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Bi 103 Synoptic Gospels

Assignment 11

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Outline of the Gospel of Mark

I. Introduction (1:1-13)

A. The message of John the Baptist 1:1-8

B. Baptism of Jesus 1:9-11

C. Temptation 1:12-13

II. The ministry of Jesus in and around Galilee 1:14-8:21

A. In Galilee 1:14-5:43

1. Ministry of teaching and miracles 1:14-45

A. The preaching of Jesus 1:14-15

B. Call of the first disciples 1:16-20

C. Summary: teaching with authority 1:21-22

D. Exorcism and healings 1:23-38

E. Summary: preaching and teaching 1:39

F. Healing of leper 1:40-45

2. Conflicts and controversies 2:1-3:35

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- B. Call of Levi 2:13-14
- C. Criticism of table-fellowship 2:15-17
- D. Question of fasting 2:18-22
- E. Controversies over sabbath observance 2:23-3:6
- F. Withdrawal and appointment of the Twelve 3:7-19
- G. Controversies over the source of Jesus' power 3:20-30
- H. True relatives of Jesus 3:31-35

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- A. Parable of the soil 4:1-9
- B. Theory of parable confusion 4:10-12
- C. Allegorical interpretation 4:13-20
- D. Parables of the kingdom 4:21-32
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- A. Rejection in Nazareth 6:1-6

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A. Feeding of the five thousand 6:30-44

B. Jesus walks on the water 6:45-52

C. Summary: enthusiasm for Jesus 6:53-56

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F. Healing of deaf-mute 7:31-37

G. Feeding of the four thousand 8:1-10

H. Refusal of sign to Pharisees 8:11-13

I. Mystery of the miraculous feeding 8:14-21

III. Anticipation of Passion (the "hinge" section) 8:22-10:52

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B. The confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi 8:27-30

C. The passion predictions 8:31-10:45

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A. First passion prediction 8:31-33

B. Nature of discipleship 8:34-9:1

C. Transfiguration of Jesus 9:2-13

D. Healing of epileptic boy 9:14-29

2. Second passion prediction and its effects 9:30-50

A. Second prediction 9:30-32

- B. Nature of discipleship 9:33-37
- C. Identity of true disciples 9:38-41
- D. Accountability of discipleship 9:42-50

3. Traveling to Jerusalem 10:1-31

- A. Summary: Jesus teaches the crowds 10:1
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- C. Access to Jesus 10:13-16
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- A. Third prediction 10:32-34
- B. Nature of discipleship 10:35-45

D. Healing of blind Bartimaeus 10:46-52

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7. The burial 15:42-47

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2. What does the author mean when stating that the Book of Mark represents the inauguration of the mission to the Gentiles?

A: The Gentile mission in Mark's Gospel is inaugurated when Jesus travels into foreign territory and heals the Gerasene demoniac in chapter 5:1-20. The episode is the first instance to depict Jesus outside the geopolitical space of the Jewish homeland, after He receives Gentiles from the surrounding regions in Galilee. The first journey into foreign territory has a preparatory function. **The exorcism of the possessed man, the cleansing of the land through the destruction of the swine, and the preaching of the healed man** prepares the people and the region for the return of Jesus and the continuation of the Gentile mission. The healing of the Gerasene demoniac sets up a narrative pattern that is foundational to the theological development of the Gentile theme.

3. Explain how Mark portrays Jerusalem.

A: The second half of Mark's Gospel turns toward Jerusalem, a place that Mark interpreted negatively. It stood for the opposition, hostility, and rejection that culminated in Jesus' execution. It symbolized that unresponsiveness and hardheartedness that results in unbelief. Whereas the characteristic emphasis of the first half was on the miracles of Jesus, the second half emphasized his passion and its implications for discipleship.

4. Explain Mark 8:22 to 10:52. What is this section of Mark's Gospel referred to?

A: The literary "hinge" joining the two parts extends from 8:22 to 10:52. Mark bracketed this critical transition section of his narrative with two miracle stories relating the healing of the blind. As is frequently the case with early Christian stories, physical blindness is indicative of spiritual imperception, and restoration of sight signals the renewal of spiritual discernment. The scope, depth, and accuracy of the disciples' grasp of who Jesus is and of what God is accomplishing through Him is at center stage. Mark is alerting his hearers that this segment of

his Gospel addresses the crucial need of all whom Jesus encounters to see with spiritual clarity and to comprehend with conviction.

5. What is different about 8:22 to 10:52 than the rest of Mark's Gospel?

A: This section in the Gospel of Mark, sometimes referred to as "The Way" section, located in chapters 8:22-10:52. "The Way" section is a vital part of Mark's writing and essential to understanding his gospel. While the first eight chapters in Mark contain a ledger of Jesus' many miracles, "The Way" section is not as dense in miracles. However, it is set apart from the rest of the text with two miraculous stories, narratives of the healings of blind men. Mark is famous for his focus on Jesus' works rather than his words. But this section has a high proportion of dialogue and discourse. While the first eight chapters are mostly located in Galilee, and the concluding chapters occur in and around Jerusalem. This section provides a geographical link between these two settings.

6. Why did Mark keep Jesus' identity undercover to some degree? Who was Jesus' competition? What is meant by the Messianic secret motif?

A: The popular Hellenistic superstition raised difficulties for Christian gospel preaching that had not been present when Jews were the primary audience. These Gentiles did not know much about the Messiah (Christ) of the Jewish religious traditions. Christians told them stories of Jesus' calming the storm, or healing the paralytic, or giving advice about divorce, or exorcising a demon. To the Gentile non-Christian those stories sounded like the familiar exploits of another "divine man." Christ must be like the Hellenistic wonder-worker, which was the competitor of Jesus. This motif runs through most of Mark's Gospel. Scholars have pointed out a number of traits in the Gospel of Mark by which recognition of the messianic identity of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, actually seems to be suppressed. For instance, Jesus repeatedly imposed

commands of silence on demons and unclean spirits that he exorcise (1:23-25, 34; 3:11-12).

Mark described Jesus as forbidding people whom he had healed from telling others about their good fortune. He even prohibited his disciples from telling others about him. This motif helped Mark deal with the problem that members of his community were having when they tried to use the stories of Jesus. It was an additional antidote to the potential danger that Gentiles might misunderstand those stories as picturing Jesus as a Hellenistic “divine man.”

7. What is the actual conclusion of Mark’s gospel?

A: As we can observe in most editions of the New Testament, the ending of Mark’s Gospel has been problematic. The oldest Greek manuscripts of Mark concluded with chapter 16:8. Scholars, with few exceptions, regard the various alternative extension that other ancient manuscripts contain as later additions appended by unknown Christians to provide what seemed to them to be a more satisfactory conclusion. The divergence in the vocabulary and literary style of those last few added verses compared with the literary style in the rest of the Gospel confirms the manuscript evidence.

8. Explain why, according to biblical scholarship, it is not likely that Mark, the companion of Peter, actually wrote the gospel.

A: As much as we would like to answer the question of the identity of the author of the Second Gospel with absolute certainty, we must recall what we said at the end of the first chapter. All the Gospels in the New Testament are anonymous works. Their authors did not explicitly identify themselves for our benefit. Nickel says, about the best we can do is to describe the author as an unknown first-century Hellenistic Christian. With the data, and geographical location all are inconclusive.

9. Why was it necessary for Matthew and Luke to improve Mark's grammar and style?

Regarding the historical present tenses used in Mark, how did Matthew and Luke treat them? How many did they change?

A: Matthew and Luke frequently improved Mark's grammar and style (151 historical present tenses in Mark were reduced to 21 in Matthew and 1 in Luke). They eliminated unnecessary repetition in Mark (Mark 1:32 and parallels; 2:25 and parallels). They removed picturesque but inessential detail from the Markan version. They corrected errors in Mark's account, the Malachi text was removed from the conflated prophetic citation in Mark to make the quotation conform to the introductory formula referring only to Isaiah; Matthew corrected Mark's "Eloi" to "Eli." Both later evangelists often modified or excised features of the Markan narrative that they found offensive.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels. The double tradition is the term for the material common to Matthew and Luke. The triple tradition is the term for the material found in all three synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The extent of engagement in wording and order in the triple tradition is so great as to demand an explanation of literary interdependence among all three Gospels. The synoptic problem poses the question: which evangelist used which Gospel?

There are four answers to the synoptic problem that have commended themselves in recent years.

- 1. The Two-Source Hypothesis**
Mark wrote first. Matthew and Luke independently used both Mark and a document termed Q.
- 2. The Griesbach-Farmer Hypothesis**
Matthew wrote first. Luke used Matthew, while Mark used both Matthew and Luke.
- 3. The Augustinian-Butler Hypothesis**
Matthew wrote first. Mark used Matthew, while Luke used both Matthew and Mark.

The first two solutions share the trait called Markan priority, that is, the idea that Mark was the first of the Synoptics. Markan priority itself is compatible with the Two-Source Hypothesis and with the Farrer-Goulder Hypothesis. The last two solutions are examples of Matthean priority. Lukan priority is rarely supposed. The purpose of this summary is to argue for Markan priority. In connection with the first great discourse of Jesus (Mt. 5-7), there follows a string of ten miracle stories by way of illustrating 4:23; thus Matthew brings together in chapters 8 and 9 miracles that are scattered throughout the first half of Mark.

Matthew attaches to these miracle chapters a mission address, as an introduction to which he has moved forward the call of the twelve. Here also can be observed in detail Matthew's

alteration of Mark's sequence; the two controversy sayings in Mt. 9:9-17 are out of place in a cycle of miracles and can be accounted for only on the ground that this is where they occur in Mark. Very significant likewise is the comparison of the parable chapter, Mk. 4:1-34, with Mt. 13:1-52: because Mt. 13:36-52 has been added even though the Markan sequence has been maintained, the explanation of the parable itself by the parables of Mt. 13:31-33 and by a concluding statement follows in Mt. 13:51.

A number of other considerations support the presumption of the priority of Mark. The argument for Matthean priority fails to explain the omissions Mark would thereby have had to make intentionally. There is no clear reason to account for why Mark would have chosen to include some of the material from his source Gospel (Matthew) and left out other equally important sections. We see that the same arrangement of the narrative content is visible in all three Gospels.

In support of Markan priority we may note that Matthew and Luke follow the same order of events in telling the story of Jesus so long as their common order is paralleled in Mark. When they departed from Mark's order, however, they also diverged from each other. Nowhere do Matthew and Luke diverge in common against Mark's order, although both have additional material that precedes and extends beyond the scope of Mark's account.

