

## New Testament History, Literature and Theology

### **Session 10: Mark, Part 2, Son of Man and Messianic Secret**

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this is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his New Testament History, Literature and Theology course; lecture number ten on the book of Mark, the Son of Man and the Messianic secret.

#### **A. Introduction and Omission of Peter as Hero [00:00-3:10]**

##### **A: Combine A-C; 00:000-8:39 Peter in Mark**

Last time we were discussing, we finally broke into the book of Mark, who was portraying Jesus Christ as the amazing servant of the Lord. We had focused on Mark and the person of Mark and his background as a young person, his relationship with Barnabas, his older cousin, and going out on the First Missionary Journey with Paul and Barnabas. After quitting there was the rift between Paul and John Mark, that actually broke up the relationship of Barnabas and Paul. Then at the end of his life though, being reunited with Peter in Rome, and Peter seeing Mark as his son, his “son, spiritual son.” Then also connecting up in 2 Timothy 4:11 with Paul at the end of his life realizing and saying, “I want Mark back, he’s profitable for me in the ministry.” This showed the reconciliation after the big split with that at the end of John Marks life, so at the end of Paul’s life.

What I’d like to do now is just look at some general things in terms of internal evidences. If, as Papias says, John Mark is writing as a translator, as interpreter, of Peter, and writing Peter’s story, and in one sense gospel, the follow things I think are interesting.

In the book of Mark, certain things about Peter are omitted, and one of those things is his walking on water. When Jesus walks on water, it’s in Matthew chapter 14, Peter gets out of the boat and walks to Jesus as well, and that’s a unique thing, the rest of

the disciples stay in the boat and Peter gets out. That story about walking on the water is not found in the book of Mark. This is Peter's story, it's kind of interesting. The promise of the keys of the Kingdom, in Matthew 16 is not mentioned here. "Who do people say that I am?" Peter says, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God," and Jesus says, "You are Peter, upon this rock, I will build my church," and Peter gets the keys of the kingdom. That story is not mentioned at all in the book of Mark. The temple tax, Matthew 17, mentions this temple tax. "Does your master pay the temple tax?" Peter says, "Of course he does." He goes to Jesus and says, "Hey, Jesus did you pay the temple tax?" Jesus says, "Go down and catch a fish. When you pull up the fish you'll find a coin." That coin is to pay for Jesus and Peter alone. Not the other 11, just Peter and Jesus alone. So that's the temple tax. Peter is again in a unique kind of position there with Jesus. None of those stories where Peter is the hero and shows a unique relationship with Jesus, are mentioned in the book of Mark.

### **B. The Inclusion of Peter's Mistakes [3:10-5:06]**

On the other hand, what is there are the three bumbles of Peter, when Peter botches it up. In the same chapter when Jesus says, "You are Peter upon this rock I'll build my church," a little later, Jesus is telling them he's going to suffer, that he's going to die. Peter then rebukes Jesus and says, "Jesus you are not going to suffer and die. You are the messiah," and Jesus turns to Peter and says, "Get thee behind me Satan!" That passage is then found in the book of Mark.

The transfiguration is similar; Peter, James and John go with Jesus up on the Mount of Transfiguration. Moses and Elijah show up there and Jesus is dazzling white and he is transfigured in front of them. Then Peter, as always, talking says, "let's make three sukkahs, let's make three huts: one for Moses, one for Elijah and one for you." Then all of a sudden this voice from heaven comes down and says, "Wait a minute, Moses and Elijah no, this is my son." This heavenly voice set him straight. This is the transfiguration. Again that is found in the book of Mark.

Finally there are the denials of Peter, when the cock crows and Peter denies the

Lord three times and the cock crows and Peter is denying the Lord from these servant girls that are saying, “You’re from Galilee, you know this guy.” Peter swears he doesn’t know Jesus and denies. Then Peter goes out and weeps bitterly.

These three things are in the book of Mark. It’s kind of funny though, I think that for a lot of us usually when you make a mistake and you botch something up you remember that a lot better than when you did something good. So it just seems like the negatives--often times I can be doing student reviews, and you get wonderful student reviews then you get one bad one where the person flames you and basically you remember the one flaming one over all the hundred who enjoyed the class. It’s just kind of the way we are.

### **C. Peter’s Vision and Mark’s Comment on Clean Animals and Scriptural Honesty [5:06-8:39]**

So Peter says that. Now here’s Peter’s comment, and I think this is interesting what comes up here in terms of this statement in chapter 7, and let me just read it here from the text itself. Mark chapter 7 verse 19; and this seems to be--and I should just explain a little bit; when Peter in the book of Acts, Peter is going to have a vision where these animals are going to come down, and they’re unclean animals there, and basically the heavenly voice or whatever is going to say, “Peter get up and eat these unclean animals.” Peter objects to this saying, “Hey, these lips are kosher man, I’ve never touched anything that’s unclean.” So Peter really objects to the eating of unclean animals and then finally the voice says, “No Peter, you don’t call unclean what I call clean.” This had to do with working with the Gentiles, and whether the Gentiles have to eat kosher, and whether the Gentiles have to be circumcised. And so Paul and Peter and others, the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, they were working on this notion about whether the Gentiles have to eat kosher and whether they have to be circumcised. They decide “No, they don’t have to be circumcised, and they don’t have to eat kosher.” So you get this statement in Mark which seems to be a little insertion from Peter that says, “After he had left the crowd and had entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. ‘Are

you so dull,' he asked, 'don't you see that nothing that enters a man from outside can make him unclean. For it doesn't go into his heart, but into his stomach and out through his body.'" And in brackets you read, "In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean." So that seems to be something Peter would have picked up given this heavenly vision that he had in the book of Acts coming up to the Jerusalem Council. So we're just saying that it seems to be a statement that Peter would've picked up on from Acts chapter 10 and 11.

What I like about this is the honesty and integrity and candor of the Scripture. In a lot of other books and Ancient Near Eastern documents, the great king is recorded as this wonderful person who does all these wonderful things, and this legendary hero was portrayed almost with no faults. Whereas we see, in Scripture, here is Peter, one of the biggest apostles (you know Peter, James and John being the closest to Jesus), and several points of Peter being the closest; although some debate with John, but the scriptural honest that all the apostles, all these of the twelve guys sitting at the top of the church, that are going to sit on twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel, all twelve of them have problems. So the Bible points that out basically, and the point I think is to get away from human beings and to say, we as human beings all have problems, and the Bible is historically accurate. In other words, the Bible is not giving us a snow job, it's not giving us a legendary tale of this great hero, but it's telling us this hero has warts just like all of us. So it points this out and I think it points to this historicity of these documents; that they are not crafted to make someone look good.

#### **D. When Was Mark Written? [8:39-10:58]**

##### **B: Combine D-E; 8:39-15:53; Date and Miracles**

So, when was Mark written? Peter, the Peter connection, Peter's going to die probably around 65 AD. Peter's going to die in Rome, as we said, crucified upside down. Therefore what you need is, Peter is going to have to be around to ratify Mark's gospel, in other words, Peter is probably going to put his imprimatur on that Mark, that what he wrote, was correct. So I want to say that probably pushes Mark then before 65, for sure, before the death of Peter. So that would be one kind of chronological boundary.

The synoptic ordering, now what is this synoptic? The synoptic, syn-optic, optic means “eye” like an optometrist. Syn-optic means “with one eye.” Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels. They see Christ through one eye. A lot of Mark’s content, probably 80, 90% of Mark (we’ll look at this later) is found in Matthew and Luke being shared between Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They tell the same story of Jesus. So you get this same story of Jesus, the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke telling you the same story. Then John comes, and John’s going to be like your other eye. You want depth perceptions? You need two eyes. John is totally different John’s about 90% unique material. So Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the Synoptic Gospels give us one portrayal of Jesus, and John gives us the other one.

So in the Synoptic Gospels most people today would take Markan priority, that is, Mark came first and that Matthew and Luke drew on Mark. So therefore that would push Mark down, some people think, down as early as 40, 45, or 50 AD. You know, as far as Mark being the first gospel, Matthew and Luke are writing after that. So, Mark probably is the earliest.

#### **E. Critics’ Response to Miracles and Prophecy [10:58-15:53]**

What is interesting here in chapter 13 verse 2, Mark makes this statement: “‘Do you see all these buildings’ Jesus replied, ‘Not one stone here will be left on another. Everyone here will be thrown down.’” Jesus as he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple.

What’s interesting here is that the temple is going to be destroyed in 70 AD. Critics now – two things critics hate about the Bible, when critics look at the Bible there are two things that drive them nuts. One is miracles. So you look at miracles in the Bible, critics have got to get rid of miracles: so Peter walking on the water, Jesus rising from the dead (becomes a spiritual resurrection for them), Jesus healing, raising a young girl from the dead, raising up Lazarus from the dead, Jesus healing a leper; and the feeding of the 5,000. They’ve got to get rid of those miracles; by the way we’ve got plenty of miracles in the Old Testament too: Moses, the Red Sea crossing and Joshua walking around

Jericho and the walls falling down. There are tons of examples: Elijah and Elisha doing miracles, and lightning bolts from heaven. So basically critics have got to get rid of miracles because critics say everything is established as it is. In other words, the laws of natural cause and effect, scientific laws do not vary. Miracles are outside that. Miracles are outside that, so they say miracles can't happen, and they got to get rid of the miracles from the Bible.

Second thing that they've got to get rid of is predictive prophecy. In the scriptures you have these predictions, say, for example, in 1 Kings 13, where it says "Josiah will burn on the altar the priest's bones, "and Josiah would not live for another 300 years after that. So this prediction was made 300 years before Josiah lived and even tells what he would do and tells his name. The same thing with Cyrus, you want to see people really freak out get into Cyrus and the predictions that are made on Cyrus in the book of Isaiah. For it predicts, Cyrus would almost be like a Messiah figure, kind of the servant of the Lord and the anointed one. It tells what Cyrus would do by name, from the time of Isaiah. So then critics will break it up into second, third, fourth whatever how many Isaiahs you want. They'll basically say, "No, that was written much later down by the time of Cyrus." They treat the book of Daniel, same way, Daniel makes all these predictions: Antiochus Epiphanies ... and they'll have to drag the date down because they can't have predictive prophecies because who alone can tell the future? Only God can tell the future.

This is what happens here, Mark records Jesus saying, and what Jesus is saying this at 32 AD or 33 AD, before his death, they take him up and show him the great temple that Herod had remodeled from the second temple. And basically he says, "Every stone is going to be cast down." When the Romans do come in (70 AD), what they do is level place and throw the stones down. If you guys had been into *Get Lost in Jerusalem* at the South Wall Excavations they have actually excavated and shown these huge boulders that were part of the second temple construction up there. The Romans then pushed those stones off, dropped them down 60, 70 feet. They hit the Roman road and these huge boulders, and I'm talking probably 5 and 6 feet by 5 and 6 (that's a lot of rock

when you start 5 feet. x 5 feet. x 5 feet.). That's a lot of rock, to drop at 60 feet. It punched holes in these Roman roads. These Roman roads that were so well constructed with these flag stones, and then this rock hits it. You see this puncture right in the Roman roads, and it was exactly fulfilling what Jesus said. Jesus said basically the temple would be thrown down and all of the rocks knocked down and that's exactly what happened.

Critics don't like that, so what they do is say that Jesus didn't predict that. What you have is *vaticinium post eventum*, prophecy after the event. In other words, that Mark is writing this after the temple was destroyed, and these words then are put back in the mouth of Jesus. Prophecy after the event happened and then it was put back into the mouth of Jesus. That's how the critics get rid of this prophecy. Now the problem is Mark is written before 65, the temple in Jerusalem is not destroyed until 70 AD, that's 5 years later, at least. Many people think Mark is written way before 65 AD, so therefore, this is the problem critics have. So whenever you come to that great prophecy Jesus predicts they'll always go to a prophecy-after-the-event that was inserted into the text later.

## **F. The Roman Audience of Mark – Language [15:53-18:55]**

### **C: combine F-H Mark's Audience; 15:53-25:57**

To whom was Mark written? To whom was he written? We tried to suggest before there was probably a non-Jewish audience. Church history says, it was written in Rome. Eusebius, early church father-- well actually he wasn't so much an early church father so much as he was an early church historian about 325 AD. Papias, early second century, records that Mark was probably writing from Rome to the Romans, and so you get a very different picture than what you got with Matthew. Matthew is written for Jewish folk, Mark is written for Romans, very different perspective there.

His presence in Rome is affirmed. We've looked at already 1 Peter 5:13 where Peter says, "Hey, I'm in Babylon man. The people in Babylon send their greetings as does my son Mark." We said that Babylon was a code word for "Rome." This is well-known. So therefore John Mark was with Peter in Rome, and that's there so it could very well be written to the Romans. And Colossians 4 also has a similar thing like that where

it references John Mark in Rome.

So Mark was probably written in Rome; examples of non-Jewish types of things. He translates, Mark translates Aramaic phrases. So for examples, and many of these you guys know, *Talitha kourai* in chapter 5 verse 41, Jesus is going to heal this little girl (raise her from the dead), and basically he comes to the girl and he says, *talitha kourai*. Which means, *talitha* means “little girl,” *kourai*, mean “get up, rise up.” So “little girl, get up.” And then what happens is, in the book of Matthew chapter 9 verse 41, it says, “he took her by the hand and said to her, ‘*talitha kourai*.’” That’s the Aramaic, and a Jew would have known what that meant, but in brackets Mark says, because he’s writing to a Roman audience (they don’t know Aramaic), he says, “[which means ‘little girl I say to you get up.’]” So he explains these phrases.

Let’s look at the word *boanerges*. James and John, it says here and let me read chapter 3 verse 17, “James the son of Zebedee and his brother John (both sons of Zebedee) to them he gave the name, [or the nickname Boanerges] which means [and then he translates it] Sons of Thunder.” Now when he says “sons of thunder,” does that mean that Zebedee, their father, was a thunderous man? You guys are the sons of thunder that meant Zebedee was a thunderous guy, no; when he says sons of thunder it means they have that quality. So when you call somebody a son of something, you’re not talking about their father, you’re stating that they themselves have that quality. So anyway, Mark translates *Boanerges*, “sons of thunder.”

### **G. The Roman Audience of Mark—customs, the Law, and Geography [18:55-22:54]**

He explains Jewish customs. So Jewish customs, let me just give you a couple examples here from Mark 14:12. It says, “On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it is customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb.” So the Passover lamb is sacrificed on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is going to go on for seven days, but on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is the Passover when the Passover lamb and the things that you learned about back from Exodus 12. So Mark then says, “On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened when it



is customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, 'where do you want us to go to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?'" So "when it is customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb," that explanation would not be needed if the audience was Jewish. If you were Jewish you've done the Passover for every year of your life, you knew exactly when the Passover lamb was slaughtered.

Now here's a bigger one, chapter 7 verse 2, we've looked at that before but it's kind of interesting. When the Pharisees say, "some of his disciples eating food with hands that were unclean (that is unwashed)." Then you've got in brackets an explanation "[the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing holding to the tradition of the elders when they come in from the marketplace.]" You would not have to make that explanation to a Jewish person. You would very much have to make that because a Gentile, a Roman, would not understand why did the Jews wash their hands all the time? So Mark gives a lengthy explanation of that there again, showing a kind of non-Jewish perspective.

There's no mention in the book of Mark, in the book of Matthew it says, "Jesus said, 'I did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.'" There's much talk of the Torah, the law, that verse is not mentioned in the book of Mark. Again, with a Roman audience, when you say "I did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it," you say "law" to a Roman, he's probably thinking some of the Roman legal proceedings in the Senate that's going on in Rome, not Moses. They would not have been very much aware of Moses.

So the sending of the twelve, remember how we said the sending of the twelve was only to the Jews and not to go to the Gentiles. That passage on the sending of the twelve in Matthew 10 is not found in the book of Mark. He just skips that whole thing of the sending of the twelve. That makes sense because the Jews, that when they first send out the twelve, it was only to the house of Israel and not to the Gentiles. So Mark drops that.

Mark explains geography. The Romans would not know the geography of

Palestine. They would not be able to get on Google maps and go over there and see how it was. So what happens is in chapter 13 verse 3 it says, “As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple.” So what you’ve got is the Mount of Olives here, about 2,700 feet high, the temple mount (probably about 2,300 feet), and so what you have is it goes down into a valley, the Kidron or the Jehoshaphat, comes up the other side. So if you’re up in the Mount of Olives you’re opposite the temple. So, the Dome of the Rock today, and if some of you have been on the Get Lost in Jerusalem program you’ve seen that the Mount of Olives overlooks this temple, the temple area. So Mark says they don’t know that. So they say Jesus is up on the Mount of Olives. They don’t know the difference between the Mount of Olives and Mount Hermon. Mark says, “no no, the Mount of Olives in opposite the temple.” So again, you wouldn’t have to explain that to a Jewish person who has gone up for feast to Jerusalem and knows the Mount of Olives. You would have to explain that to a Roman.

#### **H. Latin Audience—Language and Roman’s Mentioned [22:54-25:57]**

So a Latin audience, here’s something from languages (and again this is not a big deal), but it’s interesting. He takes certain Greek phrases and gives you the Latin for them. Again, you wouldn’t do that if you were writing to a Jewish audience, but if you were writing to a Latin or Roman audience you would push the Roman context. So *aulace*, which means “palace,” *aulace* is Greek, it means “palace,” but then Mark says then, “it’s the *praetorium*.” And when you see the word “*praetorium*,” and I checked this here some of my students had Latin, when you see that –ium ending that’s surely a Latin term, *praetorium*, which basically means the palace. From Mark 15:16, it shows then that Mark has switched from Greek, and he’s giving this kind of Latin phraseology to it, the *praetorium*, just so they understand he’s talking about a certain type of palace. So this it shows the Latin or Roman influence. I’m not big on Latin; I’ve had some Latin, but I always say that Latin seemed to be ripped off half of the Greek language. So if you’ve done Latin it makes it very natural to do Greek because they’re so similar in so many ways.

Now here's another one, and this is actually rather strange. I think it's actually pretty funny so let me just do this. Do you remember there was Simon the Cyrene who Jesus was to carry the cross and he was beat up so badly he could barely carry the cross. He's got to carry his own cross to Golgotha. Jesus can't carry the cross because he's weakened. So, what happened is, they get this guy Simon the Cyrene, he's from Cyrene. Now where is Cyrene? I can't make it my hand but suppose my hand is the boot of Italy. This is the boot of Italy, Cyrene is right across the Mediterranean in Libya. So it turns out that Roman folks are mentioned. Rufus and Alexander, it turns out these are Simon the Cyrene's kids. Simon the Cyrene, who carried the cross of Jesus, his kids Rufus and Alexander become Christians and Mark mentions them in chapter 15 verse 21, so does Paul in the book of Romans. Obviously the book of Romans is written to the Romans (that kind of makes sense), so Romans is written to Romans and in chapter 16 verse 30 Paul is greeting all these people and their mothers. Paul does this huge greeting at the end of the book of Romans, and two of the people he greets are Rufus and Alexander. It turns out Mark also greets them too. Paul's writing to Rome, the suggestion is Rufus and Alexander are in Rome so it fits this Roman context there.

## **I. Conceptual Framework and Mark's Purpose for Writing [25:57-28:09]**

### **D: Combine I-K; 25:57-35:15; Purpose, Gospel, OT citations**

The book of Mark seems to have a Roman conceptual framework. Now this is a little more abstract, but basically the notion of power, in other words, power is big in the book of Mark. Jesus does all these things authoritatively with power. Rome is into power. So you're going to see the Gergasene demonic at Gergasa with the legion of demons casted into the pigs and the pigs running down the hill. Mark develops that extensively. So you've got demons. Crowds; Jesus has so many crowds; Jesus can't do some of his miracles. Jesus gets into a boat because there are so many crowds. Crowds: that fits with the Roman scene; banquets, that also fits with Rome. So therefore, this is kind of abstract, more abstract, but power, demons, crowds, and banquets. Those are the kinds of things that seem to fit with a Roman scenario.

So, what I'm trying to suggest so far, as we're trying to understand the audience to whom Mark is writing, we're also trying to understand who was Mark. You need to know something about the author to understand the book, and I think also you need to understand what the relationship is between the author and the audience. What crisis or whatever prompted this author to write this stuff down for this audience. So what was the dynamic between these two and it turns out that both the author and the audience are important. Now, it's possible that the apostles were starting to die off and the people in Rome come to Mark and say "Mark would you write this stuff down? You know Peter better than anybody else. You know the apostles; they were at your house when they did the Lord's Supper (all this kind of thing). Mark please write us a gospel." So it might have been as the disciples are getting older and passing off, there was a call to write a gospel to the Romans to say, "Hey! We want to learn about Jesus. Tell us what you know about Jesus." Then Mark was able to interpret or tell Peter's story.

### **J. The Portrayal of Christ—the First Gospel [28:09-31:19]**

Now let's look at the portrayal of Christ in the book of Mark. How does Mark portray Christ? I don't want to hit this first point very hard. Just let me say, I think Mark is a summary. Peter summarizes the gospel. In Acts chapter 10 verse 34-43, Peter gives a little sermon, a little synopsis sermon a little under 10 verses (about 9 verses or so), Peter summarizes the gospel of Jesus Christ in Acts chapter 10 verse 34 and following. It turns out that the book of Mark, if you make a comparison between that little synopsis sermon that Peter gave and the book of Mark they fit together like hand and glove. So it's an interesting connection between that sermon of Peter and the book of Acts because Mark is writing Peter's gospel so to speak.

So, Mark is the first one to call his book "a gospel," and actually I don't think that's a term of genre, that he's saying, "I'm going to write a gospel," like there was: Matthew was a gospel, Mark was a gospel, Luke was a gospel, and John was a gospel. The Gospel as a literary genre, I don't think that's what he was referring to. He's calling it the first gospel and he identifies it as a gospel. He calls it the *eu-aggelion* which is the

gospel, the word for “gospel” in Greek. *Eu* means “good.” So if you say a euphemism, what is a euphemism? You say a euphemism if suppose somebody died and you say the person croaked, that’s not a euphemism. Croaked is a very negative thing so you would say what? “They passed away.” In other words, they passed away, or they went to their rest or something like that. A euphemism is when you say something good about something. Eulogy, have you ever heard somebody give a eulogy? My dad, after he passed, he said he didn’t want anybody doing a eulogy about him. A eulogy, *eu* means “good,” *logy* is like *logos*, means “a good word.” So usually when a person dies they say a good logos, a good eulogy about the person. And so here you have *eu-aggelion*, you can kind of see like angel here right? Angel? Actually the first g becomes an n in Greek so it’s *eu-aggelion*, the *eu-aggelion* means “a good message.” What is an angel? An angel is simply a messenger. The word *aggelos* means “a messenger.” It doesn’t mean necessarily they got wings, it just means a messenger. So gospel is a good message.

The gospel is a proclamation. What Mark is writing is the proclamation of the good news or the good message. So Mark, actually, in his first verse in his book identifies it that way.

#### **K. Mark cites Isaiah [31:19-35:15]**

Now there are some other things involve with this first verse here that I want to look at in the gospel of Mark. Let me just pull over and read the first verse of the book of Mark. You’ll notice in Matthew also we looked at the first verse quite a bit. I think he sets up what he’s doing in the first verse.

And so Mark chapter 1 verse 1 it says this, “the beginning of the gospel (or the *eu-aggelion*, the good news) the beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the son of God. It is written in the prophet Isaiah, ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you who will prepare your way. A voice of one calling in the desert prepare the way for the Lord. Make straight paths for him.’” And so John came baptizing in the desert region. Now this raises some questions here from this first verse. What you get is something like this. Is John Mark misquoting scripture? Let me just read this again and say where John Mark,

and I'm going to say makes a mistake here, he says, "it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'I will send my messenger ahead of you who will prepare your way.'" Is that from Isaiah? He says, "It is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'I will send my messenger ahead of you.'" That's not from Isaiah, that's from Malachi 3:1. It's not from – he says the prophet Isaiah says, "I will send my messenger ahead of you." That's from Malachi, not Isaiah. Let me just read to you Malachi 3:1. "See I will send my messenger who will prepare the way before me." That's what he's quoting. "'Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come into his temple. The messenger of the covenant whom you desire will come,' says the Lord Almighty." So some people say Mark misquoted from the Old Testament. He actually said it was from Isaiah but it was really from Malachi.

Do you know the honest truth? This isn't just from Malachi. This "see I send this messenger to go before me," that's actually echoing out of Exodus 23, I believe its verse 20. So there's an echo in Exodus 23:20. It's echoed then specifically out of Malachi chapter 3 and then what's the next verse say? The next verse says this, "I will send my messenger ahead of you who will prepare your way," and that's Malachi. "A voice of one calling in the desert," that is Isaiah 40:3. So what Mark is doing here, he is making a composite quote; he's saying Isaiah said this because Isaiah is the big prophet. Who is Malachi? You know most of the people probably wouldn't know. You say they wouldn't know Malachi in Rome because--I've often said Malachi is the last of the Italian prophets. His name is Malachi but I call him Malachi the last of the Italian prophets, but the Italians might have known him. No, no that's a joke. But what you have here is this composite quote where he's echoing thought out of Exodus. He's specifically quoting out of Malachi and he's mixing in this quote from Isaiah that has reference to John the Baptist as we're going to see in the next verse. Then he says "as Isaiah said." So, in other words, he doesn't list and he says 'well actually I'm making a composite quote out of Exodus, Malachi, and Isaiah,' he just quotes Isaiah as being the big place he's referring to. By the way, they don't do footnotes like we do, where every little detail has to be footnoted. He's just quoting the major person he's quoting.

## **L. Mark Affirms the Deity of Christ [35:15-40:13]**

### **E: Combine L-N; 35:15-46:13; Deity and Humanity of Christ in Mark**

But now what's interesting to me is that the messenger who prepares the way before at that point there seems to be a switch in the quote. The quote that he makes does not actually quote exactly Malachi and I want to see – do you know about personal pronouns? Personal pronouns are important. We have a first person pronoun, which is what? "I." We have a second pronoun which is "you," and we have a third personal pronoun which is "he, she" or "it." So you have I (first person), you (second person), he/she/it (third person). Now look at what happens here. He says, "I send my messenger ahead of YOU," in Mark it says "you," but if you go back to Malachi, what does Malachi actually say? Here's what Malachi actually says: "I will send my messenger," who's the I that's speaking? Well, it says the Lord Almighty, Yahweh Almighty. The Lord Almighty is speaking and he says, "I will send MY messenger who will prepare the way before," Who? "Before ME." Let me just read that again, "I will send my messenger who will prepare the way before ME." Mark says, "the messenger will prepare the way before YOU," referring to Jesus. What association does that make then? "The Lord Almighty says, I will send my messenger to prepare the way for me," Mark says the Lord sent his messenger to prepare the way before you Jesus. What it says is that Jesus is the Lord Almighty. So this second verse here, then, is the affirmation of the deity of God, that it is. In Malachi it is God speaking that the messenger would go before God. Who turns out to be the messenger he goes before? It's Jesus, the YOU, and so the switch in pronouns there is wonderful. It applies what was applied to God in the Old Testament, Yahweh, Jehovah, in the Old Testament to Jesus here, right up front in the book of Mark.

It's kind of funny, when people want to study the deity of Christ they always go to the book of John. If you've got Jehovah's Witness people coming in and trying to say Jesus is not the God, Jehovah, he's a god; people always go to the book of John. But it turns out here in this quote from Malachi in the switching of the pronouns like that; you can see that Mark is equating Jesus Christ with God Almighty, with the Lord Almighty. So that's a wonderful quote that Mark puts together there. It's actually spectacular.

So what happens? So there the messenger prepares the way before ME, and this refers to Yahweh/Jehovah. This is how they abbreviate this; by the way Y-H-W-H you see there are no vowels here. Some Jewish folk will write it that way, as well as some Christians, because you can't pronounce it because there are no vowels there. The reason why they do that is they don't want to pronounce God's name in an improper context so that it's blasphemy. So in order to avoid blaspheming God's name they take the vowels out so you don't say it at all and they actually end up saying *Adonai*, which means Lord. Instead of saying Yahweh, they'll say Adonai which means Lord, or they'll say *hashem*, "the name" or some circumlocution like that.

So the messenger prepares the way before ME, Jehovah, turns out its Jesus and Mark picks that up and switches the quote around. Now here, Mark chapter 1 verse 3 it says, "The voice crying in the desert, prepare the way of the Lord," "prepare the way of Yahweh," "prepare the way of Jehovah." That's coming from Isaiah 40:3. Mark says that it comes from Isaiah and so this is kind of a combined quote. "Prepare the way before the Lord." Who is the Lord who's way is being prepared? This is John the Baptist preparing the way before Jesus. So, again, Jesus is being associated with Yahweh here, and "the voice of one crying in the desert" will be John the Baptist who is introduced in the next verse in Mark 1:4. So all I'm trying to say is this quotation, both of these quotations from Malachi and Isaiah, both point to Jesus as being Yahweh. That God will send "his messenger to prepare the way before ME," turns out that that "me" is Jesus but it's also Yahweh, and the voice of one calling in the desert, prepares the way of the Lord, turns out to be Jesus and John the Baptist is going to fulfill that. So those are some pretty neat things going on there.

### **M. What is the Gospel? [40:13- 43:29]**

Now the gospel, we talked about it as the good news, why is it called "the good news"? I just want to suggest, there's a million things when you think about "good news, chariots a coming, good news." What is the good news of the gospel? Basically the issues of life and death, that death does not reign, Jesus destroyed the power of death. Death



does not win in the end. Death does not win in the end, but there is a resurrection, there is an *anastasis*, there is a resurrection. So life wins over death, sin and pardon – or sins have condemned us to death. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” “For the wages of sin is death.” And what happens is pardoned through Jesus Christ, the good news is that we don’t bear the weight of our sin, that Jesus Christ died for our sin and that we “behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.” And so this is an incredible thing, the sin that bears upon us. The wages of sin that condemns us to death, Jesus Christ the Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world. Emptiness and love (Jesus’ great message); you know, love one another as I have loved you, versus the emptiness and the alienation of realizing how alone we are in the universe, how alone we are in the various aspects of our life. Jesus opens up the possibility for love, and love bonding, connecting people together. The breathiness of life, you know, what life’s breath is and it just passes.

I always tell people I work at Gordon College. If I pass on and go to some other place within one or two years nobody remembers you. It was the things that you think are the great achievements of your life, you realize how frail they are. Nobody really knows or cares. The significance, what is significance? Our significance is in the Lord, the possibility of serving Almighty God, regardless of the breathiness of life. This is reconciliation between God and humankind; the reconciliation where God was alienated because of our sin, now there’s reconciliation. Human beings return to the Garden of Eden. Basically human beings were sent out of the Garden, alienated from God and now all of a sudden the whole Bible is talking about this good news. That, yes, man was cast out of God’s presence, but the whole Bible is saying, God is coming to his people trying to make the way back so that God can Emmanuel, so that he can dwell with his people forever. So this reconciliation is the story of the whole Bible and why the Bible ends in Revelation chapter 21 and 22 with the temple of our God, the New Jerusalem coming down, and you have this reuniting of God and man forever and ever. The kingdom of heaven is near, and so these kinds of concepts are good news. The kingdom of heaven is

near, and indeed it is, I believe. So good news, and there's a million other things (these are just some abstract things we want to think about).

### **N. The Humanity and Deity of Jesus in Mark [43:29-46:13]**

Now the book of Mark is interesting. Matthew will portray Christ as king, John will do a lot as Christ the son of God. Mark portrays Christ in a very human way. Mark 2:16, you see Jesus eating, you see him drinking in chapter 15 verse 36. You see Jesus hungry, is Jesus ever hungry? In chapter 11 verse 12 you see Jesus hungry. Then Jesus touches people, chapter 1 verse 41, he touches people. Then in chapter 3 verse 5 (I even have it listed here), Jesus gets angry. We said that before, there was a guy with the deformed hand, and the Pharisees brought him to Jesus to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath, and Jesus gets on their case and says, "Hey man" and he looks at them in anger, "and Jesus looks at them in anger." So Jesus gets angry at the Pharisees because they want to honor the Sabbath over this guy with the deformed hand. So Jesus heals the man with deformed hand and says, "It's good to do good on the Sabbath." So Jesus corrects them. So this is kind of interesting, Raymond Brown, a great Roman Catholic theologian whose written a lot on the book of John and the gospels, Brown said that if we only had Paul we would have a theology of Christ; Mark puts a face on Christ. I would agree with that, that Mark portrays Christ in a very human way. So you get to see the human side of Jesus in Mark.

Now Christ is divine in the book of Mark, yes, there are some things we said. John starts baptizing to prepare the way before Jesus, he said, "before the way of the Lord." Mark chapter 1 verse 11 it says, "You are my son." And actually it's quoting out of Psalm chapter 2 verse 7, the son of God being the Messiah. So Mark has another Old Testament quote here out of Psalm chapter 2, this is another one; actually you can get into this and develop a whole thing on Psalm chapter 2. Who is this "son" being referred to here, "you are my son, today I have begotten you and become your father"? Also the statement when he comes up from John the Baptist, "with you I am well pleased," and this notion of the suffering servant on whom God will put his spirit and he will bring

deliverance and justice to the earth. So this kind of thing, so Jesus is held to be a son of God there.

### **O. Jesus' self-identification as the Son of Man [46:13-50:30]**

#### **F: combine O-R; 46:13-62:54; Son of Man**

Now I want to switch topics here, and there's going to be two big things I want to cover on the book of Mark, and these are two big things--we've talked about a lot of personal background (Roman audience). Two of the things that come up big time in the book of Mark: one, Jesus' self-designation. How does Jesus identify himself? What does Jesus call himself? Jesus calls himself numerous times, as far as his own self-identification, Jesus calls himself the Son of Man. So I just want to look through this and discuss then, what does Jesus mean by this term "Son of Man"? What does the term Son of Man mean? So first of all we just want to talk about what does the term "son" mean? What does son of something or other mean, what does Son of Man mean? Sometimes it means, if Jesus is the son of Joseph what does that mean? If Solomon is the son of David what does that mean? So in Jesus' case, Joseph wasn't his actual father, but he was a son of, kind of adopted into the family (kind of his step-father). David and Solomon, you know Solomon, the son of David, you're talking about actual sons. But then the term "son" can also mean, not just son in an immediate father-son relationship, but it can also jump a thousand years so you've got the son of David. So son of David would jump 1,000 years; you got David being the father, Jesus Christ being the son of David (that's 1,000 years). Jesus Christ being the son of Abraham (2000 BC), that's another, about 2,000 years. So son of doesn't necessarily 'direct son of,' son of can mean 1,000 years, that you're a progeny of, you're a descendant of, doesn't have to mean a direct son.

Another thing we would say is it's spiritual son. Do you remember Peter would say Mark is his son in 1 Peter 5:13? Timothy, in 1 Corinthians 4:17, Timothy would be said to be Paul's son. Paul would call Timothy his son and we know Paul was not the father of Timothy, but we know he was a spiritual father. So the term "son of" can mean "spiritual son of," or it can mean literal son of (like first generation) but then it can also

jump down to progeny or descendants more broadly.

Lastly (and probably most important for us) is we say “son of” is can have the character of. “Son of” means “has the character of.” So when we say, “James and John are the sons of thunder,” what does that mean? That means that they have the character, the quality of being thunderous. You remember James and John wanted to call down fire from heaven in the book of Luke. It described them wanted to call down fire from heaven. So they’re “sons of thunder.” Barnabas; *bar* means “son of,” and *nabas* means “consolation.” So Barnabas is “son of encouragement” or “son of consolation.” “Son of” means that Barnabas is an encouraging type of person. So we even use that phrase today; son of a – and we usually use that in a negative context in my head, but son of a something or other. You’re not saying that their parent had that but you’re saying that their parents had that quality. So Son of Man means that he has the quality, of man. So we want to look at this. Jesus’ self-identification and mentions explicitly at Caesarea Philippi in Mark – Matthew chapter 16 but also in Mark 2:10. Jesus comes of Caesarea Philippi, he asks his disciples, “who do people say the Son of Man is?” Check that out: “‘who do people say the Son of Man is?’ They replied, ‘and who is the Son of Man?’ Jesus identifies himself, “‘who do people say the Son of Man is?’ They replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah. Still, others say Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ ‘But what about you?’ he asks, ‘who do you say I am?’” The Son of Man, who do people say the Son of Man is, who do you say I am? “Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the son of the living God.’” So Jesus identifies himself by that phrase.

### **P. Nuances of the Son of Man –Identification and Authority [50:30-53:36]**

Now I want to work through five nuances of this term Son of Man. There’s going to be five nuances, or five aspects to this, and I want to use this acrostic: IASED. The first one then, I think it identifies him with human kind, that he is the Son of Man. That is, Jesus is truly human. So in Matthew chapter 8 verse 20 it says, “The foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” In other words what he is trying to say is that the Son of Man is very human and not only is he

human but he is a human being and he doesn't have anywhere to lay his head. So it shows his identification with human kind, that he totally identifies with human kind even to the point of the lack of housing.

Authority, another aspect of this Son of Man thing is this notion of authority. Mark chapter 2 verse 10 says this: "which is easier, to say to the paralytic," do you remember the story there? This guy is paralyzed; he can't walk. He's got four friends apparently, or so we don't know how many, but there are his friends. His friends then pick him up on this cot; they can't get the cot into Jesus because the house is full of people. So what they do then is go up on the roof-- now you have to understand this is not New England with your roofs that are steep because you have so much snow, the roofs are flat. So they go up on the flat roof, and it's made out of mud (everything is made out of mud and rock there with the housing. They dig down through the roof--and I always wonder what Jesus was thinking as he's preaching and people are digging through the roof and all that mud and plaster coming down on the things. Then all of a sudden they drop this guy down on a mat with ropes or something right into Jesus' lap. Everyone is expecting Jesus to say what, "get up and walk, I just healed you." What does Jesus say? Jesus doesn't do that. "Which is easier to say to the paralytic? 'Your sins are forgiven' or to say 'get up and take your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, he said to the paralytic, I tell you get up, take your mat and go home." Everybody was amazed. They came at him and said, "Woah, he can forgive sin? Who can forgive sin but God alone?" So this is a big factor here for the authority of Jesus, that Jesus has the ability to forgive sin, but Jesus can also heal the paralytic by speaking, "get up, take your mat and go home." And this guy does by spoken word of Jesus. So the Son of Man has authority on earth to do these things. So the term here with Son of Man is a position of authority.

#### **Q. Nuances of the Son of Man – Suffering [53:36-57:45]**

Now this one is, I think: "very interesting. In the Old Testament you have kind of two strains of thought in regard to the Messiah. You have what the Jews in old times

called the Messiah ben-David. *Ben* means ‘son of’, the Messiah, *meshiah*, means the anointed one; the Messiah, the anointed one. Ben-David was the “son of David” from 2 Samuel 7:14 and following where God says that, “today I’m going to make you a house, and the house is going to last forever. There’s going to be one of your descendants, David, that’s going to sit on the throne of Israel forever.” They called that “the son of David.” So you get this Messiah coming and the lion laying down with the lamb and with him ruling with a rod of righteousness and justice, and peace and harmony coming to the earth. You get all these wonderful predictions of the future of this coming Messiah that they’re to look for.

On the other hand, though, and this puzzle then, there’s another aspect of the Messiah in the Old Testament that is a real negative one. This is the suffering servant Messiah, you can see it in a stellar way in Isaiah 53: “he should be like a sheep taken to the slaughter ...and by his stripes we are healed.” By his stripes we are healed, all we like sheep have gone astray ‘and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all,’ Isaiah 53. Some of the people said then there was a Messiah ben-Joseph. You remember how Joseph was put in prison. Joseph was sold as a slave into Egypt and Joseph was thrown into prison and they called it the Messiah ben-Joseph, the son of Joseph.

The Son of Man term then, in the book of Mark, encompasses the notion of suffering. So this Messiah, this Son of Man, has the notion of not the Messiah ben-David, it’s there the coming king whose going to rule, but it also has this Messiah ben-Joseph, this suffering servant. Now let me just read you a couple of verses from Mark, these are wonderful verses, “He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this then Peter, he took him beside and began to rebuke him, “‘Get thee behind me Satan,’ Jesus said to him, ‘you do not have in mind the things of God but the things of men.’” It says that the Son of Man must suffer and so you get this notion that Jesus is the Son of Man, that suffering is a part of that. So it goes 8:31, 9:31 and kind of 10:31, three in a row almost. 9:31 it says, he’s going to be killed, he says to them, “the Son of Man is going to be betrayed

into the hands of men, they will kill him and after three days he will rise. But they did not understand what he meant and they were afraid to ask him about it.” Notice the disciples are afraid to ask. We’ll come back to that notion of fear later. Then in chapter 10 verse 33, he will be betrayed. “Again he took the twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. ‘We’re going up to Jerusalem,’ he said, ‘And the Son of Man [using himself again as the self-identification as the Son of Man] will be betrayed to the chief priests, the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and hand him over.’” So basically talking about the betrayal, that Judas will betray him, the Gentiles will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him, and three days later he will rise from the dead [the good news]. So the Son of Man has this notion in the book of Mark of the suffering servant, and that’s a big theme in the book of Mark.

### **R. Nuances of the Son of Man – Eschatological and Divine [57:45-62:54]**

Now, this one is a really tricky one, and one that you need to catch for sure. This is the eschatological Son of Man. Now when you say eschatological, what do you mean by that term? The term eschatological, *eschaton* means “the end.” So eschatology is the study of the end times. People that are into the book of Daniel and Revelation, it’s kind of funny certain churches are into Romans and Galatians and everything has to be understood through Paul’s view of Jesus. The rest of the Bible is understood through Romans and Galatians and then they pride themselves on that kind of hermeneutic. There are other folks that are more into the eschatological. They understand the whole Bible in relation to Daniel and Revelation. So you can look even at various schools and various schools will emphasize Romans and Galatians and other schools will emphasize Daniel and Revelation. My point is that we need to understand the whole Bible through the whole Bible. It’s best to start with Genesis and actually read it the way it was written rather than using these couple books to understand the Bible. Going back to this eschatological, let’s just check Jesus out here. This is actually some incredible stuff here. Mark 14:61; this is at the end, Jesus, after the high priest asked him – so the high priest is going to condemn him to death and he would be crucified. The high priest says, “Are you

the Christ, the son of the blessed one?” “I am.” Said Jesus. Are you the Christ? Christ is the *Mesiah*, are you the Messiah, the son of the blessed? ‘I am,’ said Jesus, ““and you will see the Son of Man.”” See how he switches it? Are you the Christ, the son of the blessed, blessed is used in terms of God (are you the son of God?). “I am,” said Jesus, “and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the mighty one, coming in the clouds of heaven.’ The high priest tore his clothes. ‘Why do we need any more witnesses?’ he said, ‘You have heard his blasphemy.’ Now how is this blasphemy? Well it turns out that Jesus is quoting, “You will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds,” from Daniel 7:13. For Daniel 7:13 (you need to understand the Old Testament background)--who in the Old Testament rides the clouds? Who comes on the clouds? Who rides the chariots of the clouds? Well, you say, in the Old Testament, it was Baal who rides the clouds, but then you say, “No, the Old Testament corrects that in places like Psalm 68, where it says, ‘Jehovah is the one who rides the clouds.’” God, Jehovah, Yahweh, the Lord is the one who rides the clouds. Now Jesus says you’re going to see the Son of Man--what does he call himself?--“the son of Man.” You’re going to see the Son of Man come whooshing down on these clouds. The priests understood, a high priest understood exactly what Jesus was saying. Jesus was saying that as the Son of Man, in the book of Daniel, he was coming in the clouds of heaven for the final judgment there, that Jesus was saying “I am God.” Therefore the high priest rips his clothes and says, “this is blasphemy.” Indeed, I wouldn’t call it blasphemy because he was God, but Jesus then, you can see why he freaks out; because he’s quoting the Son of Man passage. The Son of Man, that title is mentioned, in Daniel 7:13, and it’s referenced to God coming in on the clouds. So, “you heard his blasphemy,” it’s beautiful how Jesus uses this term, Son of Man, to reference his deity. The high priest freaks then over this.

Finally, this is our last point (and this is pretty much the same as the last one), that is, the term “Son of Man” actually means or is referenced, to deity. So you get this idea of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven is actually a reference to deity. So the term “Son of Man” has many aspects to it, and it basically has identification with human beings, that he is totally human, he feels, he doesn’t have anywhere to put his head; he is



authoritative, he heals people by his word, he forgives sins; he's the suffering servant, he's the Messiah ben-Joseph – he suffers, he's going to be betrayed; he's eschatological, he's coming in the clouds of heaven at the end of the world, and going to make things right. The Son of Man is going to make everything right. So these are aspects then of this term "Son of Man." It's a complex term. Jesus identifies himself by that term, Son of Man, and so it's a really significant term.

### **S. What is the Messianic Secret? [62:54-64:58]**

Now, our next big topic, and this is – we'll just go on for a few minutes and end with this – this is the notion of the Messianic secret. Any of you that have read the book of Mark know that this can be a problem. Why did Jesus tell people not to tell who he was? So what is the Messianic secret? Why did Jesus tell people not to tell what he did? He'd heal somebody and then he would say, "Hey, don't tell anybody about it." Actually, usually when he says don't tell anybody about it they usually go out and tell everybody. So some people think it's kind of reverse psychology. Jesus said don't tell anybody, so that they would tell them. I think you have to be careful with that approach, but Jesus does – and if you've read it you've probably wondered why does Jesus say this?

Let me give you a couple examples. Mark 3:11 says this: "When the evil spirits saw him they fell down before him and cried out. 'You are the son of God.'" Now, what clearer statements, you've got demons falling down saying, "You are the son of God," "but he gave them strict orders not to tell who he was." Here's one over from Mark 1:44, this is when Jesus is healing a leper. "Then Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: 'see that you don't tell this to anyone, but go show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing as a testimony to them.' Instead, he went out going to talk freely spreading the news." As a result, because this guy went out and broadcast this stuff, it says that "Jesus could no longer enter the town openly." So apparently the crowds get so big that he couldn't handle it because this guy spread the stuff all around. So how do you work with this so-called the Messianic Secret, that Jesus asked people not to say anything?

## **T. A Possible Solution to the Messianic Secret [64:58-70:48]**

### **G: Combine S-T; 62:54-70:48; Messianic Secret**

What I want to do is I want to basically suggest to you that this is not a monolithic concept. It actually involves three different audiences that Jesus addresses saying, “don’t tell anyone.” One of the audiences will be the ones he heals. They say the ones that he heals was the leper, and he told the leper, “don’t tell anyone,” and he cleanses them of their leprosy. He says, “Go show your show yourself to the priest, the priest will declare you clean or unclean.” This was the Old Testament way of doing it. So he tells the ones who are healed not to do that. Now why did Jesus tell them not to do that? Why is Jesus telling them to go to the priest? I think Jesus did not want to be known as a magician, nor did he want people necessarily coming to him just because he was a magician and he would do some magic on them. So therefore because these people were being healed, he didn’t want all that. Now one of the problems we see right here is that when the people who were healed went out, that Jesus could no longer enter the town. The crowds were so big that he could not even enter the town. So Jesus, I think, said, “keep it down,” because he does not want to be known as a magician. So I think to the healed one, he says, “Okay, I know I’ve healed you but don’t go telling everybody, because I don’t want their expectation that I’m just going to heal everybody and that I’m a magician.”

Second category of persons that he tells not to say anything, are the demons. Several times the demons fall down and say, “You are the Son of God,” and Jesus says, “Don’t say anything.” I think that demons, I think it’s basically the demons not telling who he is because the demons represent Satan and all the forces of evil and he’s saying that’s bad PR. “I don’t want these demons telling who I am because that’s bad PR.” That’s like saying Hitler says you’re a nice guy. Hitler says I’m a nice guy--says I’m a nice guy after he kills 6,000,000 people. Somebody bad says something nice about you then probably you’re bad too. So he says, “I don’t want that kind of PR because the demons are liars, deceivers and evil.” Everybody knows they’re evil and he doesn’t want the testimony of their evil words. So he tells them, “Demons, don’t tell people I’m the son of God; that’s not in your domain.”

Lastly, even the disciples, and this is interesting, let me see if I can pull this verse for you. Chapter 9 with the disciples, in Mark 9:9 Jesus says to them not to tell anyone what they had seen (they had just seen the transfiguration) until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. Now what does that mean? I think largely that the disciples had very little clue about Jesus. The disciples in many places Jesus says, “You guys still don’t understand about the leaven, you still don’t understand this stuff.” They’re up at the transfiguration; they are wanting to make three huts for Moses, Elijah and Jesus. They still have no clue about really what to do, that the son of God is the Son of Man. Largely, he says to the disciples don’t tell anyone until after the resurrection. After the resurrection they will have true vision about who Jesus really was and what he was destined, called and meant to do. So I think with the disciples it’s a matter of understanding until they get the Holy Spirit enlightenment of the resurrection.

So you get these three groups of people being addressed in this Messianic secret thing saying, “keep it under your hat.” The healed ones, Jesus doesn’t want to be known as a magician; the demons, he doesn’t want their approval because of the bad associations; and the disciples, largely because the disciples need to understand the full picture of who he is before they go out and tell about the transfiguration and they need to understand better.

So that’s as far as I want to get in the book of Mark today. So we’ve looked at the person of Mark, his relationship with Paul, his relationship with Peter. We’ve looked at Mark in terms of the deity of Christ and those first few verses and how he quotes the prophecy of Isaiah that turns out to be from Exodus and from Malachi; and from Isaiah he wonderfully presents Jesus Christ as the one who the way is prepared before as God, as Jehovah. Then we also examined the term “Son of Man.” We’ve also now looked at the Messianic secret. Those two things are really important in the book of Mark. Okay, we’ll call it quits there. We’ll pick up and finish the book of Mark next time. Thanks for joining us.

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