




THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

Reimagining Power





Date 68-75 CE

Author: Mark





The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, Son of God


Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ]

Priene Calendar Inscription (9 BCE)



It seemed good to the Greeks of Asia, in the opinion of the high priest Apollonius of Menophilus Azanitus: Since providence, which has ordered all things and is deeply interested in our life, has set in most perfect order **by giving us Augustus**, whom she filled with virtue that he might benefit humankind, **sending him as a savior**, both for us and for our descendants, that he might end war and arrange all things, and since he, Caesar, by his appearance excelled even our anticipations, surpassing all previous benefactors, and not even leaving to posterity any hope of surpassing what he has done, and since **the birthday of the god Augustus was the beginning of the good news (euangelion) for the world** that came by reason of him, which Asia resolved in Smyrna.



The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, Son of God

- “good news” used for military victory (Isa 40:9, 41:25-27)
- to herald a new era, like the accession of a new Emperor.



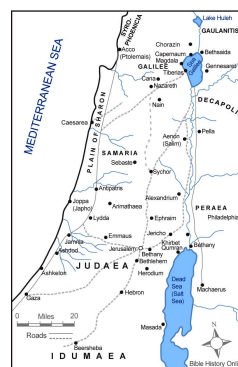
Dionysius (Bacchus)

- Divine father, - son of Zeus
- Human mother (Semele)
- Known as “the god who comes”
- Wandered in human form to promote cult
- Rescued people from the underworld
- Killed by Titans, but “resurrected” in the spring vine leaves each year



Structure:

- I. Prologue: Preparation for Proclamation (Mk 1:1-15)
- II. Ministry in Galilee (Mk 1:16-8:21)
- III. Journey to Jerusalem (Mk 8:22-10:52)
- IV. Conflict in Jerusalem (Mk 11:1-13:36)
- V. Passion & Death (Mk 14:1-15:47)
- VI. Empty Tomb (Mk 16:1-8)



<u>East of Sea of Galilee</u>	<u>West of Sea of Galilee</u>
Exorcism 1:21-27	Exorcism of Legion 5:1-15
Healing miracles	Healing miracles
Teaching	Teaching
Feeding of 5000, 6:34-44	Feeding of 4000, Decapolis, 8:1-9
Arguments with Pharisees	Arguments with Pharisees

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Power in Mark

Mark 1:21-28	First Exorcism
Mark 5:25-34	Flow of power
Mark 8:27-33	What kind of Messiah?
Mark 10:35-45	Seats of Power
Mark 11:1-11	Triumphal Procession
Mark 15:25-27, 39	Crucifixion

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Power in Mark 1:21-28

1:22 *"he taught them as one having authority..."*

1:27 *"A new teaching—with authority!"*

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Power in Mark 5:25-34



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Power in Mark 5:25-34

"In the narrative, the flow of power from Jesus mirrors the flow of blood from the woman."

Moss, "The Man with the Flow of Power" JBL 129 (2010) 516.

QUESTIONS:

1. How do you use your physicality to project power and authority (or to diminish your power)?
2. Are there ways you give over or "leak" power? (Is it life-giving to others?)
3. How do you carry the affects of ministry in your body?

Power in Mark 8:27-33

"You are the Messiah"

- Son of Man must undergo great suffering
- be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes,
- be killed,
- and after three days rise again.

Power in Mark 10:25-34

10:31 First will be last and the last will be first

10:33-34 Passion prediction #3 – mock, spit, flog, kill

10:35 **REQUEST – sit at right and left (seats of power)**

10:42 Gentile authority: to lord it over them (subdue / dominate and tyrannize)

10:43 Greatness = servant / First = slavery

Mark 11:1-11

Three imperial rituals in Rome and provinces:

- Adventus
- Triumph
- Funeral



Coin commemorating the arrival (*adventus*) of the emperor.
Trajan Decius, c. 249-251.



"Mark is a literary icon of a crucified King"



Mark 15

Matt 27,54	Mark 15,39	Luke 23,47-48
The centurion and those with him guarding Jesus seeing the earthquake and the things that happened	The centurion who stood facing him seeing how he breathed his last said,	The centurion seeing what happened
feared greatly saying, "Truly this was God's Son!"	"Truly this man was the son of God".	glorified God saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" And all the crowds who had gathered for this spectacle seeing the things that happened returned home beating their breasts.

Theologically, Mark takes the prophetic tradition's text about arrival of God and reinterprets them to describe the arrival of Jesus. In doing so, he also reconfigures divine kingship and divine glory. Glory is found in a broken body on the cross and a king dies a criminal's death.





Mark's inbreaking and "advent" of God subverts all expected power structures and military expectations.

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Questions for Reflection:

1. Anything new, challenging, surprising?
2. How do we embody self-giving, life-giving power and authority?
3. And how to we help our congregations to embrace this kind of discipleship?

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