

Part two: Jesus' ministry associated with Jerusalem—10:1-16:20 (last 6 months)

- As the power of Jesus' miracles recedes from view, his pronunciatory power comes forward in ever more detail. (Robert Gundry)
- This section will be more theological rather than chronological.

Last few weeks in Perea (Herod Antipas' turf)—10:1-52 [Feb./Mar. 33 AD]

- 1) Christ teaches on divorce (a limited teaching)—10:1-12
 - a) He heads toward Judea and Perea—10:1
 - b) Publicly: with a group of Pharisees outdoors—10:2-9
 - i) The Pharisees interrupt His teaching of the crowds—10:1-2
 - (1) Their goal is four-fold (at least):
 - (a) to test Jesus' view about a man's right to divorce his wife
 - (b) to get Jesus to take sides among the rabbis
 - (c) to get Jesus to incriminate or compromise Himself
 - (d) to get Jesus to offend Herod Antipas on Herod's turf as John the Baptist did earlier (cf. 6:17-19).
 - (2) The root issue was this, what does "something indecent" mean in Deut. 24:1?
 - (a) Rabbi Shammai: the strict view of divorce only for immorality.
 - (b) Rabbi Hillel: a lenient view of divorce for almost any reason.
 - (i) Rabbi Akiba (or Aqiba) permitted divorce if a husband found a woman more attractive than his current wife.
 - (3) Their question clearly lacks sincerity. No matter how Jesus answers the question, someone will be upset.
 - ii) Jesus responds with a question about Scripture—10:3
 - iii) Jesus directs their attention to Scripture—10:4-9
 - (1) The Pharisees refer to Deut. 24:1-4, but do so by omitting certain aspects of Moses' teaching.
 - (a) The certificate of divorce was gracious to the vulnerable woman.
 - (b) The rabbis mistook God's gracious provision in allowing divorce as his approval of it. (Walter Wessel)
 - (2) Jesus teaches on Gen. 1:27 and 2:24
 - (a) Jesus does not deny that Moses permitted divorce, but He addresses the root cause of Moses' permission (i.e. spiritual insensitivity toward God resulting in disobedience).
 - (3) Moses *assumes, acknowledges, and regulates* the presence of divorce in Israel but did not institute or authorize it.
 - (4) Jesus states God's original intentions of a permanent ("one flesh") relationship.
 - (a) There are exceptions: Matt. 5:32; 19:9; 1 Cor. 7:15; Ex. 21:10-11
 - (b) Remember that God divorced Israel. (cf. Is. 50:1; Jer. 3:8)
 - iv) Mark does not record the response of the Pharisees to this teaching.
 - c) Privately: with the disciples indoors—10:10-12
 - i) The disciples want clarification—10:10

- (1) Cf. Matt. 19:10
 - ii) Jesus teaches about men divorcing their wives—10:11
 - (1) In the Greco-Roman world of Mark’s audience as well as in the Jewish world of Jesus’ audience, a man is thought to commit adultery against the husband of a woman with whom he commits adultery, but not against his own wife Jesus upsets this norm. (Robert Gundry)
 - iii) Jesus teaches about women divorcing their husbands—10:12
 - (1) This was very rare among the Jews, but Roman law permitted this.
- 2) Christ teaches on children and the kingdom—10:13-16
- a) Jesus’ disciples strongly rebuke others—10:13
 - i) Apparently, the disciples learned little from Mark 9:33-37.
 - ii) The children ranged in age from birth (cf. Luke 18:15) to @ 12 years old.
 - iii) Children were loved but were socially powerless; the high infant mortality rate meant that they were physically powerless as well, many dying before attaining maturity. (In the poorest places, like Egypt, perhaps half of those born died by the age of twelve. Poorer Gentile families often discarded babies if they thought they could not support them.) (Craig Keener)
 - b) Jesus responds with intense anger at an obvious injustice—10:14a
 - i) Do not soften Jesus’ human emotions to make Him cozier for us.
 - ii) Consider Mark’s other descriptions of Jesus’ “negative emotions.” (1:41, 43; 3:5; 8:12; 9:19)
 - c) Jesus commands *positively* (permit) and *negatively* (do not prevent)—10:14b
 - d) Jesus explains—10:14c-15
 - i) Mark’s 14 uses of “the kingdom of God” (1:15; 4:11, 26, 30; 9:1, 47; **10:14-15**, 23-25; 12:34; 14:24; 15:43)
 - (1) Note that entrance to the kingdom is still future.
 - (2) The kingdom is a gift to be received and a realm to be entered. (Walter Wessel)
 - ii) The term for children [*paidion*] emphasizes the lowly helplessness and complete dependence on others characteristic of smaller children.
 - e) Jesus visibly and audibly blesses (intensely) the children—10:16
 - i) Having hugged them, He then places His hands on them.
 - f) Additional thoughts:
 - i) Negative:
 - (1) This passage does not support infant sprinkling or pouring.
 - (2) This passage does not teach that children are innocent or pure.
 - ii) Positive:
 - (1) This passage shows that genuinely following Jesus will change our view of children from disapproving rejection or simply ignoring them to approving reception.

- 3) Christ teaches on riches and rewards—10:17-31
 - a) Jesus challenges an eager, respectful wealthy man—10:17-22
 - Mark keeps the man anonymous, though we know he is young (Matt. 19:20, 22) and a ruler (Luke 18:18).
 - i) With His deity—10:17-18
 - (1) The man pursued a good person (Jesus)—10:17
 - (2) The man desired a good thing (eternal life in God's kingdom)—10:17
 - (3) Jesus is good by His essence. People can be viewed as good by their achievements.
 - ii) With the authority of Scripture—10:19
 - (1) Jesus summarizes the second half of the Ten Commandments.
 - iii) With the sinful self-confidence of the human soul—10:20-22
 - (1) Note how the eager man drops the adjective “good”—10:20
 - (2) Note the eager man's self-confidence—10:20
 - (a) Probably refers to his Bar Mitzvah at age 13.
 - (i) He claims to be good, but he is not.
 - (b) The inaccuracy of his statement is proven by his response in 10:22.
 - (3) Note Jesus' love [*agapao*] for this unsaved man—10:21
 - (a) Demonstrate repentance: a series of commands with a negative aspect.
 - (b) Demonstrate faith: a command with a positive aspect.
 - (4) Note the man's response of shock (appalled) and grief—10:22
 - (a) His security was in his possessions, not in Christ.
 - (b) He leaves without Christ.
 - (i) Note that Jesus does not run after him saying, “Wait! Come back! You misunderstood!”
 - b) Jesus teaches the disciples re: wealth and the kingdom—10:23-27
 - i) Jesus makes three explosive statements—10:23-25
 - (1) The largest land animal cannot get through the smallest opening.
 - ii) The disciples are nearly overwhelmed with astonishment—10:24, 26
 - (1) If (as they assumed) wealth was an indication of God's favor, then it is hopeless to think the poor have any chance at all.
 - iii) Jesus declares that God is the only hope—10:27
 - (1) There is no room for self-confidence. Apart from God, salvation is not merely difficult; it is impossible.
 - c) Jesus encourages Peter—10:28-31
 - i) Peter's words draw attention to the contrast of his perceived obedience (left everything, stand as followers of Christ) not found with the young ruler earlier—10:28
 - (1) Perhaps he simply wants reassurance? Jesus does not correct Peter.
 - (2) Cf. this with John 21:3
 - ii) Jesus speaks of 10,000 % rewards—10:29-31
 - (1) God notices: encouragement for allegiance
 - (a) Rewards in the **present** age (between the two advents of Christ)

- (i) Restoration of what he/she has lost
 - (ii) The likelihood of persecution (cf. Acts 14:22; Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 3:12)
 - 1. This will come to the Roman believers soon enough.
 - (b) Rewards in the **future** age (following Jesus' return)
 - (2) God notices: summary about a servant mindset
 - (a) Challenges the attitude of self-seeking in following Christ.
- 4) Christ's **third foretelling** of His passion—10:32-34 (cf. 8:31; 9:9, 12, 31)
- This takes place on the way to Jericho. (cf. 10:46)
 - a) Jesus does not shrink from purposefully obeying the Father—10:32
 - i) Contrasted with the pilgrim travelers' response of *astonishment*.
 - ii) Contrasted with the disciples' response of *fear*.
 - b) Jesus details the conspiracy of sufferings that await in Jerusalem—10:33-34
 - i) In the custody of the Jews
 - (1) Arrested: He will be handed over to the religious leaders.
 - (a) This includes *Sadducees* (chief priests) and *Pharisees* (scribes/legal scholars).
 - (b) This is the first time Jesus identifies who will arrest Him.
 - (2) Condemned: He will be condemned to death.
 - (3) Transferred: He will be handed over to the Gentiles.
 - ii) In the custody of the Gentiles
 - (1) Ridiculed: He will be mocked by them.
 - (2) Dishonored: He will be spit on by them.
 - (3) Punished: He will be scourged by them.
 - (4) Executed: He will be killed by them.
 - iii) In His own power: He will raise Himself again (middle voice) the third day!
 - iv) Question: How does Jesus know all of this? cf. Luke 18:31
 - (1) See Ps. 22:6-8; Is. 50:6; 52:13-53:12
 - c) See the response of the disciples in Luke 18:34.
- 5) Christ rebukes James and John—10:35-45
- a) Jesus responds to their inconsiderate request with a question—10:35-36
 - i) He makes no promises without knowing the question itself. This is wise.
 - (1) Cf. Herod's foolish answer in 6:23
 - ii) Perhaps they assume the journey to Jerusalem will result in Jesus setting up His kingdom?
 - (1) There appears to be at least some faith that Jesus will set up His kingdom.
 - b) The request of James and John for special privilege—10:37-40
 - Their mother Salome (possibly Mary's sister) was directly involved. (Matt. 20:20-21)

- i) Their request is rooted in self-centeredness ambition and ignorance—
10:37-38a
 - (1) They want the two highest seats of honor.
 - ii) Their request is rooted in naïve self-confidence—10:38b-39
 - (1) Jesus' question assumes a "No" answer.
 - (2) They will suffer for their allegiance to Jesus.
 - iii) Their request is denied based on Jesus' submission to the Father's plan—
10:40
 - c) The response of The Ten and Jesus' teaching about humility—10:41-45
 - i) The Ten are furious with James and John—10:41
 - ii) Jesus compares worldly leadership with Godward service—10:42-45
 - (1) The authoritarian domination that pleases the world—10:42
 - (a) This is what Mark's Roman readers were familiar with.
 - (2) The humble serving of others that pleases God—10:42-45
 - (a) The emphasis on Christ's death is not the extent of the ransom but His substitutionary self-sacrifice for many.
 - (b) Jesus is most likely referring to Is. 52:13-53:12
- 6) Christ heals Bartimaeus and his companion—10:46-52
- This is the last healing miracle recorded by Mark.
- a) Jesus meets Bartimaeus on the west or southwest edge of Jericho—10:46
 - i) There is an old-Jericho and a new-Jericho, about one mile apart.
 - (1) This helps explain the parallel accounts in Matt. 20 and Luke 18.
 - (2) This is @ 15-17 miles east-northeast of Jerusalem.
 - ii) Note how Mark translates the Aramaic name *Bartimaeus* ("the son of Timaeus") for his Gentile readers.
 - iii) Both blindness and beggars were common in this time.
 - b) Bartimaeus persistently screams for mercy from Jesus, the Son of David—
10:47-48
 - i) This is the first use of this title in the book of Mark.
 - ii) He "saw" Jesus with his ears.
 - iii) This is a recognition that Jesus is the Messiah.
 - (1) Cf. 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Is. 11:1-5; Jer. 23:5-6; Ezek. 34:23-24
 - c) Jesus calls Bartimaeus to Himself—10:49-50
 - i) Perhaps some of those who told Bartimaeus to be quiet (10:48) are now telling him to obey Jesus' invitation?
 - (1) Some people are a hindrance for others to come to Jesus.
 - ii) Bartimaeus' primary action is coming to Jesus, with throwing aside his cloak (used for catching donations, cf. 10:46) and jumping up being preparation for doing so.
 - d) Jesus questions Bartimaeus' desires—10:51
 - i) Jesus has already heard his persistent (but general) plea for mercy.
 - (1) This could be asking for money, food, etc.
 - ii) The Aramaic title *Rabboni* means "my master/teacher."

- iii) The restoration of his sight [*anablepo*] is a specific form of mercy.
 - (1) Apparently, he had been able to see at one time.
- e) Jesus heals Bartimaeus—10:52
 - i) A command to “move along.”
 - ii) A reassurance of his permanent healing.
 - (1) Faith is the necessary means, not the efficient cause of his healing.
(John Grassmick)
 - iii) An immediate desire to follow Jesus, demonstrating his allegiance.
 - (1) Unlike the wealthy young man (cf. 10:17-22)
 - iv) This sets the stage for the rest of the story in 11:1-ff.