

***“The Gospel According to Mark:
 The Beginning of the Good News”***

Roseville Lutheran Church – 10:10 – March 8, 15, 22, 29, 2020
 James L. Boyce

A prominent theologian once described the Gospel of Mark as a “Passion Narrative with an extended introduction.” From its opening announcement of this work as the “beginning of the good news of Jesus the Christ,” Mark’s story draws us into the story of Jesus’ journey to the cross with repeated foretelling of Jesus’ coming suffering, death, and resurrection. At the same time we are at times left somewhat breathless and puzzled by the motifs of secrecy and mystery that compel us as readers.

**“The Beginning of the Good News” Mark 1:1-3:35
 Setting the Context**

Expectations of a Messiah-Deliverer (Apocalyptic)

Isaiah 11:1f. 1 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord...

Assumption of Moses 10 (written during Jesus’ lifetime)

For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone, And He will appear to punish the Gentiles, And He will destroy all their idols. Then you, O Israel, shall be happy, And you shall mount upon the necks and wings of the eagle, And they shall be ended.	And God will exalt you, And He will cause you to approach to the heaven of the stars, In the place of their habitation. <i>And you will look from on high and see your enemies in Ge(henna)</i> <i>And you shall recognize them and rejoice,</i> <i>And you shall give thanks and confess thy Creator.</i>
---	---

Inscription from Priene, in Asia Minor 9 B.C, during reign of Caesar Augustus

“The birthday of this god was the beginning of the gospel of good news that came upon the world because of him”

“For let us consider a man who in all his virtues, his almighty power and nobility of character far transcended human nature. For from the moment he entered into a position of care and concern for all our human affairs, he began to bring honor and veneration upon himself and on all who followed after him. To the uttermost parts of the earth, struggling in endless war, he brought peace and so is rightly deemed the averter of evil. He calmed the storms which were breaking down from every side. He healed the diseases of all the world. He not only loosed the chains of bondage that were pressing down on all the world but smashed them asunder. This is he who reclaimed freedom for all, changed disorder into order, and brought peace and harmony for all. He is the guardian of peace, who has not decided to keep his honors for himself but has showered his grace on each and all, and has become the first and greatest benefactor, the single pilot of the ship of humanity, and brought it safely to shore. And so the

whole world justly deems him worthy to receive heavenly honors and to worship him everywhere, for in him truly there is hope and salvation for those who go out and those who come in." Philo of Alexandria, "Embassy to Gaius," 143ff. (39 C.E.)

Josephus, Jewish War (7.1-4) (describing events of 70 C.E.)

1. (1) Now, as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be objects of their fury (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other such work to be done) Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne, and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. (2) This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison; as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; (3) **but for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited.** (4) This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind.

How Shall We Hear?

Aristotle (*The Art of Rhetoric, Poetics*) 350 BC

How does persuasion (trust, belief) work?

Ethos	Logos	Pathos
Character/ author	Words/ text/ argument	Passion/ emotion/ hearer

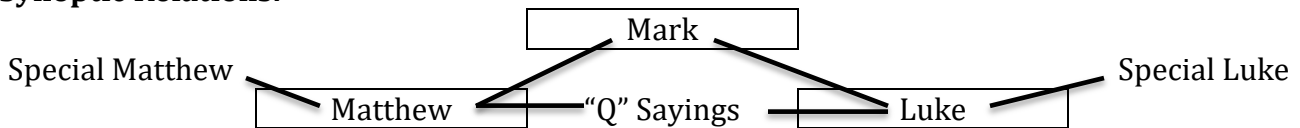
Enlightenment: Testing the Tradition in History, Literature, and Story (17th century....)

Study of the Gospels (Careful reading; new manuscripts)

4 Gospels, One story (Tatian's Harmony, 2nd century;)

4 Gospels, 4 Stories

Synoptic Relations:



Transforming Hearers and Readers

Noting and Evaluating Details of the Narrative

Making Outlines

Gospel comparison (e.g. Eusebius of Caesarea (4th century) Gospel Canon Tables

Mark 1:1 Beginning of the "Good News" How shall we translate? What shall we read?

KJV 1610 the beginning of the gospel....	NIV 1973 the beginning of the good news...
NAS 1910 the beginning of the gospel....	NRSV 1991 the beginning of the good news....
RSV 1947 the beginning of the gospel....	
NET 1996 the beginning of the gospel....	

Only NIV reads "the beginning of the good news of Jesus --**the Messiah**"

Mark 1:2-3: As it is written? In Isaiah? Who is coming? What is in the wilderness?

<p>Mark 1:2-3 "See, I am sending my messenger <u>ahead of you</u>, who will prepare <u>your way</u>;</p> <p>3 the voice of one crying out <u>in the wilderness</u>: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make <u>his</u> paths straight,"</p>	<p>Malachi 3:1 See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way <u>before me</u>, and the <u>Lord</u> whom you seek will suddenly come to <u>his temple</u>. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight-- indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.</p> <p>Isaiah 40:3 A voice cries out: "<u>In the wilderness</u> prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway <u>for our God</u>."</p>
--	---

Mark 1:4, 15: The preaching of John and of Jesus What is the "Gospel" About?

Proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.....(John)

Proclaiming the good news of God...kingdom has come near ...repent and believe in the good news (Jesus)

"Jesus preached about the coming of the kingdom of God; early Christians preached about Jesus"

"Repentance:", turning about, conversion; "as a turning away ... Mostly of the positive side of repentance, as the beginning of a new relationship with God"

Mark 1:10 What did Jesus See? (the original Greek word in Mark here means to "split" or "tear asunder" (Matthew and Luke later both read rather to "open")

<p>KJV 1610 he saw the heavens opened NAS 1910 he saw the heavens opening RSV 1947 he saw the heavens opened</p>	<p>NIV 1973 he saw heaven being torn open NRSV 1991 he saw the heavens torn apart NET 1996 he saw the heavens splitting apart</p>
--	---

Cf. Mark 15:38: and the curtain of the temple was torn in two (KJV, NAS, RSV, NIV, NRSV, NET)

Mark's Special Story

<p>Beginnings and Endings Begins with a Fanfare:... good news...a voice crying out Ends with a whimper:.....and they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid (Mark 1:1; 16:8, cf Matthew and Luke)</p> <p>Urgency and Movement: Plunges directly into the story of Jesus' baptism and ministry "immediately" (14 times in first 3 chapters)</p>	<p>Hiddenness or Secrecy "See that you say nothing to anyone"</p> <p>Disciples Misunderstanding seems to grow as the story progresses (cf. 10:35-40)</p> <p>Overwhelming presence of Jesus' Passion 3:6: the Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him</p>
---	---

Gospel of Mark. Part I: 1:1—3:35 (selections)

Mark 1:1-28

1 ¶ The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3 the

voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,"

4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was

clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

9 ¶ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

12 ¶ And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ...forty days, tempted by Satan...

14 ¶ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

16 ¶ As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea-- for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." 18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. 20 Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

21 ¶ They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. 22 They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. 23 Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, 24 and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." 25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" 26 And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. 27 They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching-- with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." 28 At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Mark 1:29-39 As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. 31 He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. 32 That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. 33 And the whole city was gathered around the door. 34 And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to

speak, because they knew him. 35 In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. 36 And Simon and his companions hunted for him. 37 When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." 38 He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." 39 And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Heals a Leper (1:40-45) Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. 43 After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, 44 saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; ..." 45 But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

Heals a Paralyzed Man (2:1-12)

Calls a Tax Collector "got up and followed" (2:13-14)

Mark 2:15-17 15 And as he sat at dinner in Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples-- for there were many who followed him. 16 When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" 17 When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

Plucking Grain on the Sabbath (2:23-28)

Mark 3:1-6

1 ¶ Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. 2 They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. 3 And he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come forward." 4 Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. 5 He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. 6 The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

Mark 3:3-35

1 ¶ Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. 32 A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters¹ are outside, asking for you." 33 And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" 34 And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."