, but only confirms what he said a little before." Calvin.

Mark 14:21

ὅτι ὁ μὲν υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑπάγει καθὼς γέγραπται περὶ αὐτοῦ, οὐαὶ δὲ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκεῖνος δι' οὗ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται· καλὸν αὐτῷ εἰ οὐκ ἐγεννήθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος.

ὑπαγω go, go one's way, depart
γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω
write

Cf. 8:31; 9:12.

οὐαὶ interj. woe! how horrible it will be!
ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that (one)

ὁι οὐ "suggests the truth that the delivering up of Jesus is not simply an act of Judas, but part of a bigger purpose than his – he is in fact being used for the fulfilment of God's purpose. Nevertheless, it is his act, and he is responsible – hence the οὐαὶ and v 21c. The fact that God turns the wrath of man to his praise does not excuse the wrath of man." Cranfield.

καλος, η, ον good, right, proper
ἐγεννήθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s γενναω be
father of, bear; pass be born

Mark 14:22-25

Cf. Mt 26:26-29; Lk 22:15-20 also 1 Cor 11:23-25.

Mark 14:22

Καὶ ἐσθιόντων αὐτῶν λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐλόγησας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπεν· Λάβετε, τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου.

λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω
ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf
εὐλογεω bless
κλαω break (only of bread)

The normal action of a father at a family meal.

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι
λάβετε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl λαμβανω
σωμα, τος n body

Cranfield argues that τὸ σῶμα μου means here 'my person', myself rather than body. The breaking of bread in this familiar way was henceforth to be a pledge of Jesus' presence with his people. France comments, "The unleavened bread, together with the Passover lamb and the bitter herbs, was one of the items over which interpretative words must be spoken as part of the Passover ceremony, the specific point of the symbolism being 'because our fathers were redeemed from Egypt'... But the interpretative words spoken by Jesus are very different. While the symbolism of past redemption may be implicit, it is not included in the formula Mark records. In the fuller versions of Luke and Paul the phrase τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν [διδόμενον] points towards a redemptive significance, though in the present rather than in the past, but in Mark this is left unsaid. The simple, stark words τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου leave the disciples to think it out, until the words over the cup in v. 24 supply the note of vicarious death."

Mark 14:23

καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες.

ποτηριον, ου n cup

"The third cup of the Passover meal... Over the third cup the prayer of thanksgiving was said. Hence the third cup came to be called 'the cup of blessing'." Cranfield.

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

πίνω drink

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

Mark 14:24

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν.

αἷμα, ατος f blood

διαθηκη, ης covenant, will, testament

The inclusion of καινης before διαθηκης is an obvious insertion influenced by 1 Cor 11:25 and liturgical usage.

ἐκχεω and ἐκχυννω pour out, shed (blood

Cf. 1 Cor 11:25. "As the Old Covenant had been ratified by the sprinkling of sacrificial blood (Ex 24:6-8), so God's New Covenant with man is about to be established by Jesus' death, and the cup (i.e. the wine it contains) makes those who share in it partakers of the benefits and obligations of the New Covenant. The drinking of the wine is analogous to being sprinkled with the blood of Ex 24." Cranfield. France comments, "As God first rescued his people from Egypt and made his covenant with them at Sinai, so now there is a new beginning for the people of God, and it finds its focus not in the ritual of animal sacrifice but through the imminent death of Jesus. Here is the basis for a thoroughgoing Christian ecclesiology in relation to the people of God in the OT, but for the moment it remains at the level of allusion." France also suggests, "The phrase τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν ... vividly recalls the language of the final section of the prophecy of the suffering Servant of Yahweh in Is 53 [53:12], the point at which the redemptive significance of the Servant's death becomes most explicit. Jesus' words over the cup thus pick the concept of vicarious death which he has already presented in 10:45, with a deliberate further echo of that same remarkable passage in Isaiah; see further the discussion of the Is 53 allusion at 10:45 above."

Mark 14:25

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐκέτι οὐ μὴ πῖω ἐκ τοῦ γενήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ὅταν αὐτὸ πίνω καινὸν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ.

οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more

"The οὐκέτι of A B and the majority text may have been an explanatory gloss ... but it is perhaps more likely that the shorter reading without οὐκέτι (x C W etc.) was an assimilation to Matthew." France.

πῖω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s πίνω

γενημα, τος n product, harvest

ἀμπελος, ου f vine, grapevine

ἕως until

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that

ὅταν when, whenever

καινος, η, ον new

"The formula is, as regards its negative significance, that of a Nazirite vow. By making it, Jesus consecrates himself for the imminent sacrificial offering of his life' [Barth]. Cf. Num 6:1-21. But the saying has also a positive significance: it looks forward to the end of the period of the vow, the time when he will again taste wine – in the kingdom of God. This could be taken to refer to the final reunion with the disciples – the messianic feast (cf. Mt 8:11; Lk 14:15; 22:29f.; Rev 19:9); but perhaps is better understood (with Barth) as referring to the period between the Resurrection and Ascension (cf. Acts 10:41; also see Lk 24:30f.,35; Acts 1:4). For the suitability of ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ on this interpretation see on 9:1." Cranfield.

France, however, comments, "It is unlikely that Jesus' vision extends, as Karl Barth suggested, no further than the forty days after the resurrection when he would continue to appear on earth with his disciples, for in that case it is not clear why the wine drunk at that time (Acts 10:41 specifically mentions eating and drinking with the disciples) should be described as καινός. Most commentators have therefore assumed that ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ looks rather to that heavenly authority into which Jesus is so soon to enter, 'sitting at the right hand of Power' (14:62).

"Verses 22-24 and 25 thus present two contrasting and yet suggestively linked aspects of what is now to happen. The 'cup of death' (v. 24) and the 'cup of future glory' (v. 25) not only continue the Marcan contrast between the present aspect of the coming of God's kingdom, hidden in rejection and suffering, and its future glory, but also link the two as part of a single purpose: it is through Jesus' imminent death ὑπὲρ πολλῶν that the salvation will be achieved which represents the consummation of God's kingship."

Mark 14:26-31

Cf. Mt 26:30-35; Lk 22:39; also Lk 22:31-34. France comments, "In terms of narrative sequence these verses form a bridge between the last supper and the events in Gethsemane where Jesus' predictions of his fate begin to be fulfilled. But in the overall structure of Mark's passion narrative they have a more significant role. In vv. 10-11 and 18-21 we have learned of the treachery of one of the Twelve, but now that dire prospect is balanced by the even more far-reaching tragedy of the failure of the whole group to support Jesus when the time comes. The Passover meal is thus 'framed' by two predictions of betrayal." He adds that all of this is nevertheless in accordance with Scripture; "What appears to be victory for the forces arrayed against him is in fact all contained within the pattern of his foreknowledge and purpose in carrying out what is 'written of the Son of Man'."

Mark 14:26

Καὶ ὑμνήσαντες ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν.

ὕμνεω sing a hymn

"The second part of the *hallel*, i.e. Pss 114 (or 115)-118." Cranfield.

ὄρος, οὗς n mountain, hill
ἐλαια, ας f olive tree

"Judas knew where to find them, so this intention must have been agreed before he left the group (perhaps at the end of the meal)." France.

Mark 14:27

Καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι Πάντες σκανδαλισθήσεσθε, ὅτι γέγραπται· Πατάξω τὸν ποιμένα, καὶ τὰ πρόβατα διασκορπισθήσονται.

σκανδαλισθήσεσθε Verb, fut pass indic, 2 pl
σκανδαλιζῶ cause (someone) to sin,
cause (someone) to give up the faith

Cf. 4:17; 6:3; 9:42.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφῶ

Quoted from Zech 13:7.

πατάσσω strike, strike down

ποιμην, ενος m shepherd

προβατον, ου n sheep

διασκορπισθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl

διασκορπιζῶ scatter

"The same prophetic book which portrays the Messiah as a king riding into Jerusalem on a donkey (see on 11:1-10) also presents the rejected shepherd, described as Yahweh's 'associate' but apparently struck down by the sword of God himself (Zc. 13:7-9)." France. Lane comments, "God commands that the shepherd ... be struck down that the sheep may be scattered as an integral part of a refining process which will result in the creation of a new people of God. This action is associated with the opening of a fountain for the cleansing of sin on behalf of 'the house of David and Jerusalem' (Zech 13:1). The passage to which Jesus referred thus speaks of a necessity which leads to redemption. Even as sheep are scattered in panic when their shepherd falls, so the death of Jesus will cause the disciples to desert him and will mark the loss of the centre point of their own communal fellowship. The emphasis in verse 27, however, falls on the offence which Jesus will cause the disciples... The prophecy that the disciples will be scattered is counter balanced by the promise of reunion in Galilee following the resurrection."

Mark 14:28

ἀλλὰ μετὰ τὸ ἐγερθῆναί με προάξω ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν.

ἐγερθῆναί Verb, aor pass infin ἐγειρω
raise

προαγω go before or ahead of

"The saying looks forward to a Resurrection appearance in Galilee. The scattered flock will then be re-established." Cranfield.

France comments, "After the imagery of the shepherd and flock in v. 27 the verb (which could mean simply 'to precede'; cf. its intransitive use in 6:45) most naturally conjures up the picture of the Palestinian shepherd walking ahead of his flock into new pasture (cf. Jn 10:3-4)."

Mark 14:29

ὁ δὲ Πέτρος ἔφη αὐτῷ· Εἰ καὶ πάντες σκανδαλισθήσονται, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγώ.

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say

εἰ καὶ although

σκανδαλισθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl

σκανδαλιζῶ

Mark 14:30

καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ἀμὴν λέγω σοι ὅτι
σὺ σήμερον ταύτη τῇ νυκτὶ πρὶν ἢ δις
ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρίς με ἀπαρνήσῃ.

σημερον today
νυξ, νυκτος f night

Note the emphatic construction.

πρὶν and πρὶν ἢ before
δις twice

"The variations in the position of δις in the MSS where it occurs indicate considerable uncertainty in the textual tradition, and the omission of δις has considerable support (κ D W and several Old Latin MSS), the more so since B, which has δις here, nonetheless omits the first cockcrow in v. 68. But the omission of δις is so obvious a harmonistic device to eliminate the double cockcrow (which occurs only in Mark) that it should nevertheless be rejected, since it is hard to see why the embarrassment of a second cockcrow should be added into the tradition if it was not represented originally." France.

ἀλεκτωρ, ορος m cock, rooster
φωνεω call, call out
τρις three times
ἀπαρνήσῃ Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀπαρνεομαι disown, renounce claim to

"What Jesus now predicts for Peter is worse even than the 'stumbling' and desertion in v. 27 which Peter has already so strongly repudiated. A threefold denial is not simply a momentary succumbing to pressure, but a deliberate dissociation. This is not merely weakness but apostasy, and no wonder the suggestion evoked an even more vehement (ἐκπερισσῶς) repudiation of the idea. If desertion was unthinkable, denial must be more so." France.

Mark 14:31

ὁ δὲ ἐκπερισσῶς ἐλάλει· Ἐὰν δέη με
συναποθανεῖν σοι, οὐ μὴ σε ἀπαρνήσομαι.
ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ πάντες ἔλεγον.

ἐκπερισσῶς emphatically, again and again

A word "not found in classical Greek or LXX, and [which] occurs only here in the NT. Conceivably a Markan coinage." Cranfield.

λαλεω speak, talk
ἐάν if, even if
δέη Verb, pres subj, 3 s δεῖ impersonal verb
it is necessary, must
συναποθνήσκω die together (with)
σε Pronoun, acc s συ
ὡσαύτως adv in the same way, likewise

Mark 14:32-42

Cf. Mt 26:36-46; Lk 22:40-46. "The Gethsemane scene is a study in human weakness, even in the weakness of the most trusted of Jesus' disciples. But that is only a subplot. The main focus is on Jesus himself, and more particularly on Jesus as he relates to his Father. We have heard occasionally of Jesus at prayer (1:35; 6:46), but without being privy to the content of his prayer, and we have twice been privileged to hear God himself speak about his Son (1:11; 9:7), but here we penetrate as close as Mark will allow us to the heart of that mysterious relationship. It is summed up in the address Ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ, the more striking because given to us in both Aramaic and Greek, and it is revealed as a blending of two wills, which pull in different directions but which are brought together in the Son's willing submission to the Father's purpose. Here is the raw material for much later christological debate, but in the narrative context it serves to set Jesus before us clearly as the obedient Son, strong in his submission to suffering and death, in contrast to the disciples who for all Peter's bluster will fall at the first hurdle. It is this extraordinary scene which probably lies behind the vivid account in Heb. 5:7-10 of Jesus' 'prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death'." France.

Mark 14:32

Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς χωρίον οὗ τὸ ὄνομα
Γεθσημανί, καὶ λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ·
Καθίσατε ὧδε ἕως προσεύξωμαι.

χωριον, ου n piece of land, place
ὄνομα, τος n name

Calvin points out that Jesus would have known that Judas knew he was likely to go there. "He had made an assignation with his enemies, he presented himself to death."

καθίσατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl καθίζω
sit down

ὧδε adv here, in this place
ἕως until, up to, while
προσεύξωμαι Verb, aor midd dep subj, 1 s
προσευχομαι pray

"On both the previous occasions when Mark has depicted Jesus at prayer (1:35; 6:46) he was praying alone, having taken specific measures to get away even from his closest disciples. So now again he goes away from the disciples in order to pray. Prayer for Jesus (unlike some others, 12:40) was not a public performance." France.

Mark 14:33

καὶ παραλαμβάνει τὸν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰάκωβον
καὶ Ἰωάννην μετ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἤρξατο
ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν,

παραλαμβάνω take

"He takes the three with him partly, no doubt, for his own sake, because in his anguish and loneliness he yearns for their company, for their presence as friends who care (so Luther speaks of him as 'seeking comfort from His disciples, whom previously He had comforted') – though the effect of his taking them with him is actually to make more inescapably clear the fact of his aloneness; but surely also for their sakes and the world's, that they might be witnesses of his temptation and of his obedience, so that men might be in a position to understand better what had been done for them." Cranfield.

ἀρχῶ middd begin

ἐκθαμβεομαι be greatly distressed

"Here denotes a being in the grip of a shuddering horror in the face of the dreadful prospect before him." Cranfield.

ἀδημονεῶ be distressed or troubled

Occurs in the NT only here, in the Mt parallel and in Phil 2:26. "An anxiety from which there was no escaping and in which He saw no help or comfort." Barth.

Mark 14:34

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου
ἕως θανάτου· μείνατε ὧδε καὶ γρηγορεῖτε.

περίλυπος, ον very sad, deeply distressed

France suggests the phrase echoes the refrain in Ps 42:5, 11; 43:5 ἵνα τί περίλυπος εἶ, ψυχή. He adds, "It may be that Jesus' eventual acceptance of the will of his Father in Gethsemane owed something to his acquaintance with that psalm, where a mood of despair eventually gives way to a calm trust in God: 'Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God'. At this point in the narrative, however, that acceptance is still in the future, and the emotional turmoil expressed in this powerful sequence of words is unrelieved."

ψυχή, ης f self, inmost being, 'soul'

θανάτος, ου m death

Echos of Ps 92:5,11; 93:5; Jonah 4:9, cf. Ps 22:15; 141:3.

"Together with the phrase ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν in v.33 and the content of vv. 35f., this saying makes clear the striking contrast between Jesus' frame of mind in the face of death and the joyful courage of Jewish and Christian martyrs or the gay serenity of a Socrates. Luther has the suggestive comment: 'No one ever feared death so much as this Man.' One reason for this inexpressible fear and horror may be suggested here (the other – and even more important – reason is revealed in v.36). Jn 12:31 indicates the very special involvement of Satan in the events of the Passion (cf. Lk. 22:53?). In the wilderness Jesus had been tempted by Satan to deviate from his appointed way as the Servant and he had resisted and returned blow for blow. Now in the garden Satan returns in force and in all his majesty as the prince of this world, to avenge his earlier defeat; and Jesus sees now in appalling immediacy the full cost of his steadfast obedience. Now, to use Barth's phrase, 'the bill is being presented'. In Gethsemane it became plain that 'it was one thing to enter and continue on this way, it was another to tread it to the end, and in this world its necessarily bitter end. It was one thing to contradict and withstand the tempter, it was another to see him actually triumphant as he necessarily would be in this world, in the humanity ruled by him, to be refuted by him in the hard language of facts. From this we may gather something at least of the convulsion of that hour'." Cranfield.

μείνατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl μείνω
remain, stay

γρηγορεῶ be or keep awake, be alert

Mark 14:35

καὶ προελθὼν μικρὸν ἔπιπτεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, καὶ
προσηύχετο ἵνα εἰ δυνατόν ἐστιν παρέλθῃ ἅπ'
αὐτοῦ ἡ ὥρα,

προελθῶν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

προερχομαι go ahead, go before

μικρον adv a little

I.e. within earshot.

πιπτῶ fall, fall down

γῆ, γῆς f earth

An attitude of supplication (Lk 5:12; 17:16). "It was not, as far as we know, a normal attitude for ordinary prayer, and serves here further to underline the depth of Jesus' emotion." France.

δυνατος, η, ον possible

παρέλθῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s παρερχομαι
pass, pass by, pass away

ὥρα, ας f hour, moment, period of time

"In Jn ὄρα is especially prominent – e.g. 2:4; 5:25; 7:30; 12:23 and esp 12:27." Cranfield.

Mark 14:36

καὶ ἔλεγεν· Ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ, πάντα δυνατά σοι· παρένεγκε τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο ἀπ' ἐμοῦ· ἀλλ' οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλὰ τί σύ.

πατήρ, πατρός m father

"In the Aramaic of Jesus' time *abba*, in origin an exclamation of small children, had replaced in ordinary use *abi* ('my father'), both vocative and non-vocative, and also the emphatic state *aba*. It was not, however, used as a form of address to God (its homely origin no doubt made it seem unsuitable). So its use by Jesus is highly significant... It is significant that Jesus calls God 'Father' at this moment – as he sees the cup held out to him. He knows God as Father even in Gethsemane: to have failed to do so would have been to lose the battle." Cranfield.

France comments, "The much-discussed contention of J. Jeremias that an address to God as Ἀββὰ is unparalleled in Jewish literature, and marks a unique sense of intimacy with God, remains valid, even if the issue has been clouded by the frequent assertion by preachers that this familiar term equated to the English 'Daddy'. J. Barr's argument that 'Abba is not Daddy' is well taken, in that there is nothing childish about the special relationship implied (it was also used, for example, by disciples addressing their rabbi), but that was not Jeremias's point. The term conveys the special intimacy of a son in a patriarchal family. And in that sense Jesus' use of this form of address to God is striking and unparalleled, until it was taken over from him by his followers: Paul introduces Ἀββὰ as the sign of an amazing and hitherto inadmissible relationship of the individual believer with God (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6)."

παρένεγκε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s
 παραφέρω take away, remove
 ποτήριον, ου n cup
 θέλω wish, will

"For ποτήριον see on 10:38. The other and more important reason for Jesus' ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν is now indicated. In his identification with sinful men he is the object of the holy wrath of God against sin, and in Gethsemane as the hour of the Passion approaches the full horror of that wrath is disclosed... Isa. 51:22 speaks of the cup of God's fury being taken away from Jerusalem. Now Jesus prays that it may be taken away from him; but his prayer is really a prayer and not a demand, for he does not set his will over against the will of the Father. He has not actually made the removal of the cup his will; the wish he expresses is conditional upon the will of God. That is the significance of ἀλλ' οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλὰ τί σύ and also of εἰ δυνατόν ἐστίν in v.35. So his prayer does not call his obedience into question." Cranfield.

France comments, "Jesus' appeal to his Father is based on the twin assumptions that on the one hand πάντα δυνατά σοι, but on the other hand God has a will which is to be accepted rather than altered by prayer. It is the blending of these two convictions which gives all prayer its mysterious dynamic, and frustrates any 'quick-fix' approach... Prayer ... consists not in changing God's mind but in finding our own alignment with God's will. Where our desire is not in line with God's purpose, it is the former which must give way: οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλὰ τί σύ. If that is true for ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός (1:11; 9:7), how much more for the rest of us."

Mark 14:37

καὶ ἔρχεται καὶ εὕρισκει αὐτοὺς καθεύδοντας, καὶ λέγει τῷ Πέτρῳ· Σίμων, καθεύδεις; οὐκ ἴσχυσας μίαν ὥραν γρηγορῆσαι;

καθευδω sleep

ἰσχυω be strong, be able

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

"The only answer Jesus receives to his prayer is the hard answer of events. It begins with the failure of the three to watch with him, which drives home his utter aloneness." Cranfield.

Mark 14:38

γρηγορεῖτε καὶ προσεύχεσθε, ἵνα μὴ ἔλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν· τὸ μὲν πνεῦμα πρόθυμον ἢ δὲ σὰρξ ἀσθενής.

"The situation ... gives rise to words of rebuke and warning which no doubt Mark expected his readers to take as applicable to themselves as well as to the first disciples. (Cf. 13:35, 37 for the call γρηγορεῖτε so as not to be found sleeping, 13:36, though the reference there is to an eschatological coming and the sleep is part of a parabolic image.)...

"Editors differ over the punctuation of v. 38: if a comma is placed after γρηγορεῖτε but not after προσεύχεσθε the following *iva* clause becomes the subject of the prayer..., whereas if a comma is placed only after προσεύχεσθε the *iva* clause becomes the purpose of the combined command γρηγορεῖτε *καί* προσεύχεσθε. But since the wakefulness and the prayer are in any case closely linked, the different ways of construing the syntax make little difference to the sense. It was in both wakefulness and prayer that the disciples had failed." France.

ἔλθῃτε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl ἔρχομαι
πειρασμός, ου m period or process of
testing, trial, test, temptation

"The issue of whether 'temptation' or 'testing/trial' best conveys the sense in English is very much the same here as in the ongoing discussion with regard to the translation of the Lord's Prayer, whose terminology of being 'led into' πειρασμός is similar to the locution ἔρχομαι εἰς πειρασμόν here. What confronts the disciples at this point is both 'testing' in the sense of an ordeal which they will prove unable to cope with and 'temptation' in that the urge to run away will put their own safety before loyalty to God and his Son." France.

προθυμός, ου willing
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh
ἀσθενής, ες sick, weak, helpless

The first phrase is perhaps an echo of *ruah nedibah* ('a willing spirit') in Ps. 51:12 (MT 14), which seems to be identified with 'thy Holy Spirit' in the previous verse. The meaning would then be that God's Spirit which is imparted to them is willing, but their human nature is weak. Or it may be that πνεῦμα is here used as in 2:8, 8:12 of the human spirit." Cranfield.

France comments, "R. E. Brown argues that Jesus' words apply to himself as well as to the disciples: the purpose of his prayer has been to overcome his human weakness which shrinks from fulfilling the Father's will."

Mark 14:39

καὶ πάλιν ἀπελθὼν προσηύξατο τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον εἰπὼν.

παλιν again, once more

τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον 'the same thing.'

εἰπὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λεγῶ

τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον εἰπὼν is omitted by D and some Old Latin MSS, probably accidentally.

Mark 14:40

καὶ πάλιν ἐλθὼν εὔρεν αὐτοὺς καθεύδοντας,
ἦσαν γὰρ αὐτῶν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ
καταβαρυνόμενοι, καὶ οὐκ ᾔδεισαν τί
ἀποκριθῶσιν αὐτῷ.

καταβαρυνομαι be very heavy (ὀφθαλμοὶ
κ. be unable to keep one's eyes open)
ᾔδεισαν Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 pl οἶδα
know, understand
ἀποκριθῶσιν Verb, aor pass dep subj, 3 pl
ἀποκρίνομαι answer, say

"Their embarrassed silence recalls that of 9:34; once again the disciples are put in the wrong (cf. also 9:6, where they are silenced not so much by embarrassment as by bewilderment)." France.

Mark 14:41

καὶ ἔρχεται τὸ τρίτον καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς·
Καθεύδετε τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ ἀναπαύεσθε· ἀπέχει·
ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα, ἰδοὺ παραδίδοται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ
ἀνθρώπου εἰς τὰς χεῖρας τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν.

τρίτος, η, ου third
(το) λοιπὸν adv. henceforth, from now on
ἀναπαύω give relief; midd relax, rest

"It is possible to take καθευδετε το λοιπον και αναπαυεσθε as a command, supposing either that by this time Jesus no longer feels the need of their watching with him, since he has placed the cup to his lips, or else that the command is ironical, a rebuke. (If we take the command to be seriously meant, we can explain the immediate change that follows by supposing that after Jesus has told his disciples to sleep on he suddenly sees Judas and his company approaching.) A perhaps better alternative is to take the words as a question (or possibly an exclamatory statement)." Cranfield.

The New Jerusalem Bible translates the phrase, 'You can sleep on now and have your rest. It is all over'.

France comments on the awkwardness of the transition from permission to sleep to the almost immediate command, 'Get up! Let us go!' and writes, "Perhaps we are to assume that after Jesus' first words sounds were heard which indicated the approach of the arresting party and led him to countermand his permission to sleep."

ἀπεχω trans receive in full; intrans. be
distant; midd. abstain from, avoid;
impers. it is enough

Cranfield says that a great variety of explanations of ἀπεχει have been suggested:

- i) 'it is sufficient', 'enough of this!', with reference to the disciples' sleeping;
- ii) 'it is sufficient', with reference to the ironical rebuke (καθευδετε ...);

iii) in a technical commercial sense, 'he (i.e. Judas) has received it (i.e. the promised money);
 iv) in a commercial sense but impersonally, 'it is paid up', so 'the time is up';
 v) 'he (i.e. Judas) is taking possession of (me)'.
 Other meanings are possible if το τέλος is read after ἀπεχει (D and a few other MSS, cf. Lk 22:37), either:
 vi) 'it has its end', 'it is finished';
 vi) 'the end is far away?' (ἀπεχει το τέλος is then a third question, and what follows corrects the disciples' mistaken idea – '(On the contrary) the hour has come!
 Of all of these, Cranfield prefers the first.

ώρα, ας f hour, moment

"ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα picks up not only the ὥρα of v. 35 but the whole sequence of Jesus' passion predictions culminating in the twin announcements of betrayal and of death at the Passover meal: the time of fulfilment has now arrived." France.

παραδίδωμι hand over, deliver up
 χειρ, χειρος f hand, power
 ἁμαρτωλος, ον sinful, sinner

Mark 14:42

ἐγείρεσθε ἄγωμεν· ἰδοὺ ὁ παραδιδούς με ἤγγικεν.

ἐγειρω raise, rise

"ἐγείρεσθε ἄγωμεν in another context might sound like a call to run away, but that cannot be its meaning here, where we have been repeatedly shown that Jesus intends to go through with the events he has predicted, and where the prayer just concluded has led to his acceptance of the Father's will. This is a call to advance rather than to retreat. They are probably simply going to rejoin the other disciples close by, ready to meet the arrival of the expected posse." France.

παραδιδούς Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s
 παραδίδωμι
 ἤγγικεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s ἐγγίζω
 approach, draw near

Mark 14:43-52

Cf. Mt 26:47-56; Lk 22:47-53. Of Jesus' betrayal and arrest, France comments, "Everything is happening ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί, and Jesus is content that it should be so. He who is physically the victim and captive gives the impression of being in a deeper sense in charge of the situation. The disciples, on the other hand, fall to pieces."

Mark 14:43

Καὶ εὐθὺς ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος παραγίνεται Ἰούδας εἷς τῶν δώδεκα καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ ὄχλος μετὰ μαχαιρῶν καὶ ξύλων παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων.

εὐθὺς adv. straightway, immediately

ἔτι still, yet

παραγίνομαι come, arrive, appear

δώδεκα twelve

ὄχλος, ον m crowd, multitude

μαχαιρα, ης f sword

ξύλον, ον n wood, club

"suggests a rabble collected for the purpose, though possibly it would denote some of the Temple police accompanied by slaves of the High Priest." Cranfield.

The last phrase suggests that they represented the entire Sanhedrin.

Mark 14:44

δεδώκει δὲ ὁ παραδιδούς αὐτὸν σύσημον αὐτοῖς λέγων· Ὅν ἂν φιλήσω αὐτός ἐστιν· κρατήσατε αὐτὸν καὶ ἀπάγετε ἀσφαλῶς.

δεδώκει Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

συσσημον, ον n sign, signal

ὅς ἂν whoever

φιλεω love, kiss

κρατεω hold, sieze, arrest

ἀπαγω lead away by force

ἀσφαλῶς adv safely, under close guard

"Judas' instruction to the guards, κρατήσατε αὐτὸν καὶ ἀπάγετε ἀσφαλῶς, suggests that he expected resistance, whether from Jesus or from the other disciples, and the guards duly grab Jesus physically to prevent escape." France.

Mark 14:45

καὶ ἐλθὼν εὐθὺς προσελθὼν αὐτῷ λέγει· Ῥαββί, καὶ κατεφίλησεν αὐτόν.

προσερχομαι come or go to, approach

καταφιλεω kiss

"The compound perhaps indicates a prolonged kissing designed to give all the ὄχλος a chance to see which person is to be seized and to be ready to seize him at once." Cranfield.

Mark 14:46

οἱ δὲ ἐπέβαλαν τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῷ καὶ ἐκράτησαν αὐτόν.

ἐπιβαλλω lay (hands) on

Mark 14:47

εἷς δέ τις τῶν παρεστηκότων σπασάμενος τὴν μάχαιραν ἔπαισεν τὸν δούλον τοῦ ἀρχιερέως καὶ ἀφείλεν αὐτοῦ τὸ ὠτάριον.

παρεστηκότων Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s
 παριστημι and παριστανω stand
 before/by

Identified as Peter in Jn 18:10.

σπασάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s
 σπασομαι draw (of swords)

παιω strike, hit

δουλος, ου m slave, servant

ἀφείλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφαιρω
 take away

ὠταριον, ου n ear

Mark 14:48

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ὡς ἐπὶ ληστήν ἐξήλαθε μετὰ μαχαρῶν καὶ ξύλων συλλαβεῖν με;

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
 ἀποκρῖνομαι see v.40

ληστής, ου m robber, insurrectionist

"ληστής is a pejorative word which no one would be likely to use of himself: its use by Josephus as virtually a technical term for members of the Zealot and related movements is conditioned by his desire to distance himself from such people. The way Jesus uses the word here adds to the irony that he will himself end up crucified between two λησται (15:27), as if he were one of them." France.

ἐξήλαθε verb, aor act indic, 2 pl ἐξερχομαι
 συλλαμβανω sieze, arrest

Mark 14:49

καθ' ἡμέραν ἤμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ διδάσκων καὶ οὐκ ἐκρατήσατέ με· ἀλλ' ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί.

καθ' ἡμέραν 'daily', "suggests a longer ministry in Jerusalem than Mark has recorded and is perhaps evidence in support of the Johannine tradition in this respect." Cranfield.

ἤμην Verb, imperf act indic, 1s εἶμι
 ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts
 διδάσκω teach

κρατεω see v.44

πληρωθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl

πληρωω fulfill, make come true

γραφή, ης f writing, Scripture

γεγονεν should be understood.

Mark 14:50

καὶ ἀφέντες αὐτὸν ἔφυγον πάντες.

ἀφιημι leave, forsake

ἔφυγον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl φευγω
 flee, run away from

"Note the emphatic position of πάντες and the complete forsakeness of Jesus." Cranfield.

Mark 14:51

Καὶ νεανίσκος τις συνηκολούθει αὐτῷ περιβεβλημένος σινδόνα ἐπὶ γυμνοῦ, καὶ κρατοῦσιν αὐτόν,

νεανίσκος, ου m young man

Perhaps a reference to Mark himself, "a kind of modest signature to the gospel." Cranfield.

συνακολουθεω follow, accompany

περιβεβλημένος Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom s
 περιβαλλω put on, clothe, dress

σινδων, ονος f linen cloth

A superior form of outer garment.

γυμνος, η, ον naked, bare, poorly dressed

Cranfield suggests that he may have hurriedly dressed and rushed out.

Mark 14:52

ὁ δὲ καταλιπὼν τὴν σινδόνα γυμνὸς ἔφυγεν.

καταλιπων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

καταλειπω leave (behind), abandon

"The ignominious flight of this anonymous sympathiser serves in the narrative context to underline the complete failure of Jesus' friends to support him when the moment came. Apart from his captors, Jesus leaves Gethsemane alone." France.

Mark 14:53-65

Cf. Mt 26:57-68; Lk 22:54f, 67-71, 63-65.

The account suggests that one/some of the Sanhedrin who were sympathetic to Jesus later informed the disciples of what had occurred. "The proceedings described in vv.55-64 seem to have been not a trial but rather a preliminary inquiry held with a view to the formulation of a charge to bring before Pilate... The production of evidence with regard to the Temple (vv. 57f.) and the High Priest's concentration on 'blasphemy' in v.64 are probably to be explained by the desire of the Jewish leaders to carry as many as possible of the Sanhedrin with them. Evidence of disrespect for the Temple or of blasphemy would be more likely to unite them than evidence of a possible threat to the Roman power. Having once got the members to agree that Jesus deserved to die as a blasphemer, the High Priest presumably then obtained agreement that they would actually proceed before Pilate with a political charge. It is of course clear that it was on a political charge – that of being a messianic pretender – that Jesus was actually condemned and executed by the Romans.

"It seems probable that the meeting described in this section was informal, being held at night in the High Priest's house, and that the Sanhedrin had been summoned for the morning (15:1). If the morning meeting, though the more formal gathering, merely confirmed the decisions reached during the night, it was not unnatural that Mark should mention it only in passing." Cranfield.

Mark 14:53

Καὶ ἀπήγαγον τὸν Ἰησοῦν πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα, καὶ συνέρχονται πάντες οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς.

ἀπαγω see v.44

τον ἀρχιερέα = "Caiphas, who held office A.D. 18-36. The Synoptists do not mention Annas in connection with the Passion." Cranfield.

συνερχομαι come together, assemble

"The full phrase οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς (cf. 8:31; 11:27; 14:43) underlines the solemnity and official nature of the occasion, and the addition this time of πάντες further increases the tension by contrasting the lone figure of Jesus with the assembled representatives of official Judaism. The comments above on the less-than-formal nature of the proceedings have suggested perhaps that not all seventy-one members of the Sanhedrin might have been assembled at this time of night, or that members may continue to have arrived during the proceedings (though, of course, it is possible that the High Priest having planned to have Jesus in custody at this time, had issued a 'three-line whip' in advance). In that case Mark's πάντες achieves a literary effect rather than numerical exactitude." France.

Mark 14:54

καὶ ὁ Πέτρος ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ ἕως ἔσω εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως καὶ ἦν συγκαθήμενος μετὰ τῶν ὑπηρετῶν καὶ θερμαινόμενος πρὸς τὸ φῶς.

μακροθεν adv far off, at/from a distance

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany

ἕως up to

ἔσω adv & prep inside, within

ἕως ἔσω 'right inside'

αὐλή, ης f court, courtyard, palace

"The palace would be built round the αὐλή an open courtyard, which would be entered through the προαυλιον mentioned in v.68. Jn 18:15f explains how Peter was able to get so far." Cranfield.

συγκαθιμαι sit with

ὑπηρετης, ου m attendant, servant

θερμαινομαι warm oneself, keep warm
φως, φωτος n light

Here used "in the sense of πυρ, fire, as sometimes in classical Greek, but the idea of the light shed by the fire and illuminating Peter is in mind." Cranfield.

Mark 14:55

οἱ δὲ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ὅλον τὸ συνέδριον ἐζήτουν κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μαρτυρίαν εἰς τὸ θανατῶσαι αὐτόν, καὶ οὐχ ἠῤῥισκον·

όλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire
συνεδριον, ου n Sanhedrin (the highest Jewish council in religious and civil matters)

Cranfield considers that this is "possibly a loose way of saying 'all the members of the Sanhedrin present'." (See note at v.53.).

ζητεω seek, look for

μαρτυρια, ας f testimony, evidence

εἰς το + infinitive occurs in Mk only here. It is frequent in Paul (e.g. Rom 1:11, 20; 3:26), but also occurs in Mt., Lk, Acts, Heb, 1 Peter.

θανατωω kill, put to death

θανατωσαι αὐτόν here = 'accomplish his death'. "The expression ἐζήτουν μαρτυρίαν εἰς τὸ θανατῶσαι αὐτόν conveys two significant impressions of the nature of this hearing. Firstly it was, as we have noted above, a hearing in search of a charge, not a trial based on an already formulated accusation. Secondly, while the charge was not yet decided, the verdict was! In putting the matter in this way Mark has already declared the 'trial' to be more a kangaroo court than an impartial judicial hearing. The objective of killing Jesus already declared in 14:1 rules this gathering, so that whatever procedure is followed will be designed to produce the required capital charge to bring before the Roman prefect." France.

Mark 14:56

πολλοὶ γὰρ ἐψευδομαρτύρουν κατ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἵσαι αἱ μαρτυρίαι οὐκ ἦσαν.

ψευδομαρτυρεω give false evidence or testimony

ἴσος, η, ον equal, the same, in agreement

"The agreement of two or three witnesses was required (cf. Numb 35:30; Deut 17:6; 19:15)." Cranfield.

Mark 14:57

καὶ τινες ἀναστάντες ἐψευδομαρτύρουν κατ' αὐτοῦ λέγοντες

ἀνιστημι rise, stand up

ψευδομαρτυρεω see v.56

Mark 14:58

ὅτι Ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ὅτι Ἐγὼ καταλύσω τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον τὸν χειροποίητον καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἄλλον ἀχειροποίητον οἰκοδομήσω·

καταλύω destroy, tear down, do away with
ναος, ου m temple

The sanctuary proper rather than ἱερον which includes the entire temple complex.

χειροποιητος, ον made by human hands

Cf. Acts 7:48; 17:24.

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
ἀχειροποιητος, ον not made by human hands
οικοδομεω build

Cf. 15:29; Jn 2:19-22; Acts 6:14. "It seems clear that the charge, whatever its legal status, was an important element in the cumulative case against Jesus, and it was this rather than his alleged blasphemy which was remembered by the bystanders at the cross (15:29). The seriousness of such a charge may be judged by remembering the experience of Jeremiah, who barely escaped with his life when accused of predicting the temple's destruction, and of Uriah, who did not escape (Je 26:7-24)...

There is evidence that some Jews in the first century believed that the existing temple was to be replaced with a new one in the last days. And while this was normally regarded as the work of God himself, there were some who thought that the work of rebuilding would be the task of the Messiah. In that case the next issue raised in v. 61 is ... a logical extension of the idea implied in the temple charge that Jesus is making claims which are appropriate only to the Messiah." France.

Mark 14:59

καὶ οὐδὲ οὕτως ἴση ἦν ἡ μαρτυρία αὐτῶν.

οὕτως and οὕτω adv. thus, in this way
ἴσος, η, ον see v.56

Mark 14:60

καὶ ἀναστὰς ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς εἰς μέσον ἐπηρώτησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν λέγων· Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδέν; τί οὗτοί σου καταμαρτυροῦσιν;

μεσος, η, ον middle; ἐν μ., εἰς μ. in the middle, among

ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question
ἀποκρῖνομαι answer, reply, say
οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing;
οὐδεν adv not at all
καταμαρτυρεω testify against

οὐκ ἀποκρινη ... καταμαρτυρουσιν "is better taken as two questions (question mark after οὐδεν): to take it as a single question is unsatisfactory, for after ἀποκρινεσθαι οὐδεν an indirect question introduced by τί would be very harsh – one would expect rather to have προς." Cranfield.

Mark 14:61

ὁ δὲ ἐσιώπα καὶ οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο οὐδέν. πάλιν ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς ἐπηρώτα αὐτὸν καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ;

σιωπαω be silent, be quiet, be calm
ἀποκρῖνομαι answer, reply, say

Cf. Is. 53:7.

παλιν again, once more

"The fact that the High Priest asked this question implies that by this time the Jewish authorities had come either to suspect that Jesus might, or to know that he did, regard himself as the Messiah. It is conceivable that Judas had betrayed the secret which Jesus had bidden his disciples to keep to themselves (8:30); but quite apart from that possibility, it is highly probable that, in spite of his injunctions to secrecy and his carefulness to avoid making any overt messianic claim, and in spite of the fact that many things about him were inconsistent with what was expected of the Messiah, some of the things which he had done and said would have raised in the minds of the chief priests and scribes the question whether perhaps behind his authoritative manner there might be an implicit claim to be the Messiah." Cranfield.

France comments that the question is intended to "draw out the basis of the authority implicit in Jesus' public words and actions since coming to Jerusalem (and indeed before), together with the special status which he hinted at by casting himself in the role of the only son of the owner of the vineyard. While Mark has recorded no open claim by Jesus to be Messiah or Son of God, in these deeds and words there is enough fuel for such a charge. It is also possible that part of Judas's offer to the chief priests had been to brief them also on Jesus' more private teaching to his disciples... The High Priest's question is therefore well framed to draw into the open what has hitherto been a matter of indirect implications."

εὐλογητος, η, ον blessed, praised

Mark 14:62

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· Ἐγὼ εἰμι, καὶ ὄψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν καθήμενον τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.

"With this verse we come to the christological climax of the gospel... The time for concealment is over, and the truth must be declared firmly and openly to those who presume to set themselves as judges over him." France.

ὄψεσθε Verb, fut act indic, 2 pl ὄραω see δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξιά right hand καθῆμαι sit, sit down, live νεφέλη, ης f cloud οὐρανός, ου m heaven

Cf Ps 110:1; Dan 7:13. "The two texts are woven together in that the Daniel introduction about 'seeing the Son of Man' precedes the imagery from Ps. 110, which is then filled out with the substance of the Daniel vision. But while the words (except for the 'euphemism' τῆς δυνάμεως ...) are drawn from these two passages, the total effect is greater than the sum of the parts, and puts both texts in a new light... Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark does not specify *when* they will see, but in the comments that follow I shall argue that he has in mind the same immediacy which is expressed in Matthew's ἀπ' ἄρτι and Luke's ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν. That is, after all, what the second-person address would naturally imply: the vision will be that of those who hear Jesus speaking, not of some future generation. It is only the mistaken presupposition that these words have to do with the parousia which has led anyone to think otherwise (and to try to evade the force of the very clear time indications in Matthew and Luke with indefensible 'translations' such as NIV's 'in the future')... Both passages in fact express in their distinctive ways the same concept of a sovereign authority. This is obvious in the case of the psalm, 'sitting at the right hand of [God]', but if Dn 7:13 is read in context it conveys the same message, in that the one who comes before God in the clouds of heaven is immediately given 'dominion and glory and kingship' which are both universal and unending (on the interpretation of Jesus' references to Dn 7:13 see above on 8:38 and further comments at 13:26). Dn 7:13-14 is, in other words, no less than Ps 110:1 an enthronement oracle, and it is that universal and unending dominion which Jesus here declares that he himself will now receive – and they will see it.

"How they will see it is not spelled out. But when the prisoner about to be condemned and executed declares that his judges will see his God-given authority, we are clearly in the realm of vindication, a vindication which was to begin with Jesus' resurrection and according to Luke to be more visibly confirmed by his ascension (seen, however like his resurrection not by the Sanhedrin but by his disciples)... That sovereignty began to become visible outside the group of disciples with the powerful growth of the NT church, and in a negative sense in the demise of Jerusalem and its temple as the focus of God's rule on earth (in connection with which we have already seen Dn 7:13 deployed in 13:26; see notes there). All this offers a similar range of interpretation to what we found in the 'seeing' in 9:1, and again here it is in connection with 'power'. We need not be more specific, since Mark is not, but within this complex of events it would certainly be possible for Jesus' judges within their lifetime to see that the 'Messiah' they thought they had destroyed had in fact been vindicated and exalted to the place of supreme authority." France.

Mark 14:63

ὁ δὲ ἀρχιερεὺς διαρρήξας τοὺς χιτῶνας αὐτοῦ λέγει· Τί ἐτι χρεῖαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων;

διαρρήξας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s διαρρηγνυμι and διαρησσω tear, rip χιτων, ονος m tunic, shirt; pl. clothes

An indication that he regarded what he had heard as blasphemy, cf. 2 Ki 18:37; 19:1.

ἐτι still, yet χρεῖα, ας f need, want μαρτυς, μαρτυρός dat pl μαρτυσιν m witness

Mark 14:64

ἠκούσατε τῆς βλασφημίας· τί ὑμῖν φαίνεται; οἱ δὲ πάντες κατέκριναν αὐτὸν ἔνοχον εἶναι θανάτου.

βλασφημία, ας f blasphemy φαίνω shine; midd. and pass. appear κατέκριναν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl κατακρινω condemn, pass judgement ον ἔνοχος, ον liable, answerable, guilty εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἰμι θάνατος, ου m death

"Mark probably uses this form of expression rather than κατέκριναν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ (or ἀποθανεῖν), because he is aware that this was not a formal trial and that they were not pronouncing a sentence but rather giving a legal opinion." Cranfield.

Mark 14:65

καὶ ἤρξαντό τινες ἐμπτύειν αὐτῷ καὶ περικαλύπτειν αὐτοῦ τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ κολαφίζειν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγειν αὐτῷ· Προφήτευσον, καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται ῥαπίσασιν αὐτὸν ἔλαβον.

ἤρξαντο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 pl ἀρχω midd begin
ἐμπτω spit on
περικαλυπτω cover (over), blindfold
προσωπον, ου n face
κολαφιζω beat, strike
προφητεω prophesy

The various longer texts are best explained as expansions of an original simple Προφήτευσον which was felt to be too obscure; they reflect various aspects of the fuller versions in Mt 26:68 and Lk 22:64.

France comments, "Mark does not spell out just how Jesus is expected to prophesy ... but the expansion in both Matthew and Luke with τίς ἐστὶν ὁ παῖσας σε; indicates a much more specific focus, the ability of this alleged Messiah to identify those who hit him."

"The reader is not likely to miss the irony of the sarcastic demand that Jesus 'prophesy' when the way they are treating him is in fact itself a direct fulfilment of what he has earlier predicted as his own fate in Jerusalem (just as the incident immediately following in vv 66-72 will fulfil exactly another more recent prediction). France.

ὑπηρετης, ου m attendant, servant
ῥαπισμα, τος n a blow (with a stick); slap (with the hand)

ῥαπισμασιν ... ἔλαβον "seems to be a vulgarity, possibly due to Latin influence." Cranfield.

Mark 14:66-72

Cf. Mt. 26:69-75; Lk 22:56-62.

Mark 14:66

Καὶ ὄντος τοῦ Πέτρου κάτω ἐν τῇ αὐλῇ ἔρχεται μία τῶν παιδισκῶν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως,

κατω down, below, beneath
αὐλη, ης f see v.54
εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one, a
παιδισκη, ης f maid, slave-girl

"The female diminutive form παιδίσκη may have the effect of emphasising her social insignificance – hardly a person for Peter to be afraid of. But in the NT (where the masculine παιδισκος is not used) παιδίσκη does not generally have clear diminutive force, and can serve merely as the feminine form of παῖς (see Lk 12:45)." France.

Mark 14:67

καὶ ἰδοῦσα τὸν Πέτρον θερμαινόμενον ἐμβλέψασα αὐτῷ λέγει· Καὶ σὺ μετὰ τοῦ Ναζαρηνοῦ ἦσθα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ·

ἰδοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s ὄρω see, observe
θερμαινομαι see v.54
ἐμβλέψασα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s ἐμβλεπω look straight at, consider

After ἰδοῦσα, suggests a more searching look.

ἦσθα Verb, imperf indic, 2 s (one of two forms) εἶμι

"The order του Ναζαρηνου ... του Ἰησου is perhaps contemptuous." Cranfield.

Mark 14:68

ὁ δὲ ἠρνήσατο λέγων· Οὔτε οἶδα οὔτε ἐπίσταμαι σὺ τί λέγεις, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἔξω εἰς τὸ προαύλιον καὶ ἀλέκτωρ ἐφώνησεν.

ἠρνήσατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s ἀρνεομαι deny, disown

"denied (it)"; but possibly the reader is intended to think also of the meaning 'denied (him)'. Cranfield.

οὔτε not, nor (οὔτε ... οὔτε neither ... nor)
οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know
ἐπίσταμαι know, understand

Cranfield lists a number of ways of understanding Peter's words:

- i) I neither know nor understand what you say (mean).
- ii) I neither know him, nor do I understand what you say (mean).
- iii) I neither know nor understand this that you say. What do you mean?
- iv) I neither know nor am acquainted with him. What do you mean?

France suggests the repetition is "a rhetorical device to strengthen the force of the denial."

ἔξω adv. out, outside, away
προαυλιον, ου n gateway, forecourt
ἀλεκτωρ, ορος m cock, rooster
φωνεω call, call out

"After προαυλιον the words και ἀλεκτωρ ἐφώνησεν should be read, though omitted by x B L W c sy^s. The omission of the words is probably to be explained as an assimilation to Mt. and Lk., in which only one cock-crowing is mentioned." Cranfield.

Mark 14:69

καὶ ἡ παιδίσκη ἰδοῦσα αὐτὸν ἤρξατο πάλιν λέγειν τοῖς παρεστῶσιν ὅτι Οὗτος ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐστίν.

ἰδοῦσα see v.67

ἀρχω midd begin

πάλιν again, once more

παρεστῶσιν Verb, perf act ptc, m & n dat pl
παριστημι and παριστανω stand
before/by

"There is some variation between the four gospels as to who challenged Peter." Cranfield.

France comments, "The identification of Peter this time as ἐξ αὐτῶν, not simply as having been with Jesus, suggests that while it was only Jesus whom they had been sent to arrest, his followers were perceived as a coherent group of troublemakers. Their rapid flight from Gethsemane, and the subsequent account by John of their meeting behind closed doors 'for fear of the Jews', confirm that they felt themselves to be a suspect group."

Mark 14:70

ὁ δὲ πάλιν ἠρνεῖτο. καὶ μετὰ μικρὸν πάλιν οἱ παρεστῶτες ἔλεγον τῷ Πέτρῳ· Ἀληθῶς ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶ, καὶ γὰρ Γαλιλαῖος εἶ καὶ ἡ λαλιά σου ὁμοιάζει·

ἄρνεομαι see v.68

παρεστῶτες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl
παριστημι
ἀληθως adv truly, in truth

Cranfield considers that "the balance of probability seems to be in favour of the reading, και ἡ λαλια σου ὁμοιάζει after Γαλιλαιος εἰ in spite of the impressive witnesses for omission." In this view he has little support from other commentators.

ὁμοιάζει Verb, pres act indic, 3 s ὁμοιάζω
to resemble

Verse 71

ὁ δὲ ἤρξατο ἀναθεματίζειν καὶ ὀμνῆσαι ὅτι Οὐκ οἶδα τὸν ἄνθρωπον τοῦτον ὃν λέγετε.

ἀναθεματίζω curse, invoke a curse on oneself, bind with a solemn vow

France thinks that the most likely meaning is that Peter cursed *Jesus*. He writes, "In this context the natural object to be understood is Jesus, so that Mark portrays Peter as voluntarily doing what Pliny was later informed that 'real Christians' could not be compelled to do (Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96.5), cursing Jesus. This understanding of the text, which Christian interpreters naturally find unwelcome (hence translations such as RSV, NIV), is the most probable sense of Mark's words, though he has avoided too blatant offence by leaving the object of the verb unstated."

ὀμνῆσαι Verb, pres act infin ὀμνῶ and ὀμνῶμι swear, make an oath

Mark 14:72

καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκ δευτέρου ἀλέκτωρ ἐφώνησεν· καὶ ἀνεμνήσθη ὁ Πέτρος τὸ ῥῆμα ὡς εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι Πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι δις τρίς με ἀπαρνήσει, καὶ ἐπιβαλὼν ἔκλαιεν.

εὐθως adv. straightway, immediately
δευτερος, α, ον second; ἐκ δ. a second time

ἐκ δευτέρου is omitted by several MSS, probably as part of harmonisation with the other gospels which record only one crowing (see note on v. 68). Similar variants and omissions occur with δις later in the verse.

ἀνεμνήσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s

ἀναμνησκω remind; pass remember

ῥημα, ατος n word, thing

πριν and πριν ἢ before

δις twice

τρὶς three times

ἀπαρνήσει Verb, fut midd dep indic, 2 s

ἀπαρνεομαι

ἐπιβαλλω lay (hands) on, throw or place on, beat against, fall to

"Many different interpretations have been suggested; 'when he thought thereon'; 'covering his head'; 'drawing his cloak about his face'; 'dashing out'; 'throwing himself on the ground'; 'set to and'. The last, which is Moulton's suggestion, is perhaps the most probable." Cranfield.

France comments, "Mark's choice of idiom must remain obscure, but the essential sense is not in doubt: Peter's bold denials give way to remorse as he realises that he has fallen into precisely the trap of which Jesus has warned him. With that Mark's account is complete, and we are left to guess how the bystanders reacted to this apparent confession of guilt and how Peter escaped from his compromising situation in the προαύλιον of the High Priest's house."

κλαω weep, cry

"ἐκλαυσεν (κ* A* C) looks like simple harmonisation to the tense in Matthew and Luke (which is in any case more natural in context). ἤρχατο (D Θ) is probably an attempt to put into better Greek the assumed meaning of the odd participle ἐπιβαλῶν ... in the same way as most of the versions have rendered it." France.

Mark 15:1-15

Cf. Mt 27:1f., 11-26; Lk 23:1-5, 17-25. The Jewish hearing was not a formal trial but a search for a plausible charge to bring against Jesus. Now a political charge is presented to Pilate.

Mark 15:1

Καὶ εὐθὺς πρῶτ' συμβούλιον ποιήσαντες οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς μετὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ὅλον τὸ συνέδριον δῆσαντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπήνεγκαν καὶ παρέδωκαν Πιλάτῳ.

εὐθὺς see 14:72

πρῶτ' adv early morning, in the early morning, morning

At, or even before, daybreak.

συμβουλιον, ου n council

The reading ποιήσαντες is better attested than ἐτοιμασαντες. Cranfield comments: "While συμβουλιον ἐτοιμασαντες would mean 'having prepared (reached) a decision', συμβουλιον ποιήσαντες must mean 'having held a council (consultation)'. The reading ἐτοιμασαντες gets rid of the reference to a second meeting and so brings Mk in line with Mt." The reading ἐποίησαν (D Θ and many versions) improves the syntax.

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

συνεδριον, ου n Sanhedrin

"Since the three groups just mentioned make up the membership of the Sanhedrin, this phrase cannot designate an additional group. It serves rather to emphasise (more strongly than πάντες of 14:53) that this is now a full gathering of the Sanhedrin, competent to draw up a case to present to Pilate. It is likely that members have been arriving through the night hearing, so that by now they are a sufficient quorum (and Mark's phrase suggests more than a mere quorum) to ratify formally the results of the night's proceedings." France.

δεω bind, tie

ἀπήνεγκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἀποφερω take (away), carry (away)

παραδιδωμι hand, deliver up

"The verb παραδιδωμι is used in its natural sense without any special theological nuance, but the alert reader may remember Jesus' words in 10:33, παραδωσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. The verb παραδιδωμι which came to our attention in the passion predictions of 9:31 and 10:33-34 recurs several times in Mark's narrative, not only for Judas's action (14:10, 11, 18, 21, 41, 42, 44) but also for the subsequent stages of Jesus' progress towards the cross here and in vv. 10 and 15 which mark the progressive fulfilment of those predictions." France.

"Mark ... assumes his readers will know that he [Pilate] was the Procurator... Pilate would probably be resident in the fortress of Antonia (which overlooked the Temple area) during the Passover. Another view is that he would reside in Herod's palace." Cranfield.

Mark 15:2

καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτὸν ὁ Πιλάτος· Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτῷ λέγει· Σὺ λέγεις.

ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question

"Pilate perhaps has the charge in writing before him; at any rate he is using the terms of the Sanhedrin's accusation, and asking Jesus whether he admits its truth. The verse makes clear what the charge was (cf. v.32)." Cranfield. France comments on the phrase ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, "It was an appropriate 'translation' of Jesus' messianic claim into language which a Roman governor would understand and which he would immediately recognise as potentially treasonable."

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

Jesus' reply is not a denial but a guarded affirmation – 'yes, but not in the way you think.'

Mark 15:3

καὶ κατηγοροῦν αὐτοῦ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς πολλά.

κατηγορεω accuse, bring charges against

"πολλα is here more probably the direct object of κατηγοροῦν ... than used adverbially." Cranfield.

Mark 15:4

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος πάλιν ἐπηρώτα αὐτὸν λέγων· Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδέν; ἴδε πόσα σου κατηγοροῦσιν.

παλιν again, once more

οὐδέν Adjective, n nom & acc s οὐδεις,
 οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing; οὐδεν
 adv not at all
 ποσος, η, ον how much(?), how many(?)

Mark 15:5

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς οὐκέτι οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίθη, ὥστε
 θαυμάζειν τὸν Πιλάτον.

οὐκετι adv no longer, no more
 ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
 ἀποκρινομαι

"Cf. 14:61. It is not impossible that Jesus himself may have had Isa 53:7 in mind." Cranfield.

ὥστε so that, with the result that
 θαυμάζω wonder, be amazed

Cf. Is 52:15 (LXX). "θαυμάζω often carries a note of admiration, and Pilate's subsequent attempts to secure Jesus' release suggest that he was impressed by the contrast between the priest's vehemence and Jesus' silence." France.

Mark 15:6

Κατὰ δὲ ἑορτὴν ἀπέλυνεν αὐτοῖς ἓνα δέσμιον
 ὃν παρηγοῦντο.

ἑορτή, ης f festival, feast
 ἀπολυω release, set free
 δεσμιος, ου m prisoner
 παραιτεομαι ask for, request

While there is no independent evidence for this specific custom there are several recorded incidents of Roman officials releasing prisoners at the request of and to placate the Jews. France comments, "It is not improbable that Pilate found a similar concession politically expedient; the annual release of a single prisoner is a very modest concession compared with many political amnesties. If there was no such custom, it is not easy to see where such a well-established part of the Christian passion tradition might have been derived from. For the people's right to choose, cf. the custom at gladiatorial contests of asking the people whether a given contestant should live or die."

Mark 15:7

ἦν δὲ ὁ λεγόμενος Βαραββᾶς μετὰ τῶν
 στασιαστῶν δεδεμένος οἵτινες ἐν τῇ στάσει
 φόνον πεποιήκεισαν.

ὁ λεγόμενος Βαραββᾶς "The only other place in the N.T. where ὁ λεγόμενος is used in an exactly analogous way seems to be Lk 22:47. Elsewhere it is used to attach a title or alternative name to a personal name already mentioned (e.g. Mt 27:22) or to attach a name to a common noun or equivalent (e.g. Mt 26:3; Jn 9:11). So, while (in view of Lk. 22:47) this expression cannot be called impossible it is certainly unusual. Moreover, in Mt. 27:16f. Θ f1, sy^{s, pal} attest the addition of Ἰησοῦν, a reading which Origen mentions but rejects on theological grounds. It seems extremely probable that the addition should be read in Mt. 27:16f., and, as this passage in Mt. is dependent on Mk, it is probable that Mk originally had Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγ. B., and that Ἰησοῦς was omitted for the sake of reverence." Cranfield.

στασιαστής, ου m rebel, insurrectionist

"The other two λησταί who were subsequently crucified with Jesus (v. 27) probably belonged to the same group, left behind when Barabbas alone was released. Thus Jesus found himself in compromising company; the occurrence of a στάσις recently enough for its perpetrators to be still in prison awaiting execution means that this was a dangerous time for anyone to be charged in Jerusalem with claiming to be ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; no doubt the priests had reckoned with that." France.

δεω bind, tie

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

στασις, εως f riot, revolt, rebellion

φονος, ου m murder, killing

πεποιήκεισαν Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 pl
 ποιεω

Mark 15:8

καὶ ἀναβάς ὁ ὄχλος ἤρξατο αἰτεῖσθαι καθὼς
 ἐποίει αὐτοῖς.

ἀναβαίω go up, come up, ascend

"The sudden arrival (ἀναβάς) of the crowd is surprising, and the verb ἀναβαίω less natural than Matthew's συναγομαι ἀναβοήσας (a verb Mark does not use elsewhere) therefore looks like an 'improved' reading, substituting the crowd's vocal activity, which is the subject of the rest of the sentence, for its physical movement." France.

To the fortress of Antonia?

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

"Probably supporters of Barabbas who had come to ask for his release." Cranfield.

ἀρχω midd begin
αἰτεῖσθαι Verb, pres midd infin αἰτεω ask;
midd ask for oneself, request

"After αἰτεῖσθαι there is an ellipse: the meaning is 'asked (him to do) as ...'." Cranfield.

Mark 15:9

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς λέγων· Θέλετε ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων;

ἀπεκρίθη see v.5.
θελω wish, will
ἀπολυω see v.6.

"Perhaps Pilate was misled by the charge against Jesus into imagining that he was a more popular and significant figure in Jerusalem than was really the case. In terms of popular support in relation to Barabbas there was no contest. Thus the only time Pilate takes the initiative in this scene, he is unsuccessful. It is others who are calling the tune." France.

Mark 15:10

ἐγίνωσκεν γὰρ ὅτι διὰ φθόνον παραδεδώκεισαν αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς.

ἐπιγινωσκω know, perceive
φθονος, ου m envy, jealousy, spite
παραδεδωκεισαν Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 pl
παραδιδωμι

On the presumption that the two shared the name 'Jesus', Cranfield comments that this "May then be understood as explaining why it was that Pilate thought the crowd was asking for the release of Jesus of Nazareth – it was natural for him to think this, since he knew that Jesus was popular and that it was on account of their jealousy of his popularity and influence that the chief priests had delivered him up."

Mark 15:11

οἱ δὲ ἀρχιερεῖς ἀνάσεισαν τὸν ὄχλον ἵνα μᾶλλον τὸν Βαραββᾶν ἀπολύσῃ αὐτοῖς.

ἀνασειω incite, stir up

Cranfield thinks that the crowd was composed of Barabbas' supporters who had come to lobby for his release. The members of the High Priest's party were simply agitating and encouraging the crowd to call for the release of the one for whom they had already come. France comments, "The only other NT occurrence of ἀνασειω in the sense of to 'stir up' or 'incite' is, significantly, in the parallel passage in Lk 23:5, as the priests' version of what *Jesus* has been doing with the people."

μαλλον adv more; rather

Mark 15:12

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος πάλιν ἀποκριθεὶς ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Τί οὖν θέλετε ποιήσω ὃν λέγετε τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων;

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

On the textual variants in this verse Cranfield comments: "The great majority of MSS. and versions read θελετε before ποιησω, but it is omitted by x B C W Δ Ψ 1 13 *al* co geo, and should probably not be read. With regard to ὃν λεγετε, though there is strong support for its omission, the balance is perhaps in favour of retaining it."

On Pilate's question Cranfield says, "Did he hope that the crowd would beg for the release of Jesus of Nazareth as well? Did he intend in that case to make a show of generosity by releasing two prisoners instead of one? Or did he hope to persuade them to alter their request?" France comments, "In offering an amnesty for ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων in v. 9 Pilate must have thought that some at least of the crowd would welcome Jesus under that title. Now that his offer has been rejected he reminds the crowd that it was their priests who had introduced the title; so if they do not want their 'king' released, what do they want?"

Mark 15:13

οἱ δὲ πάλιν ἔκραξαν· Σταύρωσον αὐτόν.

παλιν again, once more

Cranfield considers that παλιν here means 'thereupon'.

κραζω cry out, call out
σταυρωω crucify

"Crucifixion was the normal Roman penalty for provincial political rebels (otherwise it was normally reserved for slaves except in very extreme cases), and so the form of execution demanded is consistent with the accusation that Jesus was claiming to be a βασιλεὺς, and indeed was the only realistic option if Pilate were to declare him guilty of the charge... The direct singular imperative σταύρωσον, twice repeated (contrast Matthew's third-person imperative σταυρωθήτω), emphasises that this can only be by Pilate's personal decision." France.

Mark 15:14

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Τί γὰρ ἐποίησεν κακόν; οἱ δὲ περισσῶς ἔκραξαν· Σταύρωσον αὐτόν.

κακος, η, ον evil, wrong, harm

"The question serves here primarily to provide the reader with further confirmation that Jesus' execution was a miscarriage of justice, in that even the 'impartial' Roman governor by whose verdict he was condemned to death was not persuaded that he was really guilty." France.

περισσως all the more, even more; even louder

Mark 15:15

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος βουλόμενος τῷ ὄγλῳ τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιῆσαι ἀπέλυσεν αὐτοῖς τὸν Βαραββᾶν, καὶ παρέδωκεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν φραγελλώσας ἵνα σταυρωθῇ.

βουλομαι want, desire, wish, intend, plan

Stronger than θελων.

ἱκανος, η, ον worthy, sufficient, much ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω

"τῷ ὄγλῳ το ἱκανον ποιησαι ... is a Latinism (= *satis facere*). It is used in the LXX in Jer 31:30 in a similar sense." Cranfield.

φραγελλωω beat with a whip

"A Latin loanword. Φραγελλωω is a transliteration of *flagello*. The fearful scourging it denotes was the normal prelude to crucifixion (cf. Josephus, *B.J.* ii:306, 308; v:449; Livy, 33:36)." Cranfield. France comments, "This too, like the 'handing over' to Gentiles, has been part of Jesus' prediction in 10:34."

σταυρωθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s σταυρωω

Mark 15:16-20

"After the flogging mentioned in v. 15 Jesus must already have been a pitiable sight, probably barely able to stand or walk and certainly incapable of resistance even if he had wished. In any case, he is on his way to execution, so there is nothing to curb their enjoyment of this opportunity to humiliate the 'king of the Jews', and the contempt for Jews in general which is amply illustrated in literature of the Roman empire is eagerly focused on this one ludicrous example of a Jew who had dared to challenge the imperial power. It is not an attractive scene." France.

Mark 15:16

Οἱ δὲ στρατιῶται ἀπήγαγον αὐτὸν ἔσω τῆς αὐλῆς, ὃ ἔστιν πραιτώριον, καὶ συγκαλοῦσιν ὅλην τὴν σπεῖραν.

στρατιωτης, ου m soldier

ἀπαγω lead away by force, lead

ἔσω i) adv & prep with gen inside, within

Cranfield thinks αὐλη here means 'Palace'.

πραιτωριον, ου n headquarters or residence (of an army or governor)

συγκαλεω call together

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

σπειρα, ης f cohort (tenth part of a Roman legion having about 600 men)

"If σπεῖρα is used here in its technical military sense for a cohort (as in Acts 10:1; 27:1), there could have been six hundred men involved, though the size of a cohort varied; but the Greek word is not necessarily so specific (we need not believe that it took six hundred men to arrest Jesus, Jn 18:3, 12), and could mean simply that all the soldiers there on duty gathered round." France.

Mark 15:17

καὶ ἐνδιδύσκουσιν αὐτὸν πορφύραν καὶ περιτιθέασιν αὐτῷ πλέξαντες ἀκάνθινον στέφανον·

ἐνδιδύσκω dress or clothe in

πορφυρα, ας f purple cloth

"The Mt. parallel probably interprets correctly by *χαλαμυδα κοκκινην*, i.e. 'a scarlet military cloak'. For *purpura* as the characteristic of kings cf., e.g., Virgil, *Georg.* 2:495 (*purpura regum*); of the Emperor, cf., e.g., Ammianus Marcellinus, 21:9.8. The soldier's cloak was perhaps used as the nearest substitute for the *purpura* available." Cranfield.

περιτιθημι put around, put on

πλεκω weave, twist together

ἀκανθινος, η, ον of thorns

στεφανος, ου m wreath, crown

"They probably had in mind the royal διαδημα." Cranfield.

Mark 15:18

καὶ ἤρξαντο ἀσπάζεσθαι αὐτόν· Χαῖρε, βασιλεῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων·

ἀσπαζομαι greet

χαρω rejoice; imperat used as a greeting

βασιλεῦ Noun, voc s βασιλευς, εως m king

"Cf. the Latin greeting *Ave, Caesar*." Cranfield.

Mark 15:19

καὶ ἔτυπον αὐτοῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν καλᾶμῳ καὶ ἐνέπτυν αὐτῷ, καὶ τιθέντες τὰ γόνατα προσεκύνουν αὐτῷ.

τυπω beat, strike

κεφαλη, ης f head

καλαμος, ου m reed, rod, cane

ἐμπτω spit on

τιθημι place, set

γονυ, γονατος n knee

προσκυνεω worship, fall at another's feet

Cranfield suggests, "Perhaps 'did homage to him'; but perhaps more than ordinary homage is meant, 'a mockery in terms of Caesar worship, or Oriental ideas of kingship' (Taylor)."

Mark 15:20

καὶ ὅτε ἐνέπαιζαν αὐτῷ, ἐξέδυσαν αὐτὸν τὴν πορφύραν καὶ ἐνέδυσαν αὐτὸν τὰ ἱμάτια τὰ ἴδια. καὶ ἐξάγουσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα σταυρώσωσιν αὐτόν.

ὅτε conj when

ἐμπαιζω ridicule, make fun of

ἐκδύω strip, take

ἐνδύω dress, clothe

ἱματιον, ου n garment, clothing

ἐξάγω lead or bring out

σταυρώσωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl

σταυρωω crucify

Mark 15:21-41

Cf. Mt 27:32-56; Lk 23:26-49.

Mark 15:21

Καὶ ἀγγαρεύουσιν παράγοντά τινα Σίμωνα Κυρηναῖον ἐρχόμενον ἀπ' ἀγροῦ, τὸν πατέρα Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ Ρούφου, ἵνα ἄρῃ τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ.

ἀγγαρεύω force, press into service

παραγω pass by

Κυρηναῖος, ου m a Cyrenian

ἀγρος, ου m field, farm, countryside

ἄρῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s αἶρω take, take up

σταυρος, ου m cross

"It was normal for the condemned himself to carry the cross-beam of his cross to the place of execution. Presumably Jesus had carried it for a while, but had been physically unable to carry it further. Otherwise the impressing of someone else to carry it for him would be surprising... It is implied that the two names are well known to Mark's readers. Apparently Alexander and Rufus (perhaps Simon too) were Christians. Is this Rufus perhaps the same as the one mentioned in Rom 16:13? The two sons are mentioned only by Mark. The account does not encourage any speculation on the feelings of Simon, but it is natural to wonder whether this experience led to his conversion." Cranfield.

France comments, "It would be inappropriate to the narrative context to suggest that Simon's 'taking up the cross' (the same verb αἶρω is used here as in 8:34) in itself symbolises his personally entering a life of discipleship, but Mark's readers may well have found in his action a striking illustration of the costly identification with a suffering Messiah which Jesus' earlier saying called for."

Mark 15:22

καὶ φέρουσιν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸν Γολγοθᾶν τόπον, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεούμενον Κρανίου Τόπος.

φέρω bring, carry, bear, lead

τοπος, ου m place

μεθερμηνεω translate

κρανιον, ου n skull

"The origin of the name is unknown: the nineteenth-century identification of 'Gordon's Calvary' north of the city assumed that it was a hill which was so named because it looked like a skull, but it is at least as likely that the name derived from its use as a place of execution and burial." France.

Mark 15:23

καὶ ἐδίδουν αὐτῷ ἐσμυρνισμένον οἶνον, ὃς δὲ οὐκ ἔλαβεν.

ἐδίδουν Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl

διδωμι

ἐσμυρνισμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc &

n nom/acc s σμυρνίζω flavour with

myrrh

οἶνος, ου m wine

ἔλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαμβανω

"It was a Jewish custom, based on Prov 31:6, to give wine drugged with myrrh to those who were about to be executed, in order to dull their senses. His refusal to drink may be explained as due to his vow recorded in 14:25. Another motive was probably also present – the will to avoid nothing of the cup which his Father had given him." Cranfield. France comments that if this was a drink given to dull pain then, "despite the unmarked change of subject, we are to understand here the action of sympathisers." He suggests it may have been offered by the sympathetic women of Jerusalem mentioned in Lk 23:27-31.

Mark 15:24

καὶ σταυροῦσιν αὐτὸν καὶ διαμερίζονται τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ, βάλλοντες κληρὸν ἐπ' αὐτὰ τίς τί ἄρῃ.

σταυρωω see v.20

διαμερίζω divide, distribute

ἱματιον, ου n see v.20

βαλλω throw, throw down

κληρος, ου m lot (of something thrown or drawn to reach a decision)

ἄρη see v.21

"It was customary for the condemned to be crucified naked, and his clothes were a recognised perquisite of his executioners. The words are reminiscent of Ps 22:18." Cranfield.

Mark 15:25

Ἦν δὲ ὥρα τρίτη καὶ ἐσταύρωσαν αὐτόν.

ὥρα, ας f hour, period of time
τρίτος, η, ου third

I.e. about 9 a.m. France comments, "Mark's abruptly paratactic summary introduces the first of a series of specific time markers into the crucifixion story, which have the effect of dividing it into three three-hour periods." France comments on the difficulty of harmonising the synoptic chronology with John's assertion that when Pilate passed sentence on Jesus ὥρα ὡς ἕκτη (Jn 19:14). A few MSS read ὥρα ἕκτη in this verse – an obvious attempt at harmonisation.

Mark 15:26

καὶ ἦν ἡ ἐπιγραφή τῆς αἰτίας αὐτοῦ ἐπιγεγραμμένη· Ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

ἐπιγραφή, ης f inscription, superscription
αἷτια, ας f reason, accusation
ἐπιγεγραμμένη Verb, perf pass ptc, f nom s
ἐπιγραφῶ write on or in

"It was the custom of the Romans to display a notice indicating the crime for which the person was being executed." Cranfield. Normally, such a notice was "tied round their neck or carried before them on the way to execution, and while there is no evidence outside the NT for this placard being attached to the cross there is nothing implausible in this, since the writing was intended to be seen as widely as possible." France.

Mark 15:27

καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ σταυροῦσιν δύο ληστές, ἓνα ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ ἓνα ἐξ εὐωνύμων αὐτοῦ.

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυσιν two
ληστής, ου m robber, insurrectionist

Cf. the note on v. 7.

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξιά right hand
εὐωνυμός, ον left (hand side)

"ἓνα ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ ἓνα ἐξ εὐωνύμων αὐτοῦ is a cumbersome way to say 'between', and Mark probably expects his reader to remember the request of James and John to sit at Jesus' right and left in his glory (10:37, 40). If so, there is scope for ironical reflection of the sort of δόξα Jesus now enjoys and on the quality of those who share it with him, and also perhaps on the fact that now the time has come James and John are not there to fulfil their boast of 10:39." France.

Mark 15:28

"καὶ ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφή ἢ λεγουσα· Καὶ μετὰ ἀνομῶν ἐλογίσθη is added in many Greek MSS., and in lat syr^p bo (a few MSS.), but it is not in κ A B C D k sy^s sa bo (most MSS.), and should not be read." Cranfield. The words, which occur only in comparatively late witnesses, would seem to be a gloss reflecting Lk 22:37.

Mark 15:29

Καὶ οἱ παραπορευόμενοι ἐβλασφήμουν αὐτὸν κινῶντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν καὶ λέγοντες· Οὐὰ ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ οἰκοδομῶν ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις,

παραπορευομαι pass by
βλασφημεῶ speak against, slander, insult

In the more general sense of verbal abuse.

κινεῶ move, shake

κεφαλή, ης f head

οὐὰ Aha! Ah!

Cf. Lam 2:15; Jer 18:16; Ps 22:7.

καταλυῶ destroy, tear down

ναός, ου m temple

οἰκοδομεῶ build, build up

τρεις, τρια gen τριῶν dat τρισιν three

Mark 15:30

σῶσον σεαυτὸν καταβὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ.

σῶσον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s σῶζω
save, rescue

σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself

καταβαίνω come or go down, descend

Mark 15:31

ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ἐμπαίζοντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων ἔλεγον· Ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι·

ὁμοίως likewise, in the same way
ἐμπαίζω ridicule, make fun of

The same verb used of the Roman soldiers in v. 20.

ἀλληλῶν, οἰς, οὐς reciprocal pronoun one
another

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/herself, itself
 δυναμαι can, be able to

"It is precisely because he does not come down from the cross that the mockery will prove in time to have missed the mark. If he had saved himself, he could not have saved others. Mark's readers may well be reminded of Jesus' own paradoxical words about losing one's ψυχή in order to save (σῶζω) it (8:35)." France. Here also, perhaps even here especially, he is the Lord of Glory. No one took his life from him, he laid it down (John 10:17,18).

Mark 15:32

ὁ χριστὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ καταβάτω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύσωμεν. καὶ οἱ συνεσταυρωμένοι σὺν αὐτῷ ὠνειδίζον αὐτόν.

καταβάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s
 καταβαινω

ἴδωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ὄραω see
 πιστεωω believe (in), have faith (in)

"Cf. Jn 6:30; also Mk 8:11f. It was the same demand for a σημειον, a compelling proof, that Jesus had all along had to refuse. It had to be refused now, because the world's salvation depended on his staying on the cross and drinking the cup his Father had given him to the dregs. But, even apart from that reason, to give them in their unbelief the sort of 'seeing' they were demanding would have been to make impossible a real 'believing'. See on 4:11f." Cranfield.

συνεσταυρωμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom
 pl συσταυροομαι be crucified together
 (with someone else)

ὠνειδίζω reproach, insult, abuse

"The mockery of all three groups is expressed in the imperfect tense, suggesting that it may have gone on for some time." France.

Mark 15:33-39

France comments, "In the previous section Jesus has been the passive object of crucifixion and mockery. Now as the passion narrative reaches its climax in his death, while the themes of mockery and perhaps cruelty continue in vv. 35-36, they are overshadowed by the renewed focus on Jesus himself. The unnatural darkness tells us that this is a crucifixion unlike any other, and prepares us to hear Jesus' dreadful last shout from the cross, and then to witness the striking manner in which he died. His death is as extraordinary as his life, and its far-reaching implications are underlined by the physical symbol of the tearing of the temple curtain and by the astonished declaration of the centurion, whose use of the title υἱὸς θεοῦ rounds off the revelation of the true significance of Jesus which began in Mark's introductory statement in 1:1. The title has come to the surface at several points in the narrative, but this is the first time it has been uttered with conviction (as opposed to the High Priest's scepticism, 14:61) by a human witness. The identity of that witness, a pagan soldier without the benefit either of Jewish theological education or of having been a disciple of Jesus, fits well with Mark's persistent theme of the inability of either the Jewish leadership or even Jesus' own disciples to recognise who he is, and prompts Mark's readers to reflect that what has now taken place is to be the basis for good news εἰς πάντα αἰ ἔθνη (13:10), εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον (14:9).

"In v. 39, then, Mark's account of the hapless and humiliating death of Jesus unexpectedly reaches a triumphant christological climax. But this seems the more incongruous in that this final scene is dominated not by a shout of triumph but by what sounds like a cry of despair. Mark has chosen to record as Jesus' last words (though not the last words about Jesus) not a confident address to God as Ἀββὰ but a tortured cry of abandonment. Perhaps he knew no tradition of other less devastating words from the cross such as Luke and John record. But in recording this last utterance he has set up the supreme paradox of his paradoxical story. The two verses 34 and 39 thus create the two poles of a mind-stretching antinomy, which Mark leaves unresolved for his readers to work at. Nor will he offer much help with its resolution in the rest of the narrative: the message that the crucified Jesus is alive again (16:6-7) will indeed assure us that all is now well, that whatever was the reality underlying Jesus' cry of despair was not the end of the story. But that cry in itself remains unexplained, unless it be by reflection back over a narrative in which Jesus' death has been repeatedly declared to be the goal of his ministry, in which Scripture must be fulfilled, and the purpose of which has been hinted at in tantalisingly brief statements about a ransom for many (10:45) and about the blood of the covenant (14:24). There are raw materials here for constructing a theological understanding of Jesus' death within which the stark words of v. 34 may find a place, but Mark gives us no help in constructing it. His theology of the cross remains expressed in paradox."

Mark 15:33

Καὶ γενομένης ὥρας ἕκτης σκότος ἐγένετο ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν γῆν ἕως ὥρας ἐνάτης.

ὥρα, ας f see v.25

ἕκτος, η, ον sixth

σκοτος, ους n darkness

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all

γῆ, γης f earth, land

ἐνατος, η, ον ninth

I.e. from noon until 3 p.m. France comments, "Darkness during the day is a recognised mark of God's displeasure and judgment (Dt 28:29; Am 8:9; Je 15:9, and cf. on 13:24 above for other such 'cosmic' judgment language in Is 13:10 etc.), and the supreme example of that phenomenon in the OT, the darkness over Egypt which was the penultimate plague at the time of the first Passover (Ex 10:21-23), is echoed in Mark's language (LXX Ex. 10:22: ἐγένετο σκότος ... ἐτι πᾶσαν γῆν Αἰγύπτου). That parallel suggests what is in any case more probable, that γῆ is here to be understood in its more limited sense of the land of Judaea rather than of a worldwide darkness." France.

Mark 15:34

καὶ τῇ ἐνάτῃ ὥρᾳ ἐβόησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς φωνῇ μεγάλῃ· Ἐλωὶ ἔλωϊ λεμὰ σαβαχθάνι; ὃ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον Ὁ θεός μου ὁ θεός μου, εἰς τί ἐγκατέλιπές με;

βοᾶω call, cry out, shout

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

"In v. 37, even at the moment of Jesus' death, he will again speak of φωνῇ μεγάλῃ. Jesus is not going out with a wimper but in full possession of his faculties. The loudness of the cry also serves to underline the depth of the emotion it expresses." France.

ελωι Aramaic word ελωι My God

λεμα (Aramaic word) why?

σαβαχθανι (Aramaic word) you have forsaken me

μεθερμηνευω translate

ἐγκατέλιπες Verb, aor act indic, 2 s

ἐγκαταλειπω forsake, abandon

France comments, "The variety of readings of the Hebrew/Aramaic text of Ps 22:1 quoted in both Matthew and Mark leaves room for considerable doubt on which form Mark used and what Hebrew/Aramaic words he was transliterating; the κ text printed in UBS⁴/NA²⁷ reflects a general agreement that Mark's quotation is intended to be in Aramaic, and that 'Hebraising' readings are due to assimilation to Matthew (though Matthew's ἡλί, often taken to be Hebrew, is in fact the form found in the extant targum of Ps 22:1)... In the Greek rendering it is more likely that the word order ἐγκατέλιπές με, which conforms to LXX Ps 21[22]:2[1], would be altered to agree with Matthew's order με ἐγκατέλιπες than the other way round. The substitution of ὠνειδισιάς με in some Western texts may be an attempt to avoid the theological embarrassment of Jesus' desertion by God."

Cf. Ps 22:1. "Though repeated naturally in Aramaic in the earliest Church, the cry was probably originally uttered in Hebrew; for the Hebrew *eli eli* would be more easily mistaken for the name of the prophet... The cry is to be understood in the light of 14:36; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13. The burden of the world's sin, his complete self-identification with sinners, involved not merely a felt, but a real, abandonment by his Father. It is in the cry of dereliction that the full horror of man's sin stands revealed. But the cry also marks the lowest depth of the hiddenness of the Son of God – and so the triumphant *τετελεσται* of Jn 19:30 is, paradoxically, its true interpretation. When this depth had been reached, the victory had been won." Cranfield.
France comments, "It is of course true that Ps. 22, having begun on a note of despair, concludes twenty verses later in hope and thanksgiving, but Jesus echoed not the latter part of the psalm but its opening, and to read into these few tortured words an exegesis of the whole psalm is to turn upside down the effect which Mark has created by this powerful and enigmatic cry of agony. Six hours after he was placed on the cross, and after three hours of darkness, Jesus felt abandoned by God."

Mark 15:35

καί τινες τῶν παρεστηκότων ἀκούσαντες ἔλεγον· Ἴδε Ἡλίαν φωνεῖ.

παρεστηκότων Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s
παριστημι and παριστανω stand
before/by

Ἡλιας, ου m Elijah
φωνεω call, call out

Mark 15:36

δραμῶν δέ τις καὶ γεμίσας σπόγγον ὄξους περιθεις καλάμῳ ἐπότιζεν αὐτόν, λέγων· Ἄφετε ἴδωμεν εἰ ἔρχεται Ἡλίας καθελεῖν αὐτόν.

δραμων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s τρεχω
run

γεμιζω fill

σπογγος, ου m sponge

ὄξος, ους n sour wine

περιθεις Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

περιτιθημι put on

καλαμος, ου m reed, rod, cane

ποτιζω give to drink

"The word ὄξος here, together with ποτιζω, echoes LXX Ps 68[69]:22[21], which, as we have noted above regarding v. 23, speaks of a hostile act and mentions poison in parallel to the ὄξος. If, as his wording suggests, Mark intended such an allusion here (though not in v. 23), it seems that under the influence of the psalm passage he is putting a more sinister construction on what was in itself a harmless and even kindly act, though done in a context of mockery. He does not tell us at this time whether Jesus accepted the offer, though the imperfect ἐπότιζεν might perhaps be read like the ἐδίδου of v. 23 as conative, implying that the attempt was unsuccessful." France.

ἀφιημι leave

ἴδωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ὁραω see

'let him alone; let us see ...'

καθελεῖν Verb, aor act infin καθαιρω take
down

Mark 15:37

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀφεις φωνὴν μεγάλην ἐξέπνευσεν.

ἀφεις Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἀφιημι

Here 'let [out]', i.e. 'having uttered'

ἐξέπνευσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐκπνεω
expire, die

Of the content of the cry, Mark says nothing. France, however, comments, "The recognition in Jesus of a υἱὸς θεοῦ would follow more naturally from a 'noble' or peaceful death than from one in unrelieved depression, which was surely familiar enough to a centurion used to officiating at crucifixions."

Mark 15:38

καὶ τὸ καταπέτασμα τοῦ ναοῦ ἐσχίσθη εἰς δύο ἀπ' ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω.

καταπετασμα, τος n curtain

ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary, inner part
of Jewish Temple

Cf. Heb 6:19; 9:3; 10:20.

ἐσχίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s σχιζω
split, tear, separate

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυσιν two

ἄνωθεν from above

κάτω down, below

The death of Jesus opened the way into the presence of God. France refers to the tearing of the curtain as a 'divine riposte' to the mockery of the chief priests in vv 31-32, mockery they add to the taunts of the crowd concerning the supposed claim of Jesus that he would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days. The destruction of the temple has begun and the creation of the 'new and living way' will follow.

Mark 15:39

ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ κεντυρίων ὁ παρεστηκὼς ἐξ ἐναντίας αὐτοῦ ὅτι οὕτως ἐξέπνευσεν εἶπεν· Ἀληθῶς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος υἱὸς θεοῦ ἦν.

ἰδὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω

κεντυριων, ωνος m centurion

παρεστηκως Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s

παριστημι see v.35

ἐναντιος, α, ον against, contrary to; ἐξ ἐ. opposite

οὕτως and οὕτω οὗτος thus, in this way

Cranfield states that "There is strong textual evidence for the inclusion of κράζας before ἐξέπνευσεν, and it should perhaps be read." κράζας is included in the majority of witnesses but omitted from the Alexandrian. France comments, "It is perhaps marginally more likely that κράζας was added (perhaps under the influence of Mt 27:50) because it was felt that an original οὕτως needed to be clarified, and that οὕτως then dropped out of a few texts (but not the majority) because the phrase had become too cumbersome."

ἐξέπνευσεν see v.37

ἀληθως adv truly, in truth

"What exactly *the centurion* meant by υἱὸς θεοῦ we cannot be sure. Quite possibly he used the term in a Gentile sense – 'demi-god', 'hero'. If so, then this exclamation, like the use of Βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων in vv.9, 12, 18 26, and of ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ Βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ in v.32, and the assertion Ἄλλους ἐσωσεν in v.31, is an unwitting proclamation of the truth. For *Mark* it is clearly important that at this point, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the truth was publicly declared. A theme of the whole gospel (see on 1:1) here comes to its triumphant conclusion." Cranfield.

Mark 15:40-41

France argues that these verses are better linked with what follows than what precedes – they are integral to the burial narratives and resurrection appearances. On the women France comments, "The appearance at this point in Mark's narrative of a group of women, who will be the narrative focus of the rest of the story, marks a remarkable shift in the gospel's emphasis. The reader of Mark's gospel alone would have concluded up to this point that the movement which Jesus began was an all-male movement. There had been no mention of supporting women as in Lk 8:2-3, nor of specific women associates like Martha and Mary (Lk 10:38-42). Women have appeared in Mark's narrative as the recipients of Jesus' ministry of deliverance, but the nearest we have seen to a woman follower has been the woman who anointed Jesus in 14:3-9, and she was an anonymous figure who featured only in that one incident. It is only at this point, when all Jesus' male followers (except the enigmatic Joseph of Arimathea, if he is to be reckoned as a supporter) have fallen by the wayside, that Mark lets us know that all the time there has been a female element to Jesus' entourage, who are now ready to pick up where the men have left off. The three women named are representative of a wider circle of female followers (γυναῖκες ... ἐν αἰς ...) whose close association with the disciple group is marked by the verbs ἀκολουθεῖω and διακονέω, even though the term μαθητής has been reserved only for the (all-male) Twelve; and in addition there is a wider circle of ἄλλαι πολλαί who have been part of the group coming south to Jerusalem. Only now, when the women come to the centre of the stage for the closing phase of the narrative, does Mark reveal the mixed nature of Jesus' entourage in the Galilean period..

"The important role played by these women in the closing stages of Mark's narrative (and indeed their earlier role in Galilee, now for the first time revealed) is a pointer to something new in the movement Jesus has begun which contrasts strongly with the male domination of the society of his (and Mark's) time. When all the male disciples have deserted, the women are still there faithful to the last. And it will be to them first that the message of the resurrection is entrusted. In a society which gave no legal status to the testimony of women ... everything will nevertheless come to depend on their witness to what they have seen and heard."

Mark 15:40

Ἦσαν δὲ καὶ γυναῖκες ἀπὸ μακρόθεν θεωροῦσαι, ἐν αἷς καὶ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία ἡ Ἰακώβου τοῦ μικροῦ καὶ Ἰωσήτος μήτηρ καὶ Σαλώμη,

γυνή, αἰκος f woman
μακροθεν adv far off, at/from a distance
θεωρεω see, watch, observe

Mark 15:41

αἱ ὅτε ἦν ἐν τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ ἠκολούθουν αὐτῷ καὶ δηκόνουν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἄλλαι πολλαὶ αἱ συναναβᾶσαι αὐτῷ εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα.

ὅτε conj when
ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany
διακονεω serve, wait on, care for

Cf. Lk 8:3.

ἄλλος, ἡ, ο another, other
συναναβᾶσαι Verb, aor act ptc, f nom pl
συναναβαινω come up together with

"This information enables us to fill in the background to the account of Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem in 11:1-10, particularly the presence of ὄχλος ἰκανός (10:46) of Galileans who came up with Jesus from Jericho and who were προάγοντες καὶ ἀκολουθοῦντες as they approached the city, shouting their support for Jesus as the coming king (11:8-10). Their enthusiasm has survived sufficiently to keep them even at this gruesome scene, standing apart from the mocking citizens of Jerusalem." France.

Mark 15:42

Cf. Mt 27:57-61; Lk 23:50-56. Those crucified were normally either left to decompose on the cross, taken down and left in a heap for scavengers to dispose of or were buried unceremoniously in a mass grave. France comments, "Honourable burial in a proper rock tomb was highly unlikely, and in this case it depended on the goodwill of a wealthy and influential member of the Sanhedrin, who apparently dissented from his colleagues' verdict on Jesus and used his social position to gain permission for an individual burial. Joseph of Arimathea thus enters the Christian tradition not simply as a well-disposed outsider like Simon of Cyrene or the centurion, but as at least a potential disciple (see below for the significance of the description προσδεχόμενος τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ), and the fact that Mark can introduce him in this commendatory way suggests that he may have remained in good standing with the church within which Mark obtained his information."

Mark 15:42

Καὶ ἤδη ὀψίας γενομένης, ἐπεὶ ἦν παρασκευή, ὃ ἐστὶν προσάββατον,

ἤδη adv now, already
ὀψια, ας f evening

"For the wide range of times to which ὀψίας γενομένης may apply, see on 6:47; 14:17. If the death of Jesus took place soon after 3 pm (see on v. 37), Joseph's initiative would fit within the period of roughly three hours between that and sunset, since the object of his request is to have the body buried before the sabbath begins." France.

ἐπεὶ since, because
παρασκευη, ης f day of preparation (before a sacred day)
προσαββατον, ου n the day before the Sabbath, Friday

Mark 15:43

ἐλθὼν Ἰωσήφ ὁ ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας εὐσχήμων βουλευτής, ὃς καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν προσδεχόμενος τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, τολμήσας εἰσῆλθαι πρὸς τὸν Πιλάτον καὶ ἠτήσατο τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ.

εὐσχημων, ον gen ονος respected, of high standing
βουλευτης, ου m council member (of the Sanhedrin)
προσδεχομαι wait for, expect

Cf. Lk 2:25.

τολμαω dare, be brave

'plucked up courage and ...'

αἰτεω ask; midd ask for oneself, request
σωμα, τος n body

"Whatever the impression we may have gained from the last few chapters, not everyone in Jerusalem, and indeed not everyone in the Sanhedrin, had decided against Jesus." France.

Mark 15:44

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος ἐθαύμασεν εἰ ἤδη τέθνηκεν, καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τὸν κεντυρίωνα ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτὸν εἰ πάλαι ἀπέθανεν·

θαυμαζω wonder, be amazed
τέθνηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s θνησκω die; perf be dead
προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself, summon
ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question
παλαι adv long ago, all this time

Some MSS seek to smooth out Mark's inelegant idiom εἰ πάλαι by substituting εἰ ἤδη – as already used in the previous clause.

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνησκω die

I.e. he asked how long ago Jesus had died.

Mark 15:45

καὶ γνοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ κεντυρίωνος ἐδώρησατο τὸ πτώμα τῷ Ἰωσήφ.

γνοὺς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s γινωσκω
ἐδώρησατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
δωρομαι give
πτώμα, τος n body, corpse

Mark 15:46

καὶ ἀγοράσας σινδὸνα καθελῶν αὐτὸν ἐνείλησεν τῇ σινδόνι καὶ ἔθηκεν αὐτὸν ἐν μνημείῳ ὃ ἦν λελατομημένον ἐκ πέτρας, καὶ προσεκύλισεν λίθον ἐπὶ τὴν θύραν τοῦ μνημείου.

"Apart from the need to 'take Jesus down' from the cross, this verse describes a normal, respectful if hurried burial." France.

ἀγοραζω buy, redeem
σινδων, ονος f linen cloth (for clothing or burial)
καθελων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
καθαιρω see v.36
ἐνείλησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐνείλω
wrap in
ἔθηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s τιθημι place
μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb
λελατομημένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n nom/acc s λατομew cut, hew (of rock)
πετρα, ας f rock, solid rock

I.e. probably a substantial family tomb, with space for several bodies. Matthew says it was Joseph's own.

προσκυλιω roll against or to
λιθος, ου m stone
θυρα, ας f door, gate

Mark 15:47

ἡ δὲ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία ἡ Ἰωσήτος ἐθεώρουν ποῦ τέθειται.

θεωρω see, watch, observe, notice
ποῦ interrogative adverb where

"Two of the women who were introduced as witnesses of Jesus' death are now also witnesses of his burial... They were there not just to watch, however, but so as to know where to return to after the sabbath." France.

Mark 16:1-8

Cf. Mt 28:1-10; Lk 24:1-11; Jn 20:1-10.
"One feature of all four gospel accounts which goes a long way towards authenticating the story as a whole is the prominence of women; for this is a feature which the early Church would not be likely to invent.

"As far as the Markan pericope of the Empty Tomb is concerned, the naturalness of the first part (esp. v.3), the simplicity and restraint of vv 5-8, and the surprising feature of the women's silence all point to authenticity. It reads like an eye-witness's account, not a dramatisation of a religious conviction." Cranfield.

Mark 16:1

Καὶ διαγενομένου τοῦ σαββάτου Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Ἰακώβου καὶ Σαλώμη ἠγόρασαν ἀρώματα ἵνα ἐλθοῦσαι ἀλείψωσιν αὐτόν.

διαγενομένου Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m & n gen s διαγινομαι pass (of time)
ἀγοραζω buy
ἀρωμα, ατος n aromatic spice or oil

I.e. they bought the spices/oils on Saturday night after sunset.

ἐλθοῦσαι Verb, aor act ptc, f nom pl ἐρχομαι
ἀλείψωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ἀλειφω
anoint

"The fact that they thought in terms of anointing ... suggests that, if, as 15:41 suggests, they have been with Jesus on the way to Jerusalem and so have heard his passion predictions, they have simply not taken seriously his expectation of rising again after three days." France.

Mark 16:2

καὶ λίαν πρῶτὴ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων ἔρχονται ἐπὶ τὸ μνημεῖον ἀνατείλαντος τοῦ ἡλίου.

λιαν adv exceedingly, very, quite
πρῶτὴ adv early morning, in the early morning, morning

τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων 'on the first day of the week.' The phrase "occurs in all the gospel accounts of the discovery of the empty tomb (Mt 28:1; Lk 24:1; Jn 20:1, 19); it had apparently become an essential element in the story, important as the basis for the choice of this as the Christian holy day (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2)." France.

μνημειον, ου n see 15:46
ἀνατείλαντος Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s
ἀνατελλω rise, dawn
ἡλιος, ου m the sun

I.e. immediately after sunrise.

Mark 16:3

καὶ ἔλεγον πρὸς ἑαυτάς· τίς ἀποκυλίσει ἡμῖν τὸν λίθον ἐκ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου;

ἀποκυλιω roll away

For the final phrase, cf. 15:46. "Suggests a vividly remembered anxiety." Cranfield

Mark 16:4

καὶ ἀναβλέψασαι θεωροῦσιν ὅτι ἀποκεκύλισται ὁ λίθος, ἦν γὰρ μέγας σφόδρα.

ἀναβλέψασαι Verb, aor act ptc, f nom pl
ἀναβλεπω look up
θεωρεω see, observe, notice
ἀποκεκύλισται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s
ἀποκυλιω
σφόδρα very much, very

Mark 16:5

καὶ εἰσελθοῦσαι εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον εἶδον νεανίσκον καθήμενον ἐν τοῖς δεξιοῖς περιβεβλημένον στολὴν λευκὴν, καὶ ἐξεθαμβήθησαν.

εἰσελθοῦσαι Verb, aor act ptc, f nom pl
εἰσερχομαι enter, go in

"In front of the entrance to the sepulchre (θυρα του μνημειου in v.3) there may have been a forecourt such as is mentioned in the Mishnah (e.g. *Ohol.* 15:8). The entrance was probably small and low, so that one would have to stoop to look inside or to enter; the chamber itself perhaps six or seven feet square and the same height; the place where the body had rested a bench against one of the walls or a shelf or trough let into the wall." Cranfield.

εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω see
νεανίσκος, ου m young man

"Clearly an angel is meant (cf. Mt 28:2,5; Lk 24:4,23; Jn 20:12 ...). It may be suggested that the purpose of the angel's presence at the tomb was to be the link between the actual event of the Resurrection and the women. Human eyes were not permitted to see the event of the Resurrection itself. But the angels as the constant witnesses of God's action saw it... By means of the angel's testimony the event of the Resurrection in its infinite graciousness towards men and in its infinite mystery and majesty was made known to men." Cranfield.

καθημαι sit, sit down
δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξια right hand
περιβεβλημένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n nom/acc s περιβαλλω put on, dress
στολή, ης f robe, long robe
λευκός, η, ον white, shining

Mark perhaps intends to remind us of the appearance of Jesus' clothing at his transfiguration, cf. 9:3.

ἐξεθαμβήθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
ἐκθαμβεομαι be greatly surprised or alarmed

Mark 16:6

ὁ δὲ λέγει αὐταῖς· Μὴ ἐκθαμβεῖσθε· Ἰησοῦν ζητεῖτε τὸν Ναζαρηνὸν τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον· ἠγέρθη, οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε· ἴδε ὁ τόπος ὅπου ἔθηκαν αὐτόν·

ἐκθαμβεῖσθε Verb, pres pass imperat, 2 pl
ἐκθαμβεομαι

"The word of reassurance (even if unsuccessful, v. 8) is a common feature of angelic appearances; cf. Dn 10:12; Mt 28:5; Lk 1:13, 30; 2:10; Acts 27:24." France.

ζητεω seek, search for, look for
ἐσταυρωμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc s
σταυρωω crucify
ἠγέρθη Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω
raise

"While the mere use of the passive here must not be pressed, since sometimes the passive of ἐγειρω is used without any proper passive force (e.g. 2:12), it is clear that the N.T. characteristically refers to the Resurrection as God's act (e.g. Acts 3:15; 4:10; Rom 4:24; 8:11; 10:9; 1 Cor 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor. 4:14; 1 Peter 1:21)." Cranfield.

ὧδε adv here, in this place
τοπος, ου m place
ὅπου adv. where
ἔθηκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s τιθημι place

It is worth including here a lengthy quotation from Cranfield who writes: "If ... we accept the view that the belief that the tomb had been found empty goes back to the earliest days of the Church, how are we to account for it? B.H.Streeter rejected the idea that the body of Jesus was raised; but he thought that the evidence for the tomb's being empty was convincing. His explanation was that some unknown person had removed the body. Kirsopp Lake, on the other hand, thought that the women went by mistake to the wrong tomb (a not very likely hypothesis quite apart from 15:47) and a young man directed them to the right one with the words, 'He is not here: behold, there is the place where they laid him' (rejecting ἡγερθη as a later addition and reading ἐκεῖ after ἰδε with D W Θ 565). An obvious difficulty of both explanations is that, if the empty tomb played any part in, or was implied by, the earliest preaching, one would have expected the truth to have emerged. Why did not the unknown person confess? Why did not the young man explain? That someone that knew where the body was should have kept his secret to himself seems equally improbable, whether he was friendly disposed towards the disciples, or hostile, or neutral. And, had the Jewish authorities been informed, they would have been in a difficult position to destroy the new movement without difficulty, whereas, if any of the disciples had been told, it would mean that the Christian Church was founded upon a deliberate deception – a supposition not easy to reconcile with what we know of the early Church."

Mark 16:7

ἀλλὰ ὑπάγετε εἶπατε τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ ὅτι Προάγει ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν· ἐκεῖ αὐτὸν ὄψεσθε, καθὼς εἶπεν ὑμῖν.

ὑπάγω go, go one's way, depart
εἶπατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl λεγω

"The special mention of Peter is best explained as due to the fact that after his denials of Jesus he needed a special assurance that he had not been cast off. Had it been intended to mark him out as chief of the apostles, he would probably have been mentioned before the others rather than after them." Cranfield.

προάγω intrans go before or ahead of
ἐκεῖ there, in that place
ὄψεσθε Verb, fut act indic, 2 pl ὁραω see

Cf. 14:28. "When the angel sent the disciples into Galilee, he did so, I think, in order that Christ might make himself known to a greater number of persons; for we know that he lived a long time in Galilee. He intended also to give his followers greater liberty, that by the very circumstances of their retirement they might gradually acquire courage. Besides, by their being accustomed to the places, they were aided in recognising their Master with greater certainty." Calvin.

Mark 16:8

καὶ ἐξεληθοῦσαι ἔφυγον ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου, εἶχεν γὰρ αὐτὰς τρόμος καὶ ἔκστασις· καὶ οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπαν, ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ.

ἐξεληθοῦσαι Verb, aor act ptc, f nom pl
ἐξέρχομαι
ἔφυγον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl φευγω
flee, run away from
εἶχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἔχω
τρόμος, ου m trembling
ἐκστασις, εως f amazement
φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

Cf. Mt 28:8; Lk 24:9. "Presumably Mark meant his words to be understood in a limited sense – their silence was only for a little while... It is not surprising that the women were afraid and rendered speechless for a while. Mark's account (more emphatically than any of the others) underlines the mystery and awe-fulness of the Resurrection and warns against all attempts to sentimentalise or domesticate or reduce to the measures of our mental capacity or emotional convenience the decisive intervention of God." Cranfield.

France, while agreeing that verses 9ff. below are not part of the original gospel, nevertheless argues that Mark did not intend his account to finish here for the following reasons:

- i) The phrase ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ is an inelegant way to conclude a narrative
- ii) The suggestion that the women told no one anything, while appropriate as a temporary silence, is hardly appropriate as a permanent silence. All Mark's readers would have known that they *did* go on to tell the other disciples what they had seen and heard. Mark surely intended to narrate something of that.
- iii) The words of the angel, and Jesus' earlier words recorded in 14:28, point to appearances to the disciples in Galilee. Surely Mark intended to recount something of this.

France concludes that Mark was either prevented from finishing his account by some circumstance (perhaps even death), or that the original ending was lost very early on before copies had been made. The omission or loss led to the later additions.

However, it may be that this is precisely how Mark intended to end his account. It is appropriate to a gospel which has traded heavily on paradox that it ends on such a paradoxical note. If it is asked, 'how can the story be left there?' the answer is that it has not been. The story continues in the life of the community for whom Mark wrote and in the community of the contemporary church.

The text of the closing verses of Mark

The textual evidence relating to Mark 16:9-20 is summed up as follows in Metzger's *Textual Commentary*.

"Four endings of the Gospel according to Mark are current in the manuscripts.

"(1) The last twelve verses of the commonly received text of Mark are absent from the two oldest manuscripts (Ⲙ and B), from the Old Latin codex Bobiensis (it^k), the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, about one hundred Armenian manuscripts, and the two oldest Georgian manuscripts (written AD 897 and AD 913). Clement of Alexandria and Origen show no knowledge of the existence of these verses, furthermore Eusebius and Jerome attest that the passage was absent from almost all Greek copies of Mark known to them. The original form of the Eusebian sections (drawn up by Ammonius makes no provision for numbering sections of the text after 16:8. Not a few manuscripts which contain the passage have scribal notes stating that older Greek copies lack it, and in other witnesses the passage is marked with asterisks or obeli, the conventional signs used by copyists to indicate a spurious addition to a document.

"(2) Several witnesses, including four uncial Greek manuscripts of the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries (L Ψ 099 0112), as well as Old Latin k, the margin of the Harclean Syriac, several Sahidic and Boharic manuscripts, and not a few Ethiopic manuscripts, continue after verse 8 as follows (with trifling variations): "But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this Jesus himself sent out by means of them, from east to west the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation." All of these witnesses except it^k also continue with verses 9-20.

"(3) The traditional ending of Mark, so familiar through the AV and other translations of the Textus Receptus, is present in the vast number of witnesses, including A C D K X W Δ Θ Π Ψ 099 0112 f¹² 28 33 *al.* The earliest patristic witnesses to part or all of the long ending are Irenaeus and the Diatessaron. It is not certain whether Justin Martyr was acquainted with the passage; in his *Apology* (I.45) he includes five words that occur in a different sequence in ver.20...

"(4) In the fourth century the traditional ending also circulated, according to testimony preserved by Jerome, in an expanded form, preserved today in one Greek manuscript. Codex Washingtonianus includes the following after ver.14: "And they excused themselves, saying, 'This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who does not allow the truth and power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits [*or*, does not allow what lies under the unclean spirits to understand the truth and power of God]. Therefore reveal thy righteousness now' – thus they spoke to Christ. And Christ replied to them, 'The term of years of Satan's power has been fulfilled, but other terrible things draw near. And for those who have sinned I was delivered over to death, that they may return to the truth and sin no more, in order that they may inherit the spiritual and incorruptible glory of righteousness which is in heaven.'""

In addition to the textual evidence, it is quite apparent that the vocabulary and style of verses 9-20 are quite different from the rest of Mark's Gospel. France comments, "It certainly reads very differently from Mark's lively and expansive narrative, and contains a notable concentration of words not used elsewhere in Mark. In particular, both v. 20 and the main part of the Shorter Ending read more like pious committee summaries of the post-Easter task and experiences of the church than like the way Mark writes his gospel."

Cranfield sums up the evidence by saying, of these verses, "They were probably attached to Mk some time before the middle of the second century, in order to fill the obvious gap. But the clumsy connection shows that they were not specially written for this purpose. Originally compiled, it would seem, as a catechetical summary, they may have been in existence for a considerable time before being appended to Mk. In style and vocabulary they are obviously non-Markan."

France draws attention to the way in which the Longer Ending (vv 9-20) echoes, usually in abbreviated form, elements of the resurrection stories of Matthew, Luke, and John. He provides the following analysis:

v. 9	Appearance to Mary of Magdala	Jn 20:11-17 (with Lk 8:20)
v. 10	Mary of Magdala as messenger	Jn 20:18
vv. 11,13	Disciples' unbelief	Lk 24:11, 41
vv. 12-13	Walk to Emmaus	Lk 24:13-35
v. 14	Appearance to the eleven	Lk 24:36-39; Jn 20:19-23
v. 14	Rebuke of unbelief	Jn 20:24-29 [?]
v. 15	Evangelistic Commission	Mt 28:19; Lk 24:47
v. 19	Ascension	Lk 24:50-51 (together with the 'sitting at the right hand' theology of Hebrews etc.)

Mark 16:9

[[Αναστὰς δὲ πρῶτῃ πρώτῃ σαββάτου ἐφάνη πρῶτον Μαρία τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ, παρ' ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτὰ δαιμόνια.

ἀνιστημι intrans (in 2 aor & all midd) rise

"Note the clumsiness of the connection with vv 1-8. The subject is not named, as though Jesus had just been mentioned, while Mary is described as though she was being 'introduced'." Cranfield.

πρῶτῃ adv (in the) early morning

πρῶτος, ἡ, ον first

σαββατον, ου n (often in pl) the seventh day, Sabbath, week

πρωτη σαββατου = on the first day of the week.

ἐφάνη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s φαινω shine; midd. and pass. appear, be seen

Μαγδαληνη, ης f woman of Magdala

παρα preposition with gen from

ἐκβεβλήκει Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 s

ἐκβαλλω expel, cast out

ἑπτα seven

δαιμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit

Cf. Lk 8:2.

Mark 16:10

ἐκεῖνη πορευθεῖσα ἀπήγγειλεν τοῖς μετ' αὐτοῦ γενομένοις πενθοῦσι καὶ κλαίουσιν·

ἐκεῖνος, ἡ, ο that, he/she, it

πορευθεῖσα Verb, aor pass dep ptc, f nom s

πορευομαι go

ἀπαγγελλω announce, proclaim

πενθεω mourn, be sad

κλαω weep, cry

Mark 16:11

κάκεινοι ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ζῆ καὶ ἐθεάθη ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἠπίστησαν.

κάκεινος, η, ο contraction of και ἐκεῖνος ζῆ Verb, pres act indic, 3s ζω live, be alive

ἐθεάθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s θεαομαι see

ἀπιστεω fail or refuse to believe

Cf. Mt 28:17; Lk 24:11; Jn 20:25

Mark 16:12

Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα δυσὶν ἐξ αὐτῶν περιπατοῦσιν ἐφανερώθη ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ πορευομένοις εἰς ἀγρόν·

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two

περιπατεω walk

ἐφανερώθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s

φανερωω make known, reveal, make evident

Cf. Lk 24:13-25

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

μορφη, ης f nature, form

"Possibly means 'in a different form from that in which he appeared to Mary' (with reference to the fact that the two took him for a traveller, while Mary had mistaken him for a gardener); but more probably it reflects Lk 24:16 and is to be explained as subjective to the two disciples (i.e. to them he appeared ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ inasmuch as they did not recognise him)." Cranfield.

ἀγρος, ου m field, countryside

Mark 16:13

κάκεινοι ἀπελθόντες ἀπήγγειλαν τοῖς λοιποῖς· οὐδὲ ἐκείνοις ἐπίστευσαν.

ἀπελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
ἀπερχομαι
ἀπήγγειλαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl
ἀπαγγελλω

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other
πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)

Mark 16:14-18

Cf. Lk 24:36-49; Jn 20:19-23 and also Mt 28:16-20.

Mark 16:14

Ὑστερον δὲ ἀνακειμένοις αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἑνδεκα ἐφανερώθη, καὶ ὠνειδίσεν τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν καὶ σκληροκαρδίαν ὅτι τοῖς θεασαμένοις αὐτὸν ἐγγεγμένον οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν.

ὑστερον adv afterwards, later
ἀνακειμαι be seated at table
ἑνδεκα eleven
ἐφανερώθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s
φανερω make known, reveal
ὠνειδίζω reproach
ἀπιστία, ας f unbelief
σκληροκαρδία, ας f stubbornness
θεασαμένοις Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m & n
dat pl θεασμαι see, look at, observe
ἐγγεγμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc s
ἐγειρω raise
πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)

On the lengthy gloss at the end of v.14, see notes on vv 9-20.

Mark 16:15

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει.

πορευομαι go, proceed, travel
ἅπας, ασα, αν (alternative form of πας) all, whole
κηρύξατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl
κηρυσσω preach, proclaim
εὐαγγέλιον, ου n good news, gospel
κτίσις, εως f creation, what is created

Here, 'creature' i.e. 'to everyone'.

Mark 16:16

ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς σωθήσεται, ὁ δὲ ἀπιστήσας κατακριθήσεται.

βαπτισθεὶς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s
βαπτίζω baptise
σωθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s σωζω
save
ἀπιστήσας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
ἀπιστεω fail or refuse to believe
κατακριθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s
κατακρινω condemn

"The order, πιστεύσας before βαπτισθεὶς, and perhaps also the absence of any μη βαπτισθεὶς answering to ἀπιστήσας, rule out a magical, mechanical concept of baptism." Cranfield.

Mark 16:17

σημεῖα δὲ τοῖς πιστεύσασιν ταῦτα παρακολουθήσει, ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δαιμόνια ἐκβαλοῦσιν, γλώσσαις λαλήσουσιν καιναῖς,

σημειον, ου n miraculous sign
παρακολουθεω follow closely, accompany
ὄνομα, τος n name, authority
δαιμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit
ἐκβαλοῦσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl ἐκβαλλω
throw out, expel, cast out

Cf. 3:15; 6:7,13; Acts 8:7; 16:18; 19:12.

γλωσσα, ης f tongue, language
λαλεω speak, talk
καινος, η, ον new

Cf. Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Cor 12:10,28; 14:2ff.

Cranfield says that the term καινος "points to the fact that these tongues are a fore-token of the age to come in which God will make all things new. Cf. the use of καινος in 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 2:17; 3:12; 5:9; 14:3; 21:1f.,5.

Mark 16:18

ὄφεις ἄροῦσιν κἂν θανάσιμόν τι πίωσιν οὐ μὴ αὐτοὺς βλάβῃ, ἐπὶ ἄρρωστούς χειρας ἐπιθήσουσιν καὶ καλῶς ἔξουσιν.

ὄφις, εως m snake, serpent
ἀροῦσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl αἰρω take, take away

Cf. Acts 28:3-6.

καν (καὶ ἐάν) even if, and if, even
θανασμιον, ου n deadly poison
πίωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl πινω drink
βλαπτω harm, injure
ἄρρωστος, ον sick, ill
ἐπιθήσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl
ἐπιτιθημι place on, place, put

ἔξουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἔχω; ἔχω
καλῶς be well, healthy

Cf. Acts 28:8.

Mark 16:19

Ὁ μὲν οὖν κύριος Ἰησοῦς μετὰ τὸ λαλήσαι
αὐτοῖς ἀνελήμφθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ
ἐκάθισεν ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ.

λαλεῶ speak, talk

ἀνελήμφθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s

ἀναλαμβάνω take up, take, carry

καθίζω sit down, take one's seat

δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξιά right hand

Cf. 14:62. The words are an echo of Ps 110:1. Calvin says that this is "a similitude borrowed from princes", and that "the subject here considered is not the position of His body, but the majesty of His empire."

Mark 16:20

ἐκεῖνοι δὲ ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν πανταχοῦ, τοῦ
κυρίου συνεργούντος καὶ τὸν λόγον
βεβαιούντος διὰ τῶν ἐπακολουθούντων
σημείων.]]

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο that, those, they

ἐξελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m pl nom

ἐξέρχομαι

ἐκήρυξαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl κηρυσσω

πανταχοῦ everywhere

συνεργεῶ work with, work together with

βεβαιῶ confirm, verify

ἐπακολουθεῶ follow

Cf. Heb 2:3f; Acts 14:3, also Rom 15:19; 2
Cor 12:12.