

THE AGES DIGITAL LIBRARY  
**COMMENTARY**

**Barnes' Notes on the Bible**  
**Volume 12 -**  
**Mark**

*By A. Barnes*

*To the Students of the Words, Works and Ways of God:*

Welcome to the AGES Digital Library. We trust your experience with this and other volumes in the Library fulfills our motto and vision which is our commitment to you:

MAKING THE WORDS OF THE WISE  
AVAILABLE TO ALL — INEXPENSIVELY.

**AGES Software Rio, WI USA**  
**Version 1.0 © 2000**

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

## PREFACE

Of Mark, the writer of this Gospel, little is certainly known. He is commonly supposed to be the same that is several times mentioned in the New Testament. He was not an apostle, or companion of the Lord Jesus, during his ministry, though some of the fathers affirm that he was one of the seventy disciples. This is improbable, as he is mentioned by Peter (~~<4151>~~ Peter 5:13) as “his son;” from which it is supposed that he was converted by the instrumentality of Peter.

From the New Testament we learn that he was sister’s son to Barnabas (~~<5040>~~ Colossians 4:10); and that his mother’s name was Mary, a pious woman in Jerusalem, at whose house the apostles and primitive Christians often assembled, ~~<4121>~~ Acts 12:12.

His Hebrew name was John (~~<4121>~~ Acts 12:12), and it is probable that he adopted a name better known or more familiar when he visited the Gentiles, a practice not uncommon in that age. He was at first the companion of Paul and Barnabas in their journeys to propagate Christianity, ~~<4125>~~ Acts 12:25; 13:5; 15:37. He chose not to attend them through their whole journey, but left them in Pamphylia, and probably returned to Jerusalem, ~~<4153>~~ Acts 15:38. Probably at this time he was the companion of Peter, and traveled with him to Babylon, 1 Peter 6:13. Afterward he went with Barnabas to Cyprus, ~~<4159>~~ Acts 15:39. Subsequently he went to Rome, at the express desire of Paul, in company with Timothy, ~~<5041>~~ 2 Timothy 4:11. He remained at Rome while Paul was a captive there, but how long is uncertain, ~~<5040>~~ Colossians 4:10; ~~<5024>~~ Philemon 1:24. From Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome we hear that Mark went from Rome to Alexandria, in Egypt, where he planted a church, and died in the eighth year of the reign of Nero, 64 A.D.

The time when this Gospel was written is not certainly known. It is supposed to have been between the years 56 and 63 A.D. It is allowed by

all that it was written at Rome; of course it was during the latter years of his life, after the apostles had left Judea, ~~Mark~~ Mark 16:20. Mark was for a considerable time the companion of Peter. Though he had not himself been with the Saviour in his ministry, yet, from his long acquaintance with “Peter,” he was familiar with the events of his life, and with his instructions. The uniform testimony of the fathers is that he was the “interpreter” of Peter, and that he wrote this Gospel under the eye of Peter and with his approbation. It has come down to us, therefore, with the sanction of Peter’s authority. Its right to a place among the inspired books has never been questioned. That it was written by Mark, that it was with Peter’s approbation, that it was a record of the “facts” which Peter stated in his ministry, and that it was therefore an inspired book, has never been questioned.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

## NOTES ON MARK 1

**Mark 1:1.** *The beginning of the gospel* The word “gospel” literally signifies good news, and particularly the good tidings respecting the way of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ. Some have understood the word “gospel” here to mean “history” or “life — the beginning of the history,” etc.; but Mark says nothing of the early life of the Saviour. The word “gospel” here has reference rather to the preaching of John, an account of which immediately follows, and means the beginning of the good news, or annunciation respecting the Messiah. It was very customary thus to prefix a title to a book.

*The Son of God* This title was used here to attract attention, and secure the respect of those who should read the gospel. It is no common history. It does not recount the deeds of man — of a hero or a philosopher — but the doctrines and doings of THE SON OF GOD. The history, therefore, “commands” respect.

**Mark 1:2,3.** *As it is written in the prophets* Mark mentions “prophets” here without specifying which. The places are found in Malachi 3:1, and in Isaiah 41:3. See the notes at Matthew 3:3.

**Mark 1:4-8.** See the notes at Matthew 3:3,5,6,11.

**Mark 1:9-11.** See the notes at Matthew 3:13-17.

**Mark 1:12,13.** Here Mark relates concisely what Matthew has recorded more at length in Mark 4.

*The Spirit driveth* The word “driveth” does not mean that he was COMPELLED FORCIBLY against his will to go there, but that he was INCLINED to go there by the Spirit, or was led there. The Spirit of God, for important purposes, CAUSED him to go. Compare Matthew 9:25, where

the same word is used in the original: “And when they were all put forth” in Greek, “all driven out.”

*And was with the wild beasts* This is added to show the desolation and danger of his dwelling there. In this place, surrounded by such dangers, the temptations offered by Satan were the stronger. Amid want and perils, Satan might suppose that he would be more easily seduced from God. But he trusted in his Father, and was alike delivered from dangers, from the wild beasts, and from the power of temptation, thus teaching US what to do in the day of danger and trial.

*And the angels ministered unto him* From <sup><404></sup>Luke 4:2 we learn that in those days he did eat nothing. When Mark says, therefore, that the angels ministered to him, it means AFTER the days of temptation had expired, as is said by <sup><401></sup>Matthew 4:11.

<sup><4014></sup>**Mark 1:14.** *Now after that John was put in prison* John was imprisoned by Herod, <sup><443></sup>Matthew 14:3.

*Jesus came into Galilee* He left Judea and went into the more retired country of Galilee. He supposed that if he remained in Judea, Herod would also persecute him and attempt to take his life. His time of death had not come, and he therefore prudently sought safety in retirement. Hence, we may learn that when we have great duties to perform for the church of God, we are not to endanger our lives wantonly. When we can secure them without a sacrifice of principle, we are to do it. See <sup><1216></sup>Matthew 24:16.

<sup><4015></sup>**Mark 1:15.** *The time is fulfilled* That is, the time for the appearance of the Messiah, the time so long foretold, has come. “The kingdom of God is at hand.” See the notes at <sup><402></sup>Matthew 3:2.

*Repent ye* Exercise sorrow for sins, and turn from them.

*And believe the gospel* Literally, trust in the gospel, or believe the good tidings — to wit, respecting salvation. See the notes at <sup><4047></sup>Matthew 4:17.

<sup><4016></sup>**Mark 1:16-20.** See the notes at <sup><4018></sup>Matthew 4:18-22.

<sup><4021></sup>**Mark 1:21-27.** See also <sup><4051></sup>Luke 4:31-37.

<sup><4021></sup>**Mark 1:21.** *And they went into Capernaum* For the situation of Capernaum see the notes at <sup><4013></sup>Matthew 4:13.

*Straightway* Immediately. On the following Sabbath.

*The synagogue* See the notes at <sup><4023></sup>Matthew 4:23.

*And taught* In the synagogue, the presiding elder, after reading the Scriptures, invited anyone who chose to address the people, <sup><41315></sup>Acts 13:15. Though our Saviour was not a “priest” of the Levitical order or an “officer” of the synagogue, yet we find him often availing himself of this privilege, and delivering his doctrines to the Jews.

<sup><4012></sup>**Mark 1:22.** *He taught them as one that had authority ...* See the notes at <sup><4072></sup>Matthew 7:29.

<sup><4012></sup>**Mark 1:23.** *A man with an unclean spirit* See <sup><4024></sup>Matthew 4:24. It is probable that this man had lucid intervals, or he would not have been admitted into the synagogue. When there, one of his fits came on, and he suddenly cried out.

<sup><4012></sup>**Mark 1:24.** *Let us alone* Though only one impure spirit is mentioned as possessing this man, yet that spirit speaks also in the name of others. They were leagued together in the work of evil, and this one knew that if HE was punished, others would also share the same fate.

*What have we to do with thee?* See the notes at <sup><4029></sup>Matthew 8:29. By this the spirit meant to say that, if Jesus cast him out, he would use an improper interference. But this was untrue. The possession of the man was a direct assault upon God and his works. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, and Jesus had a right, therefore, to liberate the captive, and to punish him who had possessed him. So Satan still considers it an infringement of his rights when God frees a “sinner” from bondage and destroys his influence over the soul. So he still asks to be let alone, and to be suffered to lead people captive at his will.

*Art thou come to destroy us?* Implying that this could not be the intention of the “benevolent” Messiah; that to be cast out of that man would, in fact, be his destruction, and that therefore he might be suffered still to remain. Or it may imply, as in <sup><4029></sup>Matthew 8:29, that the time of their destruction had not come, and that he ought not to destroy them before that.

*I know thee who thou art* Evil spirits seem to have been acquainted at once with the Messiah. Besides, they had learned from his miracles that he was the Messiah, and had power over them.

*The Holy One of God* The Messiah. See <sup><2702></sup>Daniel 9:24. Jesus is called “the Holy One of God” because:

1. Jesus was eminently pure.
2. Because Jesus was the only begotten Son of God — equal with the Father. And,
3. Because Jesus was anointed (set apart) to the work of the Messiah, the mediator between God and man.

<sup><4025></sup>**Mark 1:25.** *And Jesus rebuked him* Chided him, or commanded him, with a threatening. This was not the MAN that Jesus rebuked, but the SPIRIT, for he instantly commanded the same being to come out of the man. In all this, Jesus did not once address the man. His conversation was with the evil spirit, proving conclusively that it was not a mere disease or mental derangement — for how could the Son of God hold converse with “disease” or “insanity?” — but that he conversed with a “being” who also conversed, reasoned, cavilled, felt, resisted, and knew him. There are, therefore, evil spirits, and those spirits have taken possession of human beings.

*Hold thy peace* Greek, “Be muzzled.” “Restrain thyself.” “Cease from complaints, and come out of the man.” This was a very signal proof of the power of Jesus, to be able by a word to silence an evil angel, and, against his will, to compel him to leave a man whom he delighted to torment.

<sup><4026></sup>**Mark 1:26.** *And when the unclean spirit ...* Still malignant, though doomed to obey — submitting because he was obliged to, not because he chose — he exerted his last power, inflicted all the pain he could, and then bowed to the Son of God and came out. This is the nature of an evil disposition. Though compelled to obey, though prevented by the command and providence of God from doing what it “would,” yet, in seeming to obey, it does all the ill it can, and makes even the appearance of obedience the occasion for increased crime and mischief.

<sup><4027></sup>**Mark 1:27,28.** *And they were all amazed ...* The power of casting out devils was new to them. It was done by a word. Jesus did it in his own name and by his own authority. This proved that he was superior to all the unclean spirits. In consequence, Jesus’ fame spread throughout all the country, and the impression became prevalent that he WAS the Messiah.

<4029> **Mark 1:29-31.** See the notes at <4084> Matthew 8:14,15.

<4062> **Mark 1:32-34.** See the notes at <4086> Matthew 8:16,17.

*And at even, when the sun did set* See the notes at <4086> Matthew 8:16.

<4063> **Mark 1:33.** *All the city* A great part of the city. A great multitude from the city.

<4063> **Mark 1:34.** *And suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him* They knew that he was the Messiah. If they had spoken, they would have made that known to the people. Jesus was not desirous at that time that that should be publicly known, or that his name should be blazoned abroad. The time had not come when he wished it to be promulgated that he was the Messiah, and he therefore imposed silence on the evil spirits.

<4063> **Mark 1:35-37.** *And in the morning, rising up a great while before day* Luke says (<4042> Luke 4:42), “when it was day.” The passage in Mark means, in the original, not literally “a great while before day,” but very early, or while there was yet “much appearance of night.” The place in Luke means “at daybreak,” at the beginning of day. Then, also, there is much appearance of night; and Luke and Mark therefore refer to the same time before it was fully light, or just at daybreak.

*And departed into a solitary place, and there prayed* Observe here:

1. that the Saviour, though perfectly holy, regarded the duty of secret prayer as of great importance.
2. that he, sought a solitary place for it — far away from the world and even from his disciples.
3. that it was early in the morning — always the best time, and a time when it should not be omitted.
4. if Jesus prayed, how much more important is it for us!

If Jesus did it in the morning, how much more important is it for us, before the world gets possession of our thoughts; before Satan fills us with unholy feelings; when we rise fresh from beds of repose, and while the world around us is still! David also thus prayed, <4083> Psalm 5:3; 119:147. He that wishes to enjoy religion will seek a place of secret prayer in the morning. If that is omitted, all will go wrong, our piety will wither. The world will fill

our thoughts. Temptations will be strong. Through the day, we shall find it impossible to raise our feelings to a state of proper devotion. It will be found to be true universally, “that the religious enjoyment through the day will be according to the state of the heart in the morning, and can therefore be measured by our faithfulness in early secret prayer.” How different, too, was the conduct of the Saviour from those who spend the precious hours of the morning in sleep! He knew the value of the morning hours; he rose while the world was still; he saw the light as it spread abroad in the east with fresh tokens of his Father’s presence, and joined with the universal creation in offering praise to the everywhere present God.

◀1036▶ **Mark 1:36.** *And Simon* Simon Peter.

*They that were with him* The other apostles.

◀1037▶ **Mark 1:37.** *All men seek for thee* That is, many men, or multitudes. The inquiry after him was general. They told him this, evidently, with a view to induce him to leave his place of retirement, and to prevail upon him to appear publicly to instruct the multitudes.

◀1038▶ **Mark 1:38.** *And he said unto them ...* This was said in answer to their “implied” request that he would go and meet the multitudes. “Since the anxiety to hear the truth is so great, since such multitudes are waiting to hear the word, let us go into the next towns,” etc.

*Next towns* Towns in the neighborhood or vicinity of Capernaum. He proposed to carry the gospel to them, rather than that multitudes should leave their homes and attend him in his ministry. The word here rendered “towns” denotes places in size between “cities” and “villages,” or large places, but without walls.

*For therefore came I forth* That is, came forth from God, or was sent by God. Luke, says (◀1043▶ Luke 4:43), “for therefore am I sent.” Compare ◀1043▶ John 16:28: “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world.” The meaning of this verse therefore is, “Since multitudes press to hear the word, let us not remain here, but go into the neighboring towns also: for I was sent by God not to preach at Capernaum only, but “throughout Judea,” and it is therefore improper to confine my labors to this place.”

**Mark 1:39.** *And he preached in their synagogues* See **Matthew** 4:23.

*All Galilee* See **Matthew** 1:22.

*And cast out devils* See **Matthew** 4:24.

**Mark 1:40-45.** *And there came a leper ...* See the notes at **Matthew** 8:1-4.

*Kneeling down to him* He kneeled and inclined his face to the ground, in token of deep humiliation and earnest entreaty. Compare **Luke** 5:12.

*If thou wilt* This was an acknowledgment of the almighty power of Jesus, and an appeal to his benevolence.

*Make me clean* You (Jesus) can heal me of this loathsome and offensive disease, in the eye of the law justly regarded as “unclean,” and render me “legally” clean, and restore me to the privileges of the congregation.

*And Jesus ... touched him* It was by the law considered as unclean to touch a leprous man. See **Numbers** 5:2. The fact that Jesus TOUCHED him was evidence that the requisite power had been already put forth to heal him; that Jesus regarded him as already clean.

*I will* Here was a most manifest proof of his divine power. None but God can work a miracle; yet Jesus does it by his “own will” — by an exertion of his own power. Therefore, Jesus is divine.

*See thou say nothing to any man* The law of Moses required that a man who was healed of the leprosy should be pronounced clean by the priest before he could be admitted again to the privileges of the congregation, **Leviticus** 14. Christ, though he had cleansed him, yet required him to be obedient to the law of the land — to go at once to the priest, and not to make delay by stopping to converse about his being healed. It was also possible that, if he did not go at once, evil-minded men would go before him and prejudice the priest, and prevent his declaring the healing to be thorough because it was done by Jesus. It was of further importance that “the priest” should pronounce it to be a genuine cure, that there might be no cavils among the Jews against its being a real miracle.

*Offer for thy cleansing those things ...* Two birds, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop; and after eight days, two he-lambs, without blemish, and one ewe-lamb, and fine flour, and oil, <sup><0840></sup>Leviticus 14:4,10.

*For a testimony unto them* Not to the priest, but to the people, that they may have evidence that it is a real cure. The testimony of the priest on the subject would be decisive.

<sup><1045></sup>**Mark 1:45.** *Began to publish it much* That is, he made known his own cure. He was so deeply affected with it, and so much rejoiced, that he followed the natural dictates of his own feelings rather than the command of the Saviour.

*Jesus could no more enter openly into the city* The word “could,” here, does not refer to any natural inability, or to any physical obstacle in his way, but only denotes that there was difficulty, inconvenience, or impropriety in his doing it then; that he judged it best NOT then to enter into the city. The difficulty was, probably, that his being in the city drew such crowds of people as rendered it difficult to accommodate them, or so as to excite the opposition of civil rulers.

*The city* The city or large town where the leper was cured. The same reason for not entering that city applied also to others, so that he remained in the deserts, where the multitudes could come to him without any difficulty or opposition.

## NOTES ON MARK 2

◀H02▶ **Mark 2:1.** *Into Capernaum* See the notes at ▶H03▶ Matthew 4:13.

*After some days* The number of days is not known. Jesus probably remained long enough in the desert to heal the sick who were brought to him, and to give instructions to the multitudes who attended his preaching. Capernaum was not “the city” mentioned in ▶H05▶ Mark 1:45, and it is probable that there was no difficulty in his remaining there and preaching.

*And it was noised ...* He entered the city, doubtless, privately; but his being there was soon known, and so great had his popularity become that multitudes pressed to hear him.

◀H02▶ **Mark 2:2.** *So much as about the door* In the “court” or “yard” before the door. They could not get near enough to hear him.

*Preached the word unto them* The word of God; the revelation or doctrine which he came to deliver, called “the Word,” and “the Word of God,” because it was spoken or revealed by God. Compare ▶H02▶ Acts 6:2-7.

◀H02▶ **Mark 2:3-12.** See this miracle explained in ▶H02▶ Matthew 9:2-8.

*Palsy* See the notes at ▶H02▶ Matthew 4:24.

*Borne of four* Carried upon a couch (▶H02▶ Matthew 9:2) by four men.

◀H02▶ **Mark 2:4.** *The press* The crowd, the multitude of people. Jesus was probably in the large open area or hall in the center of the house. See the notes at ▶H02▶ Matthew 9:2. The people pressed into the area, and blocked up the door so that they could not have access to him.

*They uncovered the roof where he was* See the notes at ▶H02▶ Matthew 9:2.

*When they had broken it up* When they had removed the awning or covering, so that they could let the man down. See the notes at ▶H02▶ Matthew 9:2.

◀H02▶ **Mark 2:5.** *Their faith* Their confidence or belief that he could heal them.

*Son* Literally, “child.” The Hebrews used the words “son” and “child” with a great latitude of signification. They were applied to children, to grandchildren, to adopted children, to any descendants, to disciples, followers, young people, and to dependants. See the notes at <sup><400></sup>Matthew 1:1. In this place it denotes affection or kindness. It was a word of consolation — an endearing appellation, applied by the Saviour to the sick man to show his “compassion,” to inspire confidence, and to assure him that he would heal him.

<sup><402></sup>**Mark 2:12.** *We never saw it on this fashion* Literally, “We never saw it so.” We never saw anything like this.

<sup><403></sup>**Mark 2:13.** *By the sea-side* That is, by the Sea of Tiberias, on the shore of which Capernaum was situated. See the notes at <sup><404></sup>Matthew 4:13.

<sup><404></sup>**Mark 2:14.** *Levi, the son of Alphaeus* The same, undoubtedly, as “Matthew,” the writer of the gospel which bears his name. It was not uncommon among the Jews to have two names.

*The receipt of custom* See the notes at <sup><400></sup>Matthew 9:9.

<sup><405></sup>**Mark 2:15.** *Sat at meat in the house* The words “at meat” are not in the original. The phrase means “as he reclined at his meal,” or “as he was eating.” This feast was made by Matthew in honor of the Saviour. See <sup><406></sup>Luke 5:29.

*Publicans* See the notes at <sup><404></sup>Matthew 5:47.

*Sinners* Sinners of abandoned character — of the same character that publicans commonly sustained — fit companions of publicans — great sinners.

*There were many* That is, many “disciples.” Their following him, leaving their homes, and going with him from place to place, was proof of their attachment to him. There is no doubt that our Saviour, in the early part of his ministry, was extremely popular. Multitudes of the common people attended him, and gave conclusive evidence that they were his real disciples, and it was only after much opposition from the rich and the great that he ever became unpopular among the people. Perhaps no preacher has ever attracted so universal attention, and produced so decisive effects upon mankind, as did our Lord in his personal ministry.

◀4026▶ **Mark 2:16,17.** See the notes at ▶4092▶ Matthew 9:12,13.

◀4028▶ **Mark 2:18.** *And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast* Were accustomed often to fast. Compare ▶4053▶ Luke 5:33; 18:12.

*And they come and say* The disciples of John come, ▶4094▶ Matthew 9:4.

◀4029▶ **Mark 2:19-22.** See the notes at ▶4095▶ Matthew 9:15-17.

◀4023▶ **Mark 2:23-28.** See ▶4011▶ Matthew 12:1-8.

*The cornfields* The fields sown with wheat or barley. The word “corn,” in the Bible, refers only to grain of that kind, and never to “maize” or “Indian corn.”

*To pluck the ears of corn* They were hungry, ▶4011▶ Matthew 12:1. They therefore gathered the wheat or barley as they walked and rubbed it in their hands to shell it, and thus to satisfy their appetite. Though our Lord was with them, and though he had all things at his control, yet he suffered them to resort to this method of supplying their wants. When Jesus, thus “with” his disciples, suffered them to be “poor,” we may learn that poverty is not disgraceful; that God often suffers it for the good of his people; and that he will take care, in some way, that their wants shall be supplied. It was “lawful” for them thus to supply their needs. Though the property belonged to another, yet the law of Moses allowed the poor to satisfy their desires when hungry. See ▶4025▶ Deuteronomy 23:25.

◀4024▶ **Mark 2:24.** *That which is not lawful* That is, that which they esteemed to be unlawful on the “Sabbath day.” It was made lawful by Moses, without any distinction of days, but “they” had denied its lawfulness on the Sabbath. Christ shows them from their own law that it was “not” unlawful.

◀4025▶ **Mark 2:25.** *Have ye never read ...* See the notes at ▶4013▶ Matthew 12:3.

◀4026▶ **Mark 2:26.** *Abiathar the priest* From ▶0201▶ 1 Samuel 21:1, it appears that Ahimelech was high priest at the time here referred to. And from ▶0206▶ 1 Samuel 23:6, it appears that “Abiathar” was the son of “Ahimelech.” Some difficulty has been felt in reconciling these accounts. The probable reason as to why Mark says it was in the days of “Abiathar” is that Abiathar was better known than Ahimelech. The son of the high priest was regarded as

his successor, and was often associated with him in the duties of his office. It was not improper, therefore, to designate him as high priest even during the life of his father, especially as that was the name by which he was afterward known. "Abiathar," moreover, in the calamitous times when David came to the throne, left the interest of Saul and fled to David, bringing with him the ephod, one of the special garments of the high priest. For a long time, during David's reign, he was high priest, and it became natural, therefore, to associate "his" name with that of David; to speak of David as king, and Abiathar the high priest of his time. This will account for the fact that he was spoken of rather than his father. At the same time this was strictly true, that this was done in the days of "Abiathar," who was afterward high priest, and was familiarly spoken of as such; as we say that "General" Washington was present at the defeat of Braddock and saved his army, though the title of "General" did not belong to him until many years afterward. Compare the notes at [◀102▶](#)Luke 2:2. *showbread* See the notes at [◀102▶](#)Matthew 12:4.

[◀102▶](#)**Mark 2:27.** *The sabbath was made for man* For his rest from toil, his rest from the cares and anxieties of the world, to give him an opportunity to call off his attention from earthly concerns and to direct it to the affairs of eternity. It was a kind provision for man that he might refresh his body by relaxing his labors; that he might have undisturbed time to seek the consolations of religion to cheer him in the anxieties and sorrows of a troubled world; and that he might render to God that homage which is most justly due to him as the Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and Redeemer of the world. And it is easily capable of proof that no institution has been more signally blessed to man's welfare than the Sabbath. To that we owe, more than to anything else, the peace and order of a civilized community. Where there is no Sabbath there is ignorance, vice, disorder, and crime. On that holy day the poor and the ignorant, as well as the learned, have undisturbed time to learn the requirements of religion, the nature of morals, the law of God, and the way of salvation. On that day man may offer his praises to the Great Giver of all good, and in the sanctuary seek the blessing of him whose favor is life. Where that day is observed in any manner as it should be, order prevails, morals are promoted, the poor are elevated in their condition, vice flies away, and the community puts on the appearance of neatness, industry, morality, and religion. The Sabbath was therefore pre-eminently intended for man's welfare, and the best interests of mankind demand that it should be

sacredly regarded as an appointment of merciful heaven intended for our best good, and, where improved aright, infallibly resulting in our temporal and eternal peace.

*Not man for the sabbath* Man was made “first,” and then the Sabbath was appointed for his welfare, ~~◊◊◊~~Genesis 2:1-3. The Sabbath was not “first” made or contemplated, and then the man made with reference to that. Since, therefore, the Sabbath was intended for man’s “good,” the law respecting it must not be interpreted so as to oppose his real welfare. It must be explained in consistency with a proper attention to the duties of mercy to the poor and the sick, and to those in peril. It must be, however, in accordance with man’s “real good on the whole,” and with the law of God. The law of God contemplates man’s “real good on the whole;” and we have no right, under the plea that the Sabbath was made for man, to do anything contrary to what the law of God admits. It would not be for our “real good,” but for our real and eternal injury, to devote the Sabbath to vice, to labor, or to amusement.

~~◊◊◊~~**Mark 2:28.** *Therefore the Son of man ...* See the notes at

~~◊◊◊~~Matthew 12:8.

## NOTES ON MARK 3

◀◀◀ **Mark 3:1-5.** See this explained in ▶▶▶ Matthew 12:9-13.

◀◀◀ **Mark 3:4.** *Or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?* It seems to have been a maxim with the Jews that NOT to do good when we have an opportunity is to do evil; NOT to save life is to kill or to be guilty of murder. If a man has an opportunity of saving a man's life when he is in danger, and does not do it, he is evidently guilty of his death. On this principle our Saviour puts this question to the Jews — whether it was better for him, having the POWER to heal this man, to do it, or to suffer him to remain in this suffering condition; and he illustrates it by an example, showing that in a manner of much less importance — that respecting their cattle — they would do on the Sabbath just as “he” would if he should heal this man. The same remark may apply to all opportunities of doing good. “The ability to do good imposes an obligation to do it” (Cotton Mather) He that has the means of feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked, and instructing the ignorant, and sending the gospel to the destitute, and that does it not, is guilty, for he is practically doing evil; he is suffering evils to exist which he might remove. So the wicked will be condemned in the day of judgment because “they did it not,” ▶▶▶ Matthew 25:45. If this is true, what an obligation rests upon the rich to do good!

◀◀◀ **Mark 3:5.** *With anger* With a severe and stern countenance; with indignation at their hypocrisy and hardness of heart. This was not, however, a spiteful or revengeful passion; it was caused by excessive “grief” at their state: “being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.” It was not hatred of the “men” whose hearts were so hard; it was hatred of the sin which they exhibited, joined with the extreme grief that neither his teaching nor the law of God, nor any means which could be used, overcame their confirmed wickedness. Such anger is not unlawful, ▶▶▶ Ephesians 4:26. However, in this instance, our Lord has taught us that anger is never lawful except when it is tempered with grief or compassion for those who have offended.

*Hardness of their hearts* The heart, figuratively the seat of feeling or affection, is said to be tender when it is easily affected by the sufferings of others — by our own sin and danger — by the love and commands of God;

when we are easily made to FEEL on the great subjects pertaining to our interest, <sup><3119></sup>Ezekiel 11:19,20. It is hard when nothing moves it; when a man is alike insensible to the sufferings of others, to the dangers of his own condition, and to the commands, the love, and the threatenings of God. It is most tender in youth, or when we have committed fewest crimes. It is MADE hard by indulgence in sin, by long resisting the offers of salvation, or by opposing any great and affecting appeals which God may make to us by his Spirit or providence, by affliction, or by a revival of religion. Hence, it is that the most favorable period for securing an interest in Christ, or for becoming a Christian, is in youth the first, the tenderest, and the best days of life. Nay, in the days of childhood, in the Sabbath-school, God may be found, and the soul prepared to die.

<sup><4016></sup>**Mark 3:6.** *Straightway* Immediately, or as soon as possible. *Took counsel* Laid a plan. Consulted with them. Literally, “made a consultation.”

*The Herodians* See the notes at <sup><4216></sup>Matthew 22:16.

*How they might destroy him* They hated him, he was so holy; because he reproveth them; because he laid open their hypocrisy; and because he won the hearts of the people and lessened their influence. They therefore determined to remove him, if possible, and thus avoid his reproofs. Sinners would often rather put to death the man that reproves them than forsake their sins. The Pharisees had rather commit any crime, even to the murder of the Messiah, than forsake the sins for which he rebuked them.

<sup><4017></sup>**Mark 3:7,8.** *To the sea* The Sea of Galilee, or to the lonely regions which surrounded the sea, where he might be in obscurity, and avoid their designs against his life. His time had not yet come, and he prudently took care of his life, thus showing that we are not needlessly to throw ourselves into danger.

*Galilee* See the notes at <sup><4122></sup>Matthew 2:22.

*Judea* The southern division of the land of Palestine.

*Jerusalem* Jerusalem was “in” Judea. It is mentioned particularly to show that not only the people of the surrounding country came, but also many from the capital, the place of wealth, and honor, and power.

*Idumea* The country formerly inhabited by the “Edomites.” In the time of the Saviour it was embraced in the country belonging to the Jews. It was

south of Judea proper. The word “Idumea” is a Greek word made from the Hebrew “Edom.” It signifies the land of Edom, a name given to Esau, one of the sons of Isaac, <sup><0250></sup>Genesis 25:30. The word signifies “red,” and the name was given to him because he sought of Jacob red pottage as the price of his birthright. He settled in Mount Seir (<sup><0805></sup>Deuteronomy 2:5), on the south of the land of Canaan, and the country of Idumea was bounded by Palestine on the north. During the Babylonian captivity the Edomites spread themselves into the country of Judea, and occupied a considerable part of the south of Palestine. They had, however, submitted to the rite of circumcision, and were incorporated with the Jews. From them sprang Herod the Great.

*From beyond Jordan* From the region lying east of the river Jordan. The sacred writers lived on the WEST side of Jordan, and by the country “beyond Jordan” they meant that on the EAST side.

*Tyre and Sidon* See the notes at <sup><0112></sup>Matthew 11:21.

<sup><009></sup>**Mark 3:9.** *A small ship* Rather a “boat.” There were properly speaking, no “ships” on the Sea of Tiberias. This was probably a small boat that belonged to the disciples, in which he could draw off from the shore, and teach the people without being pressed by them.

*Lest they should throng him* They pressed upon him in great numbers. He had healed many, and those who were still diseased pressed or crowded on him, so that his labors were interrupted and embarrassed. He therefore withdrew from the multitude, and sought a situation where he might address them to greater advantage.

*As many as had plagues* As many as had diseases or maladies of body or mind. The word plague, now confined to the pestilence, does not express the meaning of the original, and tends to mislead.

<sup><009></sup>**Mark 3:11,12.** *Unclean spirits* Persons who were possessed of evil spirits.

*Thou art the Son of God* The Son of God, by way of eminence. In this place it is equivalent to the Messiah, who was, among the Jews, called the Son of God. Hence, they were charged not to make him known, because he was not desirous that it should be blazoned abroad that he claimed to be the Messiah. He had not yet done what he wished in order to establish his claims to the Messiahship. He was poor and unhonored, and the claim

would be treated as that of an impostor. “For the present,” therefore, he did not wish that it should be proclaimed abroad that he was the Messiah. The circumstance here referred to demonstrates the existence of evil spirits. If these were merely diseased or deranged persons, then it is strange that they should be endowed with knowledge so much superior to those in health. If they were under the influence of an order of spirits superior to man — whose appropriate habitation was in another world — then it is not strange that they should know him, even in the midst of his poverty, to be the Messiah, the Son of God.

⌌**Mark 3:13-19.** For an account of the appointment of the apostles, see the notes at ⌌**Matthew 10:1-4.**

*And calleth unto him whom he would* Those whom he chose; whom he was about to appoint to the apostleship. See the notes at ⌌**John 15:16.**

⌌**Mark 3:14.** *He ordained twelve* The word rendered “ordained” here does not express our notion of ordination to the ministry. It means, literally, “he made” — that is, he “appointed” twelve to be with him.

*twelve* The reason why “twelve” were chosen was, probably, that such a number would be deemed competent witnesses of what they saw; that they could not be easily charged with being excited by sympathy, or being deluded, as a multitude might; and that, being destined to go into all the world, a considerable number seemed indispensable. Perhaps, also, there was some reference to the fact that “twelve” was the number of the twelve tribes of Israel.

⌌**Mark 3:17.** *Boanerges* This word is made up of two Hebrew words signifying “sons of thunder,” meaning that they, on some accounts, “resembled” thunder. See the notes at ⌌**Matthew 1:1.** It is not known why this name was given to James and John. They are nowhere else called by it. Some suppose it was because they wished to call down fire from heaven and consume a certain village of the Samaritans, ⌌**Luke 9:54.** It is, however, more probable that it was on account of something fervid, and glowing, and powerful in their genius and eloquence.

⌌**Mark 3:20.** *They could not so much as eat bread* Their time and attention were so occupied that they were obliged to forego their regular meals. The affairs of religion MAY so occupy the attention of ministers and others as to prevent their engaging in their customary pursuits.

Religion is all-important — far more important than the ordinary business of this life; and there is nothing unreasonable if our TEMPORAL affairs sometimes give way to the higher interests of our own souls and the souls of others. At the same time, it is true that religion is ordinarily consistent with a close attention to worldly business. It promotes industry, economy, order, neatness, and punctuality — all indispensable to worldly prosperity. Of these there has been no more illustrious example than that of our Saviour himself.

⚔️ **Mark 3:21.** *When his friends* Greek, “they who were of him.” Not the apostles, but his relatives, his friends, who were in the place of his nativity.

*Heard of it* Heard of his conduct: his preaching; his appointing the apostles; his drawing such a multitude to his preaching. This shows that by “his friends” were not meant the apostles, but his neighbors and others who “heard” of his conduct.

*They went out to lay hold on him* To take him away from the multitude, and to remove him to his home, that he might be treated as a maniac, so that, by absence from the “causes” of excitement, he might be restored to his right mind.

*They said* That is, common report said; or his friends and relatives said, for they did not believe on him, ⚔️ John 7:5. Probably the enemies of Jesus raised the report, and his relatives were persuaded to believe it to be true.

*He is beside himself* He is delirious or deranged. The reason why this report gained any belief was, probably, that he had lived among them as a carpenter; that he was poor and unknown; and that now, at 30 years of age, he broke off from his occupations, abandoned his common employment, spent much time in the deserts, denied himself the common comforts of life, and set up his claims to be the Messiah who was expected by all the people to come with great pomp and splendor. The charge of “derangement” on account of attention to religion has not been confined to the Saviour. Let a man be made deeply sensible of his sins, and spend much of his time in prayer, and have no relish for the ordinary amusements or business of life; or let a Christian be much impressed with his obligation to devote himself to God, and “act” as if he believed there was an “eternity,” and warn his neighbors of their danger; or let a minister show uncommon zeal and spend his strength in the service of his Master, and the world is

not slow to call it derangement. And none will be more ready to originate or believe the charge than an ungodly and infidel parent or brother, a self-righteous Pharisee or professor in the church. At the same time, men may endanger themselves on the bosom of the deep or in the bowels of the earth for wealth; or may plunge into the vortex of fashion, folly, and vice, and break in upon the hours of repose, and neglect their duties to their family and the demands of business, and in the view of the world it is wisdom and proof of a sane mind! Such is the consistency of boasted reason; such the wisdom and prudence of worldly men!

**Mark 3:22-30.** *And the scribes ...* See the notes at **Matthew 12:24-32**. The occasion of their saying this was, that he had healed a man possessed with a devil. The scribes, who came from Jerusalem to watch his conduct, charged him with having made a compact or agreement with the prince of the devils.

**Mark 3:31-35.** See the notes at **Matthew 12:46-50**.

## NOTES ON MARK 4

◀1001▶ **Mark 4:1-9.** See the parable of the sower explained in the notes at  
◀1001▶ Matthew 13:1-9.

◀1010▶ **Mark 4:10-13.** See the notes at ▶1003▶ Matthew 13:10-17. On ▶1012▶ Mark  
4:12, see the notes at ▶1029▶ John 12:39,40.

*When he was alone* That is, separate from the multitude. When he  
withdrew from the multitude a few followed him for the purpose of more  
instruction.

◀1013▶ **Mark 4:13.** *Know ye not this parable?* This which is so plain and  
obvious.

*How then will ye know all parables?* Those which are more difficult and  
obscure. As they were themselves to be “teachers,” it was important that  
they should be acquainted with the whole system of religion — of much  
more importance for them at that time than for the mass of the people.

◀1014▶ **Mark 4:14-20.** See the notes at ▶1003▶ Matthew 13:18-23.

◀1021▶ **Mark 4:21.** *Is a candle brought ...* A candle is not lit up to be put  
immediately under a measure or a bed, where it can give no light. Its design  
is to give light. So my preaching by parables is not designed to obscure the  
truth, but to throw light on it. You should understand those parables, and,  
understanding them, should impart the truth to others also, as a candle  
throws its beams upon a dark world.

*Bushel* The word here used in the original means a measure for grain  
containing about 12 quarts.

*Bed* A couch, either to sleep on at night or to recline on at their meals.  
Probably the latter is here meant, and is equivalent to our saying a candle is  
not brought to be put “under” the table, but “on” it. See the notes at  
◀1026▶ Matthew 23:6.

◀1002▶ **Mark 4:22.** *There is nothing hid ...* See the notes at ▶1006▶ Matthew  
10:26.

**Mark 4:24.** *Take heed what ye hear* Or, consider well what you hear. Make a good improvement of it.

*With what measure ye mete ...* You shall be treated according to the use you make of your opportunities of learning. If you consider it well, and make a good improvement of what you hear, you shall be well rewarded. If not, your reward shall be small. This is a proverbial expression. See it explained in the notes at **Matthew 7:1,2.**

*Mete* Measure. With what measure ye measure.

*Unto you that hear* To you who are “attentive,” and who improve what you hear.

**Mark 4:25.** *For he that hath ...* See the notes at **Matthew 13:12.** The meaning here seems to be, he that diligently attends to my words shall increase more and more in the knowledge of the truth; but he that neglects them and is inattentive shall become more ignorant; the few things which he had learned he will forget, and his trifling knowledge will be diminished.

*Hath not* Does not improve what he possessed, or does not make proper use of his means of learning.

*That which he hath* That which he had already learned. By this we are taught the indispensable necessity of giving attention to the means of instruction. The attention must be “continued.” It is not sufficient that we have learned some things, or appear to have learned much. All will be in vain unless we go forward, and improve every opportunity of learning the will of God and the way of salvation. So what children are taught will be of little use unless they follow it up and endeavor to improve themselves.

**Mark 4:26.** *So is the kingdom of God* The gospel, or religion in the soul, may be compared to this. See the notes at **Matthew 3:2.** This parable is recorded only by Mark.

**Mark 4:27.** *And should sleep, and rise night and day* Should sleep in the night and rise by day, for so the expression is to be understood. That is, should live in his usual way, without exerting any influence over the growing grain. By this we are not to infer that men are to use no diligence in the obtaining and in the growth of piety; but the illustration shows only that as we cannot tell how grain grows, so we cannot tell the mode in which piety increases in the heart.

*He knoweth not how* This is still true. After all the researches of philosophers, no one has been able to tell the way in which grain grows. They can observe one fact after another; they can see the changes; they can see the necessity of rains and suns, of care and shelter, but beyond this they cannot go. So in religion. We can mark the change; we can see the need of prayer, and self-examination, and searching the Scriptures, and the ordinances of religion, but we cannot tell in what way the religious principle is developed and strengthened. As God unseen, yet by the use of proper means, makes the grass to flourish, so God unseen, but by proper means, nourishes the soul, and the plants of piety spring up, and bloom, and bear fruit. Compare the notes at <sup><4008></sup>John 3:8.

<sup><4008></sup>**Mark 4:28.** *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself* That is, it is done without the power of man. It is done while man is engaged in other things. The scope of this passage does not require us to suppose that our Saviour meant to say that the earth had any productive power of itself, but only that it produced its fruits not by the “power of man.” God gives it its power. It has no power of its own. So religion in the heart is not by the power of man. It grows he cannot tell how, and of course he cannot without divine aid, control it. It is by the power of God. At the same time, as without industry man would have no harvest, so without active effort he would have no religion. Both are connected with his effort; both are to be measured commonly by his effort (<sup><40512></sup>Philippians 2:12); both GROW he cannot tell how; both increase when the proper means are used, and both depend on God for increase.

*First the blade* The green, tender shoot, that first starts out of the earth before the stalk is formed.

*Then the ear* The original means the stalk or spire of wheat or barley, as well as the ear.

*The full corn* The ripe wheat. The grain swollen to its proper size. By this is denoted, undoubtedly, that grace or religion in the heart is of gradual growth. It is at first tender, feeble, perhaps almost imperceptible, like the first shootings of the grain in the earth. Perhaps also, like grain, it often lies long in the earth before there are signs of life. Like the tender grain, also, it needs care, kindness, and culture. A frost, a cold storm, or a burning sun alike injure it. So tender piety in the heart needs care, kindness, culture. It needs shelter from the frosts and storms of a cold, unfeeling world. It needs the genial dews and mild suns of heaven; in other words, it needs

instruction, prayer, and friendly counsel from parents, teachers, ministers, and experienced Christians, that it may grow, and bring forth the full fruits of holiness. Like the grain, also, in due time it will grow strong; it will produce its appropriate fruit — a full and rich harvest — to the praise of God.

**◀106▶ Mark 4:29.** *Immediately he putteth in the sickle* This is the way with the farmer. As soon as the grain is ripe it is cut down. So it is often with the Christian. As soon as he is prepared for heaven he is taken there. But we are not to press this part of the parable, as if it meant that all are removed as soon as they are fit for heaven. Every parable contains circumstances thrown in to fill up the story, which cannot be literally interpreted. In this, the circumstance of sleeping and rising cannot be applied to Christ; and in like manner, the harvest, I suppose, is not to be literally interpreted. Perhaps the whole parable may be differently interpreted. The seed sown may mean the gospel which he was preaching. In Judea its beginnings were small; yet he would leave it, commit it to his disciples, and return to his Father. The gospel, in the meantime, left by him, would take root, spring up, and produce an abundant harvest. In due time he would return, send forth the angels, and gather in the harvest, and save his people forever. Compare the notes at **◀103▶ Matthew 13:31-33.**

**◀106▶ Mark 4:30.** *Whereunto shall we liken ...* This shows the great solicitude which Jesus had to adapt his instructions to the capacity of his disciples. He sought out the most plain and striking illustrations — an example which should be followed by all the ministers of the gospel. At the same time that the instructions of the pulpit should be dignified as our Saviour's always were they should be adapted to the capacity of the audience and easily understood. To do this the following things are necessary in a minister:

1. "Humility." A freedom from a desire to shine, and to astonish the world by the splendor of his talents, and by his learning and eloquence.
2. "Good sense." A satisfaction in being understood.
3. Acquaintance with the habits of thought and manner of speaking among the people. To do this, frequent contact with them is necessary.
4. "A good sound education." It is the people of ignorance, with some smattering of learning, and with a desire to confound and astonish people

by the use of unintelligible words. and by the introduction of matter that is wholly unconnected with the subject, that most often shoot over the heads of the people. Preachers of humility, good sense, and education are content with being understood, and free from the affectation of saying things to amaze and confound their auditors.

*The kingdom of God* See the notes at ~~<1063>~~Matthew 3:2.

~~<1063>~~**Mark 4:31,32.** See the notes at ~~<1063>~~Matthew 13:31,32.

~~<1063>~~**Mark 4:33.** *Spake he the word* The word of God. The doctrines of his gospel.

*As they were able to hear it* As they could comprehend it. They were like children; and he was obliged to lead them along cautiously and by degrees to a full understanding of the plan of salvation.

~~<1063>~~**Mark 4:34.** *Without a parable spake he not unto them* That is, the things pertaining to his kingdom. On other subjects he spake without parables. On these, such was their prejudice, so many notions had they contrary to the nature of his kingdom, and so liable would plain instructions have been to give offence, that he employed this method to “insinuate” truth gradually into their minds, and to prepare them fully to understand the nature of his kingdom.

*They were alone* His disciples.

*He expounded* Explained. Showed them more at length the spiritual meaning of the parables.

~~<1063>~~**Mark 4:35-41.** See the notes at ~~<1063>~~Matthew 8:18-27.

~~<1063>~~**Mark 4:36.** *Even as he was in the ship* They took him without making any preparation for the voyage; without providing any food or raiment. He was sitting in a ship, or boat, instructing the people. In the same boat, probably ill fitted to encounter a storm on the lake, they sailed. This would render their danger more imminent and the miracle more striking.

*There were with him other little ships* Belonging probably to the people, who, seeing him sail, resolved to follow him.

ⓂⓂⓂ **Mark 4:39.** *Peace, be still* There is something exceedingly authoritative and majestic in this command of our Lord. Standing amid the howling tempest, on the heaving sea, and in the darkness of night, by his own power he stills the waves and bids the storm subside. None but the GOD of the storms and the billows could awe by a word the troubled elements, and send a universal peace and stillness among the winds and waves. He MUST, therefore, be divine. The following remarks by Dr. Thomson, long a resident in Syria, and familiar with the scenes which occur there, will farther illustrate this passage, and the parallel account in ⓂⓂⓂ Matthew 8:18-27, and also the passage in ⓂⓂⓂ Matthew 14:23-32. The extract which follows is taken from “The land and the Book,” vol. ii. p. 32, 33:

“To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests, we must remember that the lake lies low — 600 feet lower than the ocean; that the vast and naked plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds of the Hauran and upward to snowy Hermon; that the water-courses have cut out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of this lake, and that these act like gigantic “funnels” to draw down the cold winds from the mountains. On the occasion referred to we subsequently pitched our tents at the shore, and remained for three days and nights exposed to this tremendous wind. We had to double-pin all the tent-ropes, and frequently were obliged to hang with our whole weight upon them to keep the quivering tabernacle from being carried up bodily into the air. No wonder the disciples toiled and rowed hard all that night; and how natural their amazement and terror at the sight of Jesus walking on the waves! The faith of Peter in desiring and “daring” to set foot on such a sea is most striking and impressive; more so, indeed, than its failure after he made the attempt. The whole lake, as we had it, was lashed into fury; the waves repeatedly rolled up to our tent door, tumbling over the ropes with such violence as to carry away the tent-pins. And moreover, those winds are not only violent, but they come done suddenly, and often when the sky is perfectly clear. I once went in to swim near the hot baths, and, before I was aware, a wind came rushing over the cliffs with such force that it was with great difficulty I could regain the shore. Some such sudden wind it was, I suppose, that filled the ship with waves so that it was now full,

while Jesus was asleep on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship; nor is it strange that the disciples aroused him with the cry of Master! Master! Carest thou not that we perish.”

## NOTES ON MARK 5

◀100▶ **Mark 5:1-20.** See this account of the demoniacs fully explained in the notes at ▶108▶ Matthew 8:28-34.

◀100▶ **Mark 5:4.** *He had been often bound with fetters and chains* Efforts had been made to confine him, but his great strength — his strength increased by his malady — had prevented it. There often appears to be a great increase of strength produced by insanity, and what is here stated in regard to this maniac often occurs in Palestine and elsewhere now. Dr. Thomson (“The Land and the Book,” vol. i. p. 213) says respecting this case:

“There are some very similar at the present day — furious and dangerous maniacs, who wander about the mountains, and sleep in tombs and caves. In their worst paroxysms they are quite unmanageable and prodigiously strong.”

◀107▶ Luke 8:27 says of him that “he were no clothes,” or that he was naked, which is also implied in the account in Mark, who tells us that after he was healed he was found “clothed and in his right mind,” ▶104▶ Mark 4:15. This is often a striking characteristic of insanity. Dr. Pritchard (on “Insanity,” p. 26) quotes from an Italian physician’s description of raving madness or mania: “A striking and characteristic circumstance is the propensity to go quite naked. The patient tears his clothes to tatters.” So Dr. Thomson (“The Land and the Book,” vol. i. p. 213) says:

“It is one of the most common traits in this madness that the victims refuse to wear clothes. I have often seen them absolutely naked in the crowded streets of Beirut and Sidon. There are also cases in which they run wildly about the country and frighten the whole neighborhood. These poor wretches are held in the greatest reverence by Muslims, who, through some monstrous perversion of ideas, believe them to be inspired and peculiarly holy.”

◀105▶ **Mark 5:5.** *Cutting himself with stones* These are all marks of a madman — a man bereft of reason, a wretched outcast, strong and dangerous. The inspired penman says that this madness was caused by an

unclean spirit, or by his being under the influence of a devil. That this account is not irrational, see the notes at <sup><4024></sup>Matthew 4:24.

<sup><4026></sup>**Mark 5:6.** *Worshipped him* Bowed down before him; rendered him homage. This was an acknowledgment of his power, and of his control over fallen spirits.

<sup><4029></sup>**Mark 5:9.** *My name is Legion* See the notes at <sup><4029></sup>Matthew 8:29.

<sup><4035></sup>**Mark 5:15.** *Sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind* There could be no doubt of the reality of this miracle. The man had been well known. He had long dwelt among the tombs, an object of terror and alarm. To see him all at once peaceful, calm, and rational, was proof that it was the power of God only that had done it.

*They were afraid* They were awed, as in the presence of God. The word does not mean here that they feared that any EVIL would happen to them, but that they were affected with AWE; they felt that God was there; they were struck with astonishment at what Jesus had done.

<sup><4039></sup>**Mark 5:19.** *Jesus suffered him not* Various reasons have been conjectured why Jesus did not suffer this man to go with him. It might have been that he wished to leave him among the people as a conclusive evidence of his power to work miracles. Or it might have been that the man feared that if Jesus left him the devils would return, and that Jesus told him to remain to show to him that the cure was complete, and that he had power over the devils when absent as well as when present. But the probable reason is, that he desired to restore him to his family and friends. Jesus was unwilling to delay the joy of his friends, and to prolong their anxiety by suffering him to remain away from them.

<sup><4040></sup>**Mark 5:20.** *In Decapolis* See the notes at <sup><4025></sup>Matthew 4:25.

*How great things ...* This was the natural expression of right feeling at being cured of such a calamity. So the desire of sinners freed from sin is to honor Jesus, and to invite the world to participate in the same salvation, and to join them in doing honor to the Son of God. Compare <sup><13716></sup>Psalms 66:16.

◀1062▶ **Mark 5:22-43.** See the account of the raising of Jairus' daughter, and the healing of the woman with an issue of blood, fully explained in the notes at ▶1063▶ Matthew 9:18-26.

◀1062▶ **Mark 5:23.** *Lieth at the point of death* Is dying; in the last agonies.

◀1062▶ **Mark 5:26.** *Had suffered many things* Had resorted to many things painful, by the direction of the physicians, in order to be healed.

◀1062▶ **Mark 5:27.** *Came in the press behind* In the crowd that pressed upon him. This was done to avoid being noticed. It was an act of faith. She was full of confidence that Jesus was ABLE to heal, but she trembled on account of her conscious unworthiness, thus illustrating the humility and confidence of a sinner coming to God for pardon and life.

◀1062▶ **Mark 5:30.** *Virtue had gone out of him* Power to heal. The word in the original means power.

*Who touched my clothes?* This he said, not to obtain information, for he had healed her, and must have known on whom the blessing was conferred; but he did it that the woman might herself make a confession of the whole matter, so that the power of her faith and the greatness of the miracle might be manifested to the praise of God.

◀1062▶ **Mark 5:34.** *Daughter* A word of kindness, tending to inspire confidence and to dissipate her fears.

*Be whole* That is, continue to be whole, for she was already cured.

*Of thy plague* Thy disease; literally, thy "scourge." So a word from Jesus heals the moral malady of the sinner.

◀1062▶ **Mark 5:35,36.** *Why troublest thou ...* It seems that the people had not yet confidence that Jesus could raise the dead. He had not yet done it; and as the child was now dead, and as they supposed that his power over her was at an end, they wished no farther to trouble him. Jesus kindly set the fears of the ruler at rest, and assured him that he had equal power over the dead and the living, and could as easily raise those who had expired as those who were expiring.

◀1062▶ **Mark 5:38.** *The tumult* The confusion and weeping of the assembled people.

*Wailed* Making inarticulate, mournful sounds; howling for the dead.

◀1059▶ **Mark 5:39.** *This ado* This tumult, this bustle or confusion.

*And weep* Weep in this inordinate and improper manner. See the notes at  
◀1023▶ Matthew 9:23.

*But sleepeth* See the notes at ▶1024▶ Matthew 9:24.

◀1054▶ **Mark 5:41.** *Talitha cumi* This is the language which our Saviour commonly spoke. It is a mixture of Syriac and Chaldee, called Syro-Chaldaic. The proper translation is given by the evangelist — “Damsel, arise.”

◀1058▶ **Mark 5:43.** *Something should be given her to eat* “He had raised her by extraordinary power, but he willed that she should be sustained by ordinary means.” He also in this gave full evidence that she was really restored to life and health. The changes were great, sudden, and certain. There could be no illusion. So, when the Saviour had risen, he gave evidence of his own resurrection by eating with his disciples, ▶420▶ John 21:1-13.

## NOTES ON MARK 6

**Mark 6:1-6.** See this passage explained in the notes at **Matthew 13:54-58.**

**Mark 6:7.** *And he called unto him the twelve* See the notes at **Matthew 10:1.**

*And began to send them forth by two and two* In order that they might “support” and “encourage” each other in their work. Amid the trials and opposition with which they would meet, mutual counsel and aid would greatly lighten their burdens and alleviate their calamities. Mutual counsel might also contribute to their success, and lead to “united” plans to advance the kingdom of the Redeemer. Jesus here, as in all the work of religion, consulted at the same time the “happiness” and the “usefulness” of his disciples; nor are they ever separated. Whatever contributes to the “usefulness” of his people produces also their happiness; or, in other words, the secret of being happy is to be “useful.”

**Mark 6:8-11.** See these verses fully explained in the notes at **Matthew 10:9-15.** In **Matthew 10:5** they were commanded not to go among the Gentiles or Samaritans. Mark omits that direction, perhaps, because he was writing for the “Gentiles,” and the direction might create unnecessary difficulty or offence. Perhaps he omits it also because the command was given for a temporary purpose, and was not in force at the time of his writing.

**Mark 6:12.** *Preached that men should repent* See the nature of repentance explained in notes at **Matthew 3:2.** They were now called upon to repent and reform their lives because sin was evil, because the Messiah had come to preach forgiveness to the penitent, and because at “his” presence it was fit that the nation should turn from its sins and prepare to receive him.

**Mark 6:13.** *Cast out many devils* See the notes at **Matthew 4:24.**

*And anointed with oil ...* Anointing with oil was in common use among the Jews in cases of sickness. It was supposed to have a mild, soothing, and alleviating effect on the body. In **James 5:14**, the elders of the church, in

connection with prayer, were directed also to anoint the sick with “oil.” See the notes at that passage. It was also used in wounds. See the notes at <sup><2006></sup>Isaiah 1:6. The good Samaritan poured oil and wine into the wounds of the waylaid Jew, <sup><2008></sup>Luke 10:34. Josephus says that, in the last sickness of Herod, his physicians commanded him to be anointed with oil. It need not be supposed, however, that the apostles used oil for mere “medical” purposes. It was used, probably, like the imposition of hands, or like our Saviour’s anointing the eyes of the blind with clay; also as a sign, in expectation of imparting that aid and comfort from God which was sought, and which was “represented” by the soothing and gentle effect of oil.

<sup><4064></sup>**Mark 6:14-20.** See this account of the death of John the Baptist fully explained in the notes at <sup><4040></sup>Matthew 14:1-12.

<sup><4063></sup>**Mark 6:20.** *For Herod feared John* That is, he stood in awe of him on account of his sanctity, and his boldness and fearlessness in reproofing sin.

*Knowing that he was a just man and an Holy* A holy, pious, upright, honest man — a man who would not be afraid of him, or afraid to speak his real sentiments.

*And observed him* Margin, “kept him, or saved him.” This does not mean that he “observed” or obeyed his teachings, but that he kept him in safe custody in order to preserve him from the machinations of Herodias. He was willing to show his respect for John, and to secure him from danger, and even to do “many things” which might indicate respect for him — at least, to do so much as to guard him from his enemies.

*And did many things* But he did not do the thing which was demanded of him — to break off from his sins. He attempted to make a compromise with his conscience. He still loved his sins, and did “other” things which he supposed might be accepted in the place of putting away, as he ought, the wife of his brother — the polluted and adulterous woman with whom he lived. Perhaps he treated John kindly, or spoke well of him, or aided him in his wants, and attempted in this way to silence his rebukes and destroy his faithfulness. This was probably before John was imprisoned. So sinners often treat ministers kindly, and do much to make them comfortable, and hear them gladly, while they are still unwilling to do THE THING which is demanded of them — to repent and believe the gospel. They expect that

their kind attentions will be accepted in the place of what God demands — repentance and the forsaking of their sins.

**Mark 6:30.** *And the apostles gathered themselves together* That is, those whom he had sent out two and two, **Mark 4:7**. Having traveled around the country, they returned and met the Saviour at Capernaum.

**Mark 6:31.** *A desert place* A retired place, across the sea from Capernaum, where they would be free from interruption.

*There were many coming and going* Coming to be healed and retiring, or coming to hear him preach. It means that they were “thronged,” or that there was a vast multitude attending his preaching.

**Mark 6:32-44.** See this narrative explained in the notes at **Matthew 14:13-21**.

**Mark 6:32.** *By ship* By a boat or a small vessel.

*Privately* Without making their plan known. They INTENDED to go privately. It appears, however, that their intention became known, and multitudes followed them.

**Mark 6:33.** *Afoot thither* On foot to the place where they saw them going.

*Out of all cities* All cities or large towns in the neighborhood.

**Mark 6:34.** *Much people ... as sheep ...* They had no one to teach them and guide them. The priests and scribes were proud and corrupt; they despised the common people and neglected them.

**Mark 6:35.** *The time is far passed* The day is almost gone. It is drawing near night.

**Mark 6:37.** *Two hundred pennyworth of bread* About twenty-eight dollars, or 6 British pounds. See the notes at **Matthew 14:16**. As the disciples had a common purse in which they carried their little property, consisting of the donations of their friends and money to be given to the poor (compare **John 12:6**; **Matthew 26:8,9**; **Luke 8:3**), it is not improbable that they had at this time about this sum in their possession. Philip — for it was he who asked the question (**John 6:7**) — asked,

with a mixture of wonder and agitation, whether they should take ALL their little property and spend it on a single meal? And even if we should, said he, it would not be sufficient to satisfy such a multitude. It was implied in this that, in HIS view, they could not provide for them if they wished to, and that it would be better to send them away than to attempt it.

**Mark 6:40.** *In ranks* Literally, in the form of square beds in a garden. By regularly formed companies.

*By hundreds and by fifties* Some companies had a hundred in them, and some groupings had fifty in them. We do not need to suppose that these were “exactly” formed or arranged, but that this was approximately the number. The expression indicates a “multitude.” There were so many that they sat down, by “hundreds” and by “fifties,” in separate companies, upon the green grass.

**Mark 6:43.** *twelve baskets* Baskets belonging to the disciples, in which they carried their provisions, or, perhaps, belonging to some of the multitude.

*Fragments* Broken pieces of the bread that remained.

**Mark 6:45-56.** See this passage explained in the notes at **Matthew 14:22-36.**

**Mark 6:52.** *They considered not the miracle of the loaves* They did not remember or call to mind the “power” which Jesus had shown in feeding the five thousand by a miracle, and that, having done that, he had power also to save them from the storm.

*Their heart was hardened* Their “mind” was dull to perceive it. This does not mean that they were “opposed” to Jesus, or that they had what we denominate “hardness of heart,” but simply that they were slow to perceive his power. They did not quickly learn, as they ought to have done, that he had all power, and could therefore allay the storm. The word “heart” is frequently used in this sense. See **Ephesians 1:18**, in Greek; **Romans 1:21; 2:15;** **2 Corinthians 4:6.**

**Mark 6:54.** *They knew him* They “reclected” Jesus, because he had been there before and worked miracles.

◀105▶ **Mark 6:56.** *The border of his garment* Compare the notes at  
◀102▶ Matthew 9:20.

## NOTES ON MARK 7

**Mark 7:1-23.** See this passage explained in the notes at **Matthew 15:1-20**.

**Mark 7:1.** *Came from Jerusalem* Probably to observe his conduct, and to find matter of accusation against him.

**Mark 7:2.** *Defiled hands* The hands were considered defiled or polluted unless they were washed previous to every meal.

**Mark 7:3.** *Except they wash their hands oft* Our word “oft” means frequently, often. The Greek word translated oft has been rendered various ways. Some have said that it means “up to the wrist” — unless they wash their hands up to the wrist. Others have said up to the elbow.” There is evidence that the Pharisees had some such foolish rule as this about washing, and it is likely that they practiced it faithfully. But the Greek Word **πυγμή** <sup><4435></sup> — means properly the “fist,” and the meaning here is, “Unless they wash their hands (rubbing them) with the fist” — that is, not merely dipping the finger or hands in water as a sign of ablution, but rubbing the hands together as a ball or fist, in the usual Oriental manner when water is poured over them. Hence, the phrase comes to mean “diligently, carefully, sedulously.” — Robinson, Lexicon. The idea is, unless they pay the utmost attention to it, and do it carefully and according to rule.

*The tradition* What had been handed down; not what was delivered “by writing” in the law of Moses, but what had been communicated from father to son as being proper and binding.

*The elders* The ancients; not the old men “then living,” but those who had lived formerly.

**Mark 7:4.** *Market* This word means either the place where provisions were sold, or the place where men were convened for any purpose. Here it probably means the former.

*Except they wash* In the original, “Except they baptize.” In this place it does not mean to immerse the whole body, but only the hands. There is no evidence that the Jews washed their “whole bodies” every time they came

from market. It is probable that they often washed with the use of a very small quantity of water.

*The washing of cups* In the Greek, “the baptism of cups.”

*Cups* drinking vessels. Those used at their meals.

*Pots* Measures of “liquids.” Vessels made of wood, used to hold wine, vinegar, etc.

*brazen vessels* Vessels made of brass, used in cooking or otherwise. These, if much polluted, were commonly passed through the fire: if slightly polluted they were washed. Earthen vessels, if defiled, were usually broken.

*tables* This word means, in the original, “beds or couches.” It refers not to the “tables” on which they ate, but to the “couches” on which they reclined at their meals. See the notes at <sup><4236></sup>Matthew 23:6. These were supposed to be defiled when any unclean or polluted person had reclined on them, and they deemed it necessary to purify them with water. The word “baptism” is here used — in the original, “the baptism of tables;” but, since it cannot be supposed that “couches” were entirely “immersed” in water, the word “baptism” here must denote some other application of water, by sprinkling or otherwise, and shows that the term is used in the sense of washing in any way. If the word is used here, as is clear it is, to denote anything except entire immersion, it may be elsewhere, and baptism is lawfully performed, therefore, without immersing the whole body in water.

(Barnes’ own theological bias is showing here. Consult Liddell-Scott’s Greek Lexicon, Vine’s Expository Dictionary, Thayer’s New Testament Greek Lexicon, the Baur-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker Lexicon for the New Testament and early patristic writings, the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (10 volumes), and other authorities for the proper meaning of βαπτίζω <sup><907></sup>).

<sup><400></sup>**Mark 7:7.** *For doctrines* For commands of God binding on the conscience. Imposing “your” traditions as equal in authority to the laws of God.

<sup><400></sup>**Mark 7:8.** *Laying aside* Rejecting, or making, it give place to traditions; considering the traditions as superior in authority to the divine

law. This was the uniform doctrine of the Pharisees. See the notes at <sup><4051></sup>Matthew 15:1-9.

*The tradition of men* What has been handed down by human beings, or what rests solely on their authority.

<sup><4009></sup>**Mark 7:9.** *Full well* These words are capable of different interpretations. Some read them as a question: “Do ye do well in rejecting?” etc. Others suppose they mean “skillfully, cunningly.” “You show great cunning or art, in laying aside God’s commands and substituting in their place those of men.” Others suppose them to be ironical. “How nobly you act! From conscientious attachment to your traditions you have made void the law of God;” meaning to intimate by it that they had acted wickedly and basely.

<sup><4071></sup>**Mark 7:17.** *The parable* The “obscure” and difficult remarks which he had made in <sup><4075></sup>Mark 7:15. The word “parable,” here, means “obscure” and “difficult saying.” They could not understand it. They had probably imbibed many of the popular notions of the Pharisees, and they could not understand why a man was not defiled by external things. It was, moreover, a doctrine of the law that men were ceremonially polluted by contact with dead bodies, etc., and they could not understand how it could be otherwise

<sup><4078></sup>**Mark 7:18.** *Cannot defile him* Cannot render his “soul” polluted; cannot make him a “sinner” so as to need this purifying as a “religious” observance.

<sup><4079></sup>**Mark 7:19.** *Entereth not into his heart* Does not reach or affect the “mind,” the “soul,” and consequently cannot pollute it. Even if it should affect the “body,” yet it cannot the “soul,” and consequently cannot need to be cleansed by a religious ordinance. The notions of the Pharisees, therefore, are not founded in reason, but are mere “superstition.”

*The draught* The sink, the vault. “Purging all meats.” The word “purging,” here, means to purify, to cleanse. What is thrown out of the body is the innutritious part of the food taken into the stomach, and leaving only that which is proper for the support of life; and it cannot, therefore, defile the soul.

*All meals* All food; all that is taken into the body to support life. The meaning is, that the economy or process by which life is supported “purifies” or “renders nutritious” all kinds of food. The unwholesome or innutritious parts are separated, and the wholesome only are taken into the system. This agrees with all that has since been discovered of the process of digestion and of the support of life. The food taken into the stomach is by the gastric juice converted into a thick pulp called chyme. The nutritious part of this is conveyed into small vessels, and changed into a milky substance called “chyle.” This is poured by the thoracic duct into the left subclavian vein and mingles with the blood, and conveys nutriment and support to all parts of the system. The useless parts of the food are thrown off.

<sup><1072></sup>**Mark 7:20.** *Hat which cometh out of the man* His words; the expression of his thoughts and feelings; his conduct, as the development of inward malice, anger, covetousness, lust, etc.

*Defileth the man* Makes him really polluted or offensive in the sight of God. This renders the soul corrupt and abominable in his sight. See <sup><1058></sup>Matthew 15:18-20.

<sup><1074></sup>**Mark 7:24-30.** See this miracle explained in the notes at <sup><1052></sup>Matthew 15:21-28.

<sup><1074></sup>**Mark 7:24.** *Would have no man know it* To avoid the designs of the Pharisees he wished to be retired.

<sup><1075></sup>**Mark 7:26.** *A Greek* The Jews called all persons “Greeks” who were not of their nation. Compare <sup><8014></sup>Romans 1:14. The whole world was considered as divided into Jews and Greeks. Though she might not have been strictly a “Greek,” yet she came under this general appellation as a foreigner.

<sup><1078></sup>**Mark 7:31.** *Departing from the coasts* The country or regions of Tyre.

*Came unto the sea of Galilee* The Sea of Tiberias. See the notes at <sup><1048></sup>Matthew 4:18.

*Decapolis* See the notes at <sup><1025></sup>Matthew 4:25. He did not go immediately into Capernaum, or any city where he was known, but into the retired

regions around the Sea of Galilee. This was done to avoid the designs of the Pharisees, who sought his life.

**Mark 7:32.** *They bring* That is, his friends brought, or the people brought.

*One that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech* Not entirely mute, but who spoke indistinctly or with difficulty. His deafness might not have been of long standing, and his speech, therefore, not entirely ruined.

*To put his hand upon him* That is, to cure him. Blessings were commonly imparted by laying on the hands.

**Mark 7:33.** *And he took him aside from the multitude* Why this was done we have no means of information. It might have been to conceal from the multitude everything respecting the “manner” of cure, in order that none might attempt to cure in a similar way.

*And he put his fingers into his ears ...* Why this was done it has been found exceedingly difficult to explain. Jesus had power at once to open his ears and loose his tongue, but for some cause he chose to accompany it with a sign. This was intended, probably, simply to denote that the power of healing came from him; to satisfy the man by the touch that he had this power, and that it could come from no other quarter. Our Saviour often used signs in this way to denote his power to heal. See **Mark 8:23**; **John 9:6**.

**Mark 7:34.** *Looked up to heaven* To lift up the eyes to heaven is an act imploring aid from God, and is an attitude of prayer, **Psalm 121:1,2**; **Mark 6:41**; **John 11:41**.

*He sighed* Pitying the sufferings of the man who stood before him.

*Ephphatha* This word is “Syriac,” the language which our Lord used in addressing the man, and means “Be opened.”

**Mark 7:35.** *The string of his tongue was loosed* The difficulty in his speaking was removed.

**Mark 7:36.** *Tell no man* Do not noise it abroad. He was not ambitious of being known, and he knew that if much was said of his cures, it would excite the jealousy of the Pharisees and endanger his life.

~~<1075>~~ **Mark 7:37.** *Beyond measure* Exceedingly; very much. In the Greek, “Very abundantly.”

*He hath done all things well* All things in a remarkable manner; or, he has perfectly effected the cure of this deaf-mute.

## NOTES ON MARK 8

**Mark 8:1-9.** See this passage explained in the notes at **Matthew 15:32-39.**

**Mark 8:1.** *In those days* While in the wilderness, where he had cured the deaf-mute man.

*Having nothing to eat* Having come unprovided, or having consumed what they had brought.

**Mark 8:2.** *I have compassions* I pity their condition. I am disposed to relieve them.

**Mark 8:9.** *Four thousand* Four thousand “men,” besides women and children. See **Matthew 15:38.**

**Mark 8:10.** *Dalmanutha* In **Matthew 15:39** it is said that he came into the coasts of “Magdala.” See the note on the place.

**Mark 8:11-21.** See this passage explained in **Matthew 16:1-12.**

**Mark 8:12.** *Sighed deeply in his spirit* His heart was deeply affected at their wickedness and hypocrisy. The word “spirit” here is taken as the seat of the emotions, passions, affections. He drew groans deeply from his breast.

*No sign be given* That is, no such sign as they asked, to wit, a sign “from heaven.” He said a sign should be given, the same as was furnished by Jonas, **Matthew 16:4.** But this was not what they “asked,” nor would it be given “because” they asked it.

**Mark 8:15.** *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees* See **Matthew 16:6.**

*Of Herod* Of the Herodians — of Herod and his followers. Matthew, instead of “Herod,” has “the Sadducees.” It is not improbably that he cautioned them against them all. The Pharisees sought his life, and were exceedingly corrupt in their doctrine and practice; the Sadducees denied some of the essential doctrines of religion, and the Herodians probably were distinguished for irreligion, sensuality, and corrupt living. They were

united, therefore, with the Pharisees and Sadducees in opposing the claims of Jesus. Matthew has recorded his caution to avoid the Pharisees and Sadducees, and Mark has added, what Matthew had omitted. the caution likewise to beware of the Herodians. Thus, the evangelists speak the same thing.

**Mark 8:22.** *To Bethsaida* See the notes at **Matthew 11:21**.

*And they bring a blind man unto him* The healing of the blind man of Bethsaida is recorded only by Mark.

*Besought him to touch him* That is, to heal him, for they believed that his touch would restore his sight.

**Mark 8:23.** *Led him out of the town* Why this was done the sacred writers have not told us. It MIGHT have been to avoid the collecting of a multitude, and thus to have escaped the designs of the Pharisees who were attempting to take his life, and chiefly on a charge of sedition and of exciting the people. On this account Jesus chose to perform the miracle alone, thus showing that while he did good, he desired to do it in such a way as to avoid the “appearance” of evil, and to prevent, at the same time, ostentation and the malice of his enemies.

*Spit on his eyes* Why this was done is not known. It was evidently not intended to perform the cure by any natural effect of the spittle. It was to the man a “sign,” an evidence that it was the power of Jesus. The eyes were probably closed. They were perhaps “gummed” or united together by a secretion that had become hard. To apply spittle to them — to wet them — would be a “sign,” a natural expression of removing the obstruction and opening them. The power was not in the spittle, but it attended the application of it.

*Saw aught* Saw anything.

**Mark 8:24.** *I see men, as trees, walking* I see men walking, but see them so indistinctly that, but for their “motion,” I could not distinguish them from trees. I cannot distinctly see their shapes and features. Probably our Lord did not “at once” restore him fully to sight, that he might strengthen his faith. Seeing that Jesus had partially restored him, it was evidence that he could “wholly,” and it led him to exercise faith anew in him, and to feel more strikingly his dependence on him.

**Mark 8:25.** *Every man clearly* Could see their form and features. His sight was completely restored. Though our Lord did not by this, probably, “intend” to teach any lesson in regard to the way in which the mind of a sinner is enlightened, yet it affords a striking illustration of it. Sinners are by nature blind, <sup><1004></sup>2 Corinthians 4:4; <sup><1011></sup>1 John 2:11; <sup><1019></sup>John 9:39. The effect of religion, or of the influence of the Holy Spirit, is to open the eyes, to show the sinner his condition and his danger, and to lead him to “look” on him as a Saviour. Yet at first he sees indistinctly. He does not soon learn to distinguish objects. When converted he is in a new world. Light is shed on every object, and he sees the Scriptures, the Saviour, and the works of creation, the sun, the stars, the hills, the vales, in a new light. He sees the beauty of the plan of salvation, and wonders that he has not seen it before. Yet he sees at first indistinctly. It is only by repeated applications to the Source of light that he sees all things clearly. At first religion appears full of mysteries. Doctrines and facts are brought before his mind that he cannot fully comprehend. He is still perplexed, and he may doubt whether he has ever seen anything aright, or has been ever renewed. Yet let him not despair. Light, in due time, will be shed on these obscure and mysterious truths. Faithful and repeated application to the Father of lights in prayer, and in searching the Scriptures, and in the ordinances of religion, will dissipate these doubts, and he will see all things clearly, and the universe will appear to be filled with one broad flood of light.

**Mark 8:26.** *The town* The town of Bethsaida.

*Nor tell it ...* Lest it excite the jealousy of the Pharisees, and produce commotion and danger.

**Mark 8:27-38.** See this passage illustrated in the notes at <sup><1013></sup>Matthew 16:13-28.

**Mark 8:32.** *He spake that saying openly* With boldness or confidence, or without parables or figures, so that there could be no possibility of misunderstanding him.

**Mark 8:38.** *Ashamed of me* Ashamed to own attachment to me on account of my lowly appearance and my poverty.

*And of my words* My doctrines, my instructions.

*This adulterous and sinful generation* This age given to wickedness, particularly to adultery.

*In the glory of his Father* In the day of judgment. See the notes at ~~4186~~ Matthew 26:64. The meaning of this verse is, Whosoever shall refuse, through pride or wickedness, to acknowledge and serve Christ here, shall be excluded from his kingdom hereafter. He was lowly, meek, and despised; yet there was an inimitable beauty in his character even then. But he will come again in awful grandeur; not as the babe of Bethlehem, not as the man of Nazareth, but as the Son of God, in majesty and glory. They that would not acknowledge him HERE must be rejected by him THERE; they that would not serve him on earth will not enjoy his favor in heaven; they that would cast HIM out and despise him must be cast out BY him, and consigned to eternal, hopeless sorrow.

## NOTES ON MARK 9

**Mark 9:1.** *Verily I say ...* See the notes at **Matthew 16:28**. This verse properly belongs to the preceding chapter and the preceding discourse.

**Mark 9:2-10.** *And after six days ...* See this passage explained in the notes at **Matthew 17:1-9**.

**Mark 9:3.** *No fuller* Rather, no “scourer.” The office of the person here mentioned was to “scour” or “whiten” cloth; not to “full” it, or to render it thicker.

**Mark 9:6.** *He wist not* He “knew not.” He was desirous of saying something, and he knew not what would be proper.

**Mark 9:11-13.** *Why say the scribes ...* See the notes at **Matthew 17:10-13**.

**Mark 9:14-29.** See this passage explained in the notes at **Matthew 17:14-21**.

**Mark 9:14.** *Questioning with them* Debating with the disciples, and attempting to confound them. This he saw as he came down from the mount. In his absence they had taken occasion to attempt to perplex and confound his followers.

**Mark 9:15.** *Were greatly amazed* Were astonished and surprised at his sudden appearance among them.

*Saluted him* Received him with the customary marks of affection and respect. It is probable that this was not by any “formal” manner of salutation, but by the “rush” of the multitude, and by hailing him as the Messiah.

**Mark 9:16.** *What question ye?* What is the subject of your inquiry or debate with the disciples?

**Mark 9:17.** *A dumb spirit* A spirit which deprived his son of the power of speaking.

**Mark 9:18.** *And wheresoever* In whatever place — at home or abroad, alone or in public.

*He teareth him* He rends, distracts, or throws him into convulsions.

*He foameth* At the mouth, like a mad animal. Among us these would all be considered as marks of violent derangement or madness.

*And pineth away* Becomes thin, haggard, and emaciated. This was the effect of the violence of his struggles, and perhaps of the want of food.

**Mark 9:22.** *If thou canst do any thing* I have brought him to the disciples, and they could not help him. If THOU canst do anything, have compassion.

**Mark 9:23.** *If thou canst believe* This was an answer to the request, and there was a reference in the answer to the “doubt” in the man’s mind about the power of Jesus. “I” can help him. If THOU” canst believe,” it shall be done. Jesus here demanded “faith” or confidence in his power of healing. His design here is to show the man that the difficulty in the case was not in the want of “power” on his part, but in the want of “faith” in the man; in other words, to rebuke him for having “doubted” at all whether he “could” heal him. So he demands faith of every sinner that comes to him, and none that come without “confidence” in him can obtain the blessing.

*All things are possible to him that believeth* All things can be effected or accomplished — to wit, by God — in favor of him that believes, and if thou canst believe, this will be done. God will do nothing in our favor without faith. It is right that we should have confidence in him; and if we “have” confidence, it is easy for him to help us, and he willingly does it. In our weakness, then, we should go to God our Saviour; and though we have no strength, yet “he” can aid us, and he will make all things easy for us.

**Mark 9:24.** *Said with tears* The man felt the implied rebuke in the Saviour’s language; and feeling grieved that he should be thought to be destitute of faith, and feeling deeply for the welfare of his afflicted son, he wept. Nothing can be more touching or natural than this. An anxious father, distressed at the condition of his son, having applied to the disciples in vain, now coming to the Saviour; and not having full confidence that he had the proper qualification to be aided, he wept. Any man would have

wept in his condition, nor would the Saviour turn the weeping suppliant away.

*I believe* I have faith. I do put confidence in thee, though I know that my faith is not as strong as it should be.

*Lord* This word here signifies merely “master,” or “sir,” as it does often in the New Testament. We have no evidence that he had any knowledge of the divine nature of the Saviour, and he applied the word, probably, as he would have done to any other teacher or worker of miracles.

*Help thou mine unbelief* Supply thou the defects of my faith. Give me strength and grace to put “entire” confidence in thee. Everyone who comes to the Saviour for help has need of offering this prayer. In our unbelief and our doubts we need his aid, nor shall we ever put sufficient reliance on him without his gracious help.

◀108▶ **Mark 9:30-33.** See the notes at ▶107▶ Matthew 17:22,23.

◀108▶ **Mark 9:31.** *Is delivered* Is given to men to make an atonement by his sufferings and death, and will in due time be taken and killed.

◀108▶ **Mark 9:33-37.** See the notes at ▶108▶ Matthew 18:1-5.

◀108▶ **Mark 9:38.** *We saw one ...* There is no improbability in supposing that this might have been one of the disciples of John, or one of the seventy whom Jesus had sent out, and who, though he did not “personally” attend on Jesus, yet had the power of working miracles. There is no evidence that he was merely an “exorcist,” or that he used the name of Jesus merely as a pretence.

◀108▶ **Mark 9:39.** *Forbid him not* Do not prevent his doing good. If he can work a miracle in my name, it is sufficient proof of attachment to me, and he should not be prevented.

*Can lightly speak evil of me* The word here rendered “lightly” means quickly or “immediately.” The meaning of the passage is, that he to whom God gave the power of working a miracle, by that gave evidence that he could not be found among the enemies of Jesus. He ought not, therefore, to be prevented from doing it. There is no reason to think here that John had any improper designs in opposing the man. He thought that it was evidence that he could not be right, because he did not join them and

follow the Saviour. Our Lord taught him differently. He opposed no one who gave evidence that he loved him. Wherever he might be or whatever his work, yet, if he did it in the name of Jesus and with the approbation of God, it was evidence sufficient that he was right. Christians should rejoice in good done by their brethren of any denomination. There are men calling themselves Christians who seem to look with doubt and suspicion on all that is done by those who do not walk with them. They undervalue their labors, and attempt to lessen the evidences of their success and to diminish their influence. True likeness to the Saviour would lead us to rejoice in ALL the good accomplished, by whomsoever it may be done — to rejoice that the kingdom of Christ is advanced, whether by a Presbyterian, an Episcopalian, a Baptist, or a Methodist. Compare <sup><0018></sup>Philippians 1:18.

<sup><0041></sup>**Mark 9:41.** *Whosoever shall give you a cup ...* How easy it is to be a Christian! What is easier than to give a cup of cold water to a thirsty disciple of Jesus! But it must be in his name — that is, because he “is” a Christian, and therefore from love “to the Saviour.” This is very different from giving it from a mere motive of common kindness. If done from love to Christ, it WILL be rewarded; and hence we learn that the humblest acts of Christians — the lowest service that is rendered — will be graciously noticed by Jesus and rewarded. None are so humble in his kingdom as not to be able to do good, and none so poor that he may not show attachment to him. The feeblest service will be accepted, and acts of love that may be forgotten by MAN, will be remembered by HIM, and rewarded in heaven.

<sup><0042></sup>**Mark 9:42-50.** See the notes at <sup><0037></sup>Matthew 18:7-9. Millstone. See <sup><0036></sup>Matthew 18:6.

<sup><0044></sup>**Mark 9:44-46.** *Their worm* This figure is taken from <sup><0024></sup>Isaiah 66:24. See the notes at that passage. In describing the great prosperity of the kingdom of the Messiah, Isaiah says that the people of God “shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men who have transgressed against God.” Their enemies would be overcome. They would be slain. The people of God would triumph. The figure is taken from heaps of the dead slain in battle; and the prophet says that the number would be so great that their worm — the worm feeding on the dead — would not die, would live long — as long as there were carcasses to be devoured; and that the fire which was used to burn the bodies of the dead would continue long to burn, and would not be extinguished until they were consumed. The figure, therefore, denotes great misery, and certain and terrible destruction. In

these verses it is applied to the state beyond the grave, and is intended to denote that the destruction of the wicked will be awful, widespread, and eternal. It is not to be supposed that there will be any “real” worm in hell — perhaps no material fire; nor can it be told what was particularly intended by the undying worm. There is no authority for applying it, as is often done, to remorse of conscience, any more than to any other of the pains and reflections of hell. It is a mere image of loathsome, dreadful, and “eternal” suffering. In what that suffering will consist it is probably beyond the power of any living mortal to imagine. The word THEIR, in the phrase “their worm,” is used merely to keep up the “image” or “figure.” Dead bodies putrefying in that valley would be overrun with worms, while the “fire” would not be confined to them, but would spread to other objects kindled by combustibles through all the valley. It is “not” meant, therefore, that every particular sufferer has a special worm, or has particular sins that cause remorse of conscience. That is a truth, but it does not appear that it is intended to be taught here.

◀109▶ **Mark 9:49.** *Every one shall be salted wth fire* Perhaps no passage in the New Testament has given more perplexity to commentators than this, and it may be impossible now to fix its precise meaning. The common idea affixed to it has been, that as salt preserves from putrefaction, so fire, applied to the wicked in hell, will have the property of preserving them in existence, or they will “be” preserved amid the sprinkling of fire, to be continually in their sufferings a sacrifice to the justice of God; but this meaning is not quite satisfactory. Another opinion has been, that as salt was sprinkled on the victim preparatory to its being devoted to God (see ▶108▶ Leviticus 2:13), so would “the apostles,” by trials, calamities, etc., represented here by “fire,” be prepared as a sacrifice and offering to God. Probably the passage has no reference at all to future punishment; and the difficulty of interpreting it has arisen from supposing it to be connected with the 48th verse, or given as a “reason” for what is said in “that” verse, rather than considering it as designed to illustrate the “general design” of the passage. The main scope of the passage was not to discourse of future punishment; that is brought in incidentally. The chief object of the passage was —

**1.** To teach the apostles that “other men,” not “with them,” might be true Christians, ▶108▶ Mark 9:38,39.

2. That they ought to be disposed to look favorably upon the slightest evidence that they “might be true believers,” <sup><4094></sup>Mark 9:41.
3. That they ought to avoid giving “offence” to such feeble and obscure Christians, <sup><4092></sup>Mark 9:42.
4. That “everything” calculated to give offence, or to dishonor religion, should be removed, <sup><4093></sup>Mark 9:43. And,
5. That everything which would endanger their salvation should be sacrificed; that they should “deny” themselves in every way in order to obtain eternal life. In this way they would be “preserved” to eternal life.

The word “fire,” here, therefore denotes self-denials, sacrifices, trials, in keeping ourselves from the gratification of the flesh. As if he had said, “Look at the sacrifice on the altar. It is an offering to God, about to be presented to him. It is sprinkled with “salt, emblematic of PURITY, of PRESERVATION and of fitting it, therefore, for a sacrifice.” So “you” are devoted to God. You are sacrifices, victims, offerings to him in his service. To make you “acceptable” offerings, every thing must be done to “preserve” you from sin and to “purify” you. Self-denials, subduing the lusts, enduring trials, removing offences, are the proper “preservatives” in the service of God. Doing this, you will be acceptable offerings and be saved; without this, you will be “unfit” for his eternal service and will be lost.”

<sup><4095></sup>**Mark 9:50.** *Lost its saltness ...* See the notes at <sup><40513></sup>Matthew 5:13.

*Have salt in yourselves* Have the preserving, purifying principle always; the principles of denying yourselves, of suppressing pride, ambition, contention, etc., and thus you will be an acceptable offering to God.

*Have peace* Avoid contention and quarrelling, struggling for places, honors, and office, and seek each other’s welfare, and religion will be honored and preserved in the world.

## NOTES ON MARK 10

**Mark 10:1-12.** See this question about divorce explained in the notes at **Matthew 19:1-12.**

**Mark 10:12.** *And if a woman shall put away her husband* It would seem, from this, that a woman, among the Jews, had the power of separating herself from her husband, yet this right is not given her by the law of Moses. There is not, however, any positive evidence that females often claimed or exercised this right. Cases had occurred, indeed, in which it had been done. The wife of Herod had rejected her former husband and married Herod. And though instances of this kind “might” have been attempted to be defended by the example of Pagans, yet our Saviour was desirous of showing them that it did not free them from the charge of adultery. The apostles were going forth to teach Pagan nations, and it was proper for Christ to teach them how to act in such cases, and to show them that they were cases of real adultery.

**Mark 10:13-16.** See the notes at **Matthew 19:13-15.**

**Mark 10:13.** *Should touch them* That is, should lay his hands on them, and pray for them, and bless them. Compare **Matthew 19:13.** It was common to lay the hands on the head of a person for whom a blessing was asked. See the case of Jacob, **Genesis 48:14.**

**Mark 10:14.** *Saw it* Saw the conduct of his disciples.

*Was much displeased* Because, first, it was a pleasure to HIM to receive and bless little children; and, secondly, they were doing what they were not commanded to do — interfering in a case where it was evidently improper.

**Mark 10:15.** *Whosoever shall not receive* Whosoever shall not manifest the spirit of a little child.

*The kingdom, of God* The gospel. The new dispensation by the Messiah, “or the reign of God through a Mediator.” See the notes at **Matthew 3:2.**

*As a little child* With the temper and spirit of a child — teachable, mild, humble, and free from prejudice and obstinacy.

*Shall not enter therein* Shall not be a Christian; shall not be a “real” member of the family of Christ on earth. though he may be a “professor,” and shall never enter heaven.

<4106> **Mark 10:16.** *Took them up in his arms* These were small children.

*Blessed them* Prayed for them, sought a blessing on them, or gave them the assurance of his favor as the Messiah. How happy would it be if ALL parents thus felt it to be their privilege to present their children to Christ! The question with a parent should be, not whether he OUGHT to present them by prayer, but whether he “may” do it. And so, too, the question respecting infant baptism is not so much whether a parent OUGHT to devote his children to God in this ordinance, as whether he MAY do it. It is an inestimable privilege to do it; it is not a matter of mere stern and iron-handed duty; and a parent with right feelings will come to God with his children “in every way,” and seek his blessing on them in the beginning of their journey of life. Our children are given to us but for a little time. They are in a world of danger, sin, and woe. They are exposed to temptation on every hand. If God be not their friend, they “have” no friend that can aid them in the day of adversity, or keep them from the snares of the destroyer. If HE is their friend they have nothing to fear. The “proper expression, then, of parental feeling,” is to come and offer them early to God. A parent should ask only the “privilege” of doing it. He should seek God’s favor as the best inheritance of his children; and if a parent MAY devote his offspring to God — if he MAY daily seek his blessing on them by prayer — it is all that he should ask. With proper feelings he will rush to the throne of grace, and daily seek the protection and guidance of God for his children amid the temptations and snares of an ungodly world, and implore HIM to be their guide when the parent shall be laid in the silent grave. So children who have been devoted to God — who have been the daily objects of a father’s prayers and a mother’s — tears who have been again and again presented to Jesus in infancy and childhood — are under the most sacred obligations to live to God. They should never forget that a parent sought the favor of God as the chief blessing; and having been offered to “Jesus” by prayer and baptism in their first days on earth, they should make it their great aim to be prepared to meet “him” when he shall come in the clouds of heaven.

<4107> **Mark 10:17-31.** See this passage illustrated in the notes at

<4096> Matthew 19:16-30.

◀1107▶ **Mark 10:17.** *Gone forth* From the place where he had been teaching.

*Into the way* Into the road or path on his journey.

*Running* Thus showing the intensity with which he desired to know the way of life. Zeal to know the way to be saved is proper, nor is it possible that it should be too intense if well directed. Nothing else is so important, and nothing demands, therefore, so much effort and haste.

◀1108▶ **Mark 10:19.** *Defraud not* Do not take away your neighbor's property by fraud or dishonesty. To "cheat" or "defraud," supposes a covetous desire of a neighbor's property, and is usually attended with "falsehood" or "false witness" against a neighbor in obtaining it. It is thus a violation of the ninth and tenth commandments; and our Saviour very properly, therefore, "condensed the two," and expressed their substance in this — not to defraud. It is, besides, expressly forbidden in ◀1109▶ Leviticus 19:13: "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor."

◀1102▶ **Mark 10:21.** *Jesus beholding him, loved him* What occurred afterward showed that the young man did not love the Saviour, or was not a true disciple; so that this expression denotes simply natural affection, or means that Jesus was pleased with his amiableness, his morality, and his "external" regard for the law of God. At the same time, this was entirely consistent with deep sorrow that he would not give his heart to God, and with deep abhorrence of such a love of the world as to blind the mind to the beauty of true religion, and to lead to the rejection of the Messiah and the destruction of the soul.

*One thing thou lackest* When the young man came to Jesus he asked him, "What lack I yet?" ◀1103▶ Matthew 19:20. This "question" Mark has omitted, but he has retained the "answer." The answer means, there is "one thing" yet wanting. Though all that you have said should be "true," yet, to make the system complete, or to show that you "really" are disposed to keep the commands of God, go and sell your property. See whether you love "God" more than you do your "wealth." By doing that you will show that your love of God is supreme; that your obedience is not merely "external" and "formal," but "sincere" and "real;" the thing now "lacking" will be made up.

◀1104▶ **Mark 10:24.** *Children* An expression of affection, perhaps also implying a reproof that their slowness of understanding was like that of

children. When they should have seen at once the truth of what he said, they were slow to learn it. It became necessary, therefore, to “repeat” what he had said.

*How hard* With how much difficulty.

◀1026▶ **Mark 10:26.** *Out of measure* Very much, or exceedingly. The Greek means no more than this.

◀1027▶ **Mark 10:30.** *An hundred-fold* One hundred times as much.

*In this time* In this life. In the time that he forsakes all.

*Houses ...* This cannot be taken literally, as promising a hundred times as many “mothers, sisters,” etc. It means, evidently, that the loss shall be a hundred times “compensated” or made up; or that, in the possession of religion, we have a hundred times the “value” of all we forsake. This consists in the pardon of sin, in the favor of God, in peace of conscience, in support in trials and in death, and in raising up “friends” in the place of those who are left — “spiritual brethren, and sisters, and mothers,” etc. And this corresponds to the experience of all who ever became Christians. At the same time, it is true that godliness is profitable “for all things,” having the promise of the life that is, as well as of that which is to come. See the notes at ~~5018~~1 Timothy 4:8. “The favor of God” is the security for every blessing. Obedience to his law secures industry, temperance, chastity, economy, prudence, health, and the confidence of the world — all indispensable to success in life, and all connected, commonly, with success. Though the wicked “sometimes” prosper, yet the “surest” way of prosperity is to fear God and keep his commandments. Thus will all “needed” blessings descend on us “here,” and “eternal” blessings hereafter.

*With persecutions* Persecutions, or the contempt of the world, and bodily sufferings on account of their religion, they “must” meet. Jesus did not conceal this; but he consoled them. He assured them that “amid” these, or perhaps it should be rendered “after” these, they should find friends and comfort. It is well to bear trial if “God” be our Friend. With the promises of the Bible in our hand, we may hail persecutions, and thank God that, amid so many sorrows, he has furnished such abundant consolations.

◀1028▶ **Mark 10:32-34.** See the notes at ~~1027~~Matthew 20:17-19.

◀103▶ **Mark 10:32.** *Jesus went before him* In the manner of an intrepid, fearless leader and guide, exposing “himself” to danger and death rather than his followers.

*And they rather amazed ...* They were afraid that evil would befall him in the city; that the scribes and Pharisees, who had so often sought to kill him, would then do it. Their fear and amazement were increased when he told them what would befall him there. They were amazed that, when he knew so well what would happen, he should still persevere in going up to the city.

◀105▶ **Mark 10:35-45.** See the notes at ◀100▶ Matthew 20:20-28.

◀105▶ **Mark 10:35.** *And James and John ... came unto him* They did this through the instrumentality of their mother. They did not come in “person,” but they got their mother to make the request for them. Compare the notes at ◀100▶ Matthew 20:20.

◀106▶ **Mark 10:46-52.** See this passage explained in the notes at ◀100▶ Matthew 20:29-34.

◀106▶ **Mark 10:46.** *Blind Bartimeus* Matthew says there were two. Mark mentions but one, though he does not deny that there was another. He mentions this man because he was well known — Bartimeus, THE “blind man.”

◀105▶ **Mark 10:50.** *Casting away his garment* That is, his outer garment — the one that was thrown loosely over him. See the notes at ◀100▶ Matthew 5:40. He threw it off, full of joy at the prospect of being healed, and that he might run without impediment to Jesus. This may be used to illustrate — though it had no such original reference — the manner in which a sinner should come to Jesus. He should throw away the garments of his own righteousness — he should rise speedily — should run with joy — should have full faith in the power of Jesus, and cast himself entirely upon his mercy.

## NOTES ON MARK 11

◀1103▶ **Mark 11:1-11.** See this passage illustrated in the notes at  
 ▶1201▶ Matthew 21:1-16.

◀1105▶ **Mark 11:4.** *Two ways met* A crossroads. A public place, probably near the center of the village.

◀1105▶ **Mark 11:5.** *What do ye, loosing the colt?* Or, why do ye do this? What authority have you for doing it?

◀1111▶ **Mark 11:11-26.** See this passage explained in the notes at  
 ▶1218▶ Matthew 21:18-22.

◀1111▶ **Mark 11:11.** *Into the temple* Not into the edifice properly called “the temple,” but into the “courts” which surrounded the principal edifice. Our Saviour, not being of the tribe of Levi, was not permitted to enter into the holy or most holy place; and when, therefore, it is said that he went into the “temple,” it is always to be understood of the “courts” surrounding the temple. See the notes at ▶1212▶ Matthew 21:12.

*And when he had looked round about upon all things* Having seen or examined everything. He saw the abominations and abuses which he afterward corrected. It may be a matter of wonder that he did not “at once” correct them, instead of waiting to another day; but it may be observed that God is slow to anger; that he does not “at once” smite the guilty, but waits patiently before he rebukes and chastises.

*The eventide* The evening; the time after three o’clock p.m. It is very probable that this was before sunset. The religious services of the temple closed at the offering of the evening sacrifice, at three o’clock, and Jesus probably soon left the city.

◀1113▶ **Mark 11:13,14.** *Afar off* See the notes at ▶1219▶ Matthew 21:19.

◀1115▶ **Mark 11:15-24.** See the notes at ▶1212▶ Matthew 21:12-22.

◀1116▶ **Mark 11:16.** *Any vessel* Any vessel used in cooking, or connected with the sale of their articles of merchandise.

**¶1118** **Mark 11:18.** *All the people were astonished* He became popular among them. The Pharisees saw that their authority was lessened or destroyed. They were therefore envious of him, and sought his life.

*His doctrine* His teaching. He taught with power and authority so great that the multitudes were awed, and were constrained to obey.

**¶1121** **Mark 11:21.** *Thou cursedst* To curse means to devote to destruction. This is its meaning here. It does not in this place imply blame, but simply that it should be destroyed.

**¶1122** **Mark 11:22.** *Have faith in God* Literally, “Have the faith of God.” This may mean, have strong faith, or have confidence in God; a strong belief that he is able to accomplish things that appear most difficult with infinite ease, as the fig-tree was made to wither away by a word.

**¶1125** **Mark 11:25.** *And when ye stand praying* When ye pray. It seems that the posture in prayer was sometimes standing and sometimes kneeling. God looks upon “the heart” rather than upon our position in worship; and if the heart be right, any posture may be proper. It cannot be doubted, however, that in private, in the family, and wherever it can be conveniently done, the kneeling posture is more proper, as expressing more humility and reverence, and more in accordance with Scripture examples. Compare **¶986** Psalm 95:6; **¶463** 2 Chronicles 6:13; **¶760** Daniel 6:10; **¶2241** Luke 22:41; **¶4081** Acts 7:60; 9:40. Yet a subject like this may be made of too much consequence, and we should be careful that anxiety about a mere form should not exclude anxiety about a far more important matter — the state of the soul.

*Forgive ...* See the notes at **¶162** Matthew 6:12,25.

**¶1127** **Mark 11:27-33.** See the notes at **¶1123** Matthew 20:23-27.

## NOTES ON MARK 12

**Mark 12:1-12.** See this parable explained in the notes at **Matthew 21:33-46.**

**Mark 12:13-17.** See the notes at **Matthew 22:15-22.**

**Mark 12:18-27.** See this passage fully explained in the notes at **Matthew 22:23-33.**

**Mark 12:25.** *Are as the angels* That is, as the angels in respect to connections and relations. What those connections and relations may be we know not, but this passage teaches that the special relation of “marriage” will not exist. It does not affirm, however, that there will be no recollection of former marriages, or no recognition of each other as having existed in this tender relation.

**Mark 12:26.** *How in the bush* At the burning bush. See **Exodus 3:16.** The meaning is, “in that part of the book of Exodus which contains the account of the burning bush. When there were no chapters and verses, it was the easiest way of quoting a book of the Old Testament “by the subject,” and in this way it was often done by the Jews.

**Mark 12:28-34.** See the notes at **Matthew 22:34-40.**

**Mark 12:28.** *Perceiving that he answered them well* That is, with wisdom, and with a proper understanding of the law. In this case the opinion of the Saviour corresponded with that of the Pharisees; and the question which this scribe put to him now seems to have been one of the very few candid inquiries of him by the Jews for the purpose of obtaining information. Jesus answered it in the spirit of kindness, and commended the conduct of the man.

**Mark 12:29.** *Hear, O Israel!* This was said to call the attention of the Jews to the great importance of the truth about to be proclaimed. See **Deuteronomy 6:4,5.**

*The Lord our God ...* Literally, “Yahweh, our God, is one Yahweh.” The other nations worshipped many gods, but the God of the Jews was one, and one only. Jehovah was undivided; and this great truth it was the design

of the separation of the Jewish people from other nations to keep in mind. This was the “peculiar” truth which was communicated to the Jews, and this they were required to keep and remember forever.

**Mark 12:30.** *And thou shalt love ...* If Yahweh was the “only” God, then they ought not to love any other being supremely — then they might not bow down before any idol. They were required to love God above all other beings or things, and with all the faculties of their minds. See the notes at **Matthew 22:37**.

**Mark 12:32-34.** This answer of the scribe is not found in Matthew.

*Is more than all* Is of more importance and value.

*Discreetly* Wisely, according to truth.

*Not far from the kingdom of God* Thou who dost prefer the “internal” to the “external” worship of God — who hast so just a view of the requirements of the law — canst easily become a follower of me, and art almost fit to be numbered among my disciples. This shows that a proper understanding of the Old Testament, of its laws and requirements, would prepare the mind for Christianity, and suit a person at once to embrace it when presented. One system is grafted on the other, agreeably to **Galatians 3:24**.

*And no man after that durst ask him any question* That is, no one of the scribes, the Pharisees, or the Sadducees durst ask him a question for the purpose of “tempting” him or entangling him. He had completely silenced them. It does not appear, however, but that his “disciples” dared to ask him questions for the purpose of information.

**Mark 12:35-37.** See the notes at **Matthew 22:41-46**.

**Mark 12:37.** *The common people heard him gladly* The success of the Saviour in his preaching was chiefly among the common or the poorer class of people. The rich and the mighty were too proud to listen to his instructions. So it is still. The main success of the gospel is there, and there it pours down its chief blessings. This is not the fault of “the gospel.” It would bless the rich and the mighty as well as the poor, if they came with like humble hearts. God knows no distinctions of men in conferring his favors; and wherever there is a poor, contrite, and humble spirit — be it

clothed in rags or in purple — be it on a throne or on a dunghill — there he confers the blessings of salvation.

¶**Mark 12:38.** *In his doctrine* In his “teaching,” for so it should be rendered.

*Beware of the scribes* Be on your guard. Be cautious about hearing them or following them.

*Scribes* The learned men of the Jewish nation.

*Which love to go in long clothing* In long, flowing robes, as significant of their consequence, leisure, and learning.

*Salutations ...* See the notes at ¶**Matthew 23:6,7.**

¶**Mark 12:40.** *Which devour widows' houses* Which devour the families of widows, or the means of supporting their families. This they did under pretence of counseling them in the knowledge of the law and in the management of their estates. They took advantage of their ignorance and their unprotected state, and either extorted large sums for their counsel, or perverted the property to their own use.

No wonder that our Saviour denounced them! If there is any sin of special enormity, it is that of taking advantage of the circumstances of the poor, the needy, and the helpless, to wrong them out of the pittance on which they depend for the support of their families; and as God is the friend of the widow and the fatherless, it may be expected that such will be visited with heavy condemnation.

*For a pretence* For show, or “pretending” great devotion.

¶**Mark 12:41.** *Sat over against* Opposite to, in full sight of.

*The treasury* This was in the court of the women. See the notes at ¶**Matthew 21:12.** In that court there were fixed a number of places or coffers, made with a large open mouth in the shape of a trumpet, for the purpose of receiving the offerings of the people; and the money thus contributed was devoted to the service of the temple — to incense, sacrifices, etc.

¶**Mark 12:42.** *Two mites* The word translated “mite” denotes a small coin made of brass — the smallest in use among the Jews. The precise

value cannot now be easily estimated. It was much less than any coin we have, as the “farthing” was less than an English farthing. It was in value about three mills and a half, or one-third of a cent.

**Mark 12:43.** *This poor widow hath cast more in ...* That is, more in proportion to her means, and therefore more that was acceptable to God. He does not mean that this was more in value than all which the others had put in but it showed more love to the sacred cause, more self-denial, and, of course, more sincerity in what she did. This is the rule by which God will reward us. Compare **2 Corinthians 8:12**.

**Mark 12:44.** *Of their abundance* Of their superfluous store. They have given what they did not “need.” They could afford it as well as not, and in doing it they have shown no self-denial.

*She of her want* Of her poverty.

*All her living* All that she had to live on. She trusted in God to supply her wants, and devoted her little property entirely to him. From this passage we may learn:

1. That God is pleased with offerings made to him and his cause.
2. That it is our duty to devote our property to God. We received it from him, and we shall not employ it in a proper manner unless we feel that we are stewards, and ask of him what we shall do with it. Jesus approved the conduct of all who had given money to the treasury.
3. That the highest evidence of love to the cause of religion is not the “amount” given, but the amount compared with our means.
4. That it “may be” proper to give “all” our property to God, and to depend on his providence for the supply of our wants.
5. That God does not despise the humblest offering, if made in sincerity. He loves a cheerful giver.
6. That there are none who may not in this way show their love to the cause of religion. There are few, very few students in Sunday Schools who may not give as much to the cause of religion as this poor widow; and Jesus would be as ready to approve their offerings as he was hers: and the time to “begin” to be benevolent and to do good is in early life, in childhood.

**7.** That it is every man's duty to inquire, not how MUCH he gives, but how much compared with what he HAS; how much self-denial he practices, and what is the "motive" with which it is done.

**8.** We may remark that few practice self-denial for the purpose of charity. Most give of their abundance — that is, what they can spare without feeling it, and many feel that this is the same as throwing it away. Among all the thousands who give to these objects, how few deny themselves of ONE comfort, even the least, that they may advance the kingdom of Christ!

## NOTES ON MARK 13

The principal things in this chapter are fully explained in Matthew 24.

◀113▶ **Mark 13:1.** *What manner of stones* The stones here referred to were those used in the building of the temple, and the walls on the sides of Mount Moriah, on which the temple stood. The temple was constructed of white marble, and the blocks were of a prodigious size. Josephus says that these stones were, some of them, 50 feet long, 24 feet broad, and 16 feet in thickness.

◀113▶ **Mark 13:3.** *On the mount of Olives, over against the temple* The Mount of Olives was directly east of Jerusalem, and from it there was a fine view of the temple.

◀113▶ **Mark 13:9.** *Take heed to yourselves* Be cautious that no man deceive you; or, take care of your lives, not to run into unnecessary danger.

*To councils* The higher ecclesiastical courts of the Jews, including the Sanhedrin, or great council of the nation.

*Rulers and kings* Referring to Roman officers.

*For a testimony against them* Rather to bear testimony to them, or to be witnesses “before them” of the truth. This was “for the sake” of Jesus, or because they were attached to him; and God would overrule it so that at the same time they should bear witness “to” the rulers of the truth, as was the case with Peter and John, Acts 4; with Stephen, Acts 6—7; and with Paul, Acts 23; 24:24,25.

◀113▶ **Mark 13:11.** *Neither do ye premeditate* Do not think beforehand, or “prepare” an answer. You know not what the accusations will be, and God will furnish you with a reply that shall be adapted to the occasion.

*Not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit* This is a full promise that they should be inspired, and consequently their defenses recorded in the Acts of the Apostles are the words of the Holy Spirit. There could be no more explicit promise that they should be under an infallible guidance, and we are not left to doubt that they were taught of God. At the same time, this was a most desirable and gracious aid. They were illiterate, unknown,

without power. They were unfit of themselves to make the important statements of religion which were requisite, but God gave them power, and they spake with a wisdom, fearlessness, pungency, and ability which no other men have ever manifested — full proof that these illiterate fishermen were under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

**Mark 13:12.** *The brother shall betray ...* The brother shall give up in a treacherous manner his brother to be put to death, on account of his attachment to Jesus. Through fear, or from the hope of reward and from the hatred of the gospel, he will overcome all the natural ties of brotherhood. and give up his own kindred to be burnt or crucified. Perhaps nothing could more clearly show the dreadful evil of those times, as well as the natural opposition of the heart to the religion of Christ.

**Mark 13:15.** *On the house-top* See the notes at **Matthew 9:1-8.**

**Mark 13:32.** *Neither the Son* This text has always presented serious difficulties. It has been asked, If Jesus had a divine nature, how could he say that he knew not the day and hour of a future event? In reply, it has been said that the passage was missing, according to Ambrose, in some Greek manuscripts; but it is now found in all, and there can be little doubt that the passage is genuine. Others have said that the verb rendered “knoweth” means sometimes to “make” known or to reveal, and that the passage means, “that day and hour none makes known, neither the angels, nor the Son, but the Father.” It is true that the word has sometimes that meaning, as in **1 Corinthians 2:2**, but then it is natural to ask where has “the Father” made it known? In what place did he reveal it? After all, the passage has no more difficulty than that in **Luke 2:52**, where it is said that Jesus increased in wisdom and stature. He had a human nature. He grew as a man in knowledge. As a man his knowledge must be finite, for the faculties of the human soul are not infinite. As a man he often spoke, reasoned, inquired, felt, feared, read, learned, ate, drank, and walked. Why are not all these, which imply that he was a “man” — that, “as a man,” he was not infinite — why are not these as difficult as the want of knowledge respecting the particular “time” of a future event, especially when that time must be made known by God, and when he chose that the man Christ Jesus should grow, and think, and speak “as a man?”

**Mark 13:34.** *Who left his house* The word “house” often means family. Our Saviour here represents himself as going away, leaving his

household the church, assigning to the apostles and all his servants their duty, and leaving it uncertain when he would return. Since his return was a matter of vast consequence, and as the affairs of his kingdom were entrusted to them, just as the affairs of a house are to servants when the master is absent, so it was of vast importance that they should be faithful at their post, that they should defend the house from danger, and be ready for his return.

*The porter* The doorkeeper. To the janitor or doorkeeper was entrusted particularly the care of the house, whose duty it was to attend faithfully on those who came and those who left the house.

◀1135▶ **Mark 13:35.** *Watch ye* Be diligent, faithful, and waiting for the return of your Lord, who will come at an unexpected hour.

*Master of the house* Denoting here the Lord Jesus.

*At even, or at midnight, or ...* This refers to the four divisions into which the Jews divided the night.

◀1136▶ **Mark 13:36.** *Find you sleeping* Inattentive to your post, neglecting your duty, and unprepared for his coming.

◀1137▶ **Mark 13:37.** *I say unto all, Watch* This command was proper, not only for those who were expecting the calamities that were soon to come upon the Jews, but for all who are soon to die and to go to the judgment. We know not the time of our death. We know not how soon we shall be called to the judgment. The Son of man may come at any moment, and we should therefore be ready. If we are his friends; if we have been renewed and pardoned; if we have repented of our sins, and have believed on him, and are leading a holy life, we “are” ready. If not, we are unprepared, and soon — probably while we are not expecting it — the cold hand of death will be laid on us, and we shall be hurried to the place where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Oh how important it is to be ready, and to escape the awful sufferings of an ETERNAL HELL!

## NOTES ON MARK 14

◀141▶ **Mark 14:1-11.** See this passage explained in the notes at  
 ▶181▶ Matthew 26:1-16.

◀141▶ **Mark 14:1.** *And of unleavened bread* So called because at that feast no other bread was used but that which had been made without leaven or yeast.

*By craft* By subtilty (Matthew); that is, by some secret plan that would secure possession of him without exciting the opposition of the people.

◀141▶ **Mark 14:3.** *Ointment* This word does not convey quite the proper meaning. This was a perfume. It was used only to give a pleasant odor, and was liquid.

*Of spikenard* The “nard,” from which this perfume was made, is a plant of the East Indies, with a small, slender stalk, and a heavy, thick root. The best perfume is obtained from the root, though the stalk and fruit are used for that purpose.

*And she brake the box* This may mean no more than that she broke the “seal” of the box, so that it could be poured out. Boxes of perfumes are often sealed or made fast with wax, to prevent the perfume from escaping. It was not likely that she would break the box itself when it was unnecessary, and when the unguent, being liquid, would have been wasted; nor from a broken box or vial could she easily have “poured it” on his head.

◀141▶ **Mark 14:5.** *Three hundred pence* About forty dollars (or 9 British pounds). See the notes at ▶181▶ Matthew 26:7.

◀141▶ **Mark 14:8.** *She hath done what she could* She has showed the highest attachment in her power; and it was, as it is now, a sufficient argument against there being any “real” waste, that it was done for the honor of Christ.

◀142▶ **Mark 14:12-16.** See the notes at ▶181▶ Matthew 26:17-19.

**¶1412** **Mark 14:12.** *They killed the passover* The “paschal lamb,” which was slain in keeping the Passover.

*Go and prepare* Go and provide a lamb, have it roasted, and properly prepared with the usual things to eat with it.

**¶1413** **Mark 14:13.** *The city* The city of Jerusalem. They were now in Bethany, about 2 miles from the city.

*A man bearing a pitcher of water* This could have been known only by the infinite knowledge of Christ. Such a thing could not have been conjectured, nor was there any concert between him and the man that “at that time” he should be in a particular place to meet them, for the disciples themselves proposed the inquiry. If Jesus knew a circumstance like that, then he in the same way must have known all things; then he sees “all” the actions of men — hears every word, and marks every thought; then the righteous are under his care, and the wicked, much as they may wish to be unseen, cannot escape the notice of his eye.

**¶1414** **Mark 14:14.** *The goodman of the house* This signifies simply the “master” of the house. The original word expresses nothing respecting his character, whether it was good or bad.

*The guest-chamber* A chamber for guests or friends — an unoccupied room.

**¶1415** **Mark 14:15.** *A large upper room* The word used here denotes the upper room devoted to purposes of prayer, repose, and often of eating. See the notes at **¶1410** Matthew 9:1-8.

*Furnished and prepared* Literally, “spread” and “ready.” Spread with a carpet, or with “couches” such as were used in eating. See the notes at **¶1416** Matthew 23:6.

**¶1417** **Mark 14:17-31.** See this passage explained in the notes at **¶1411** Matthew 26:20-35.

**¶1418** **Mark 14:31.** *More vehemently* More earnestly, more confidently.

**¶1419** **Mark 14:32-42.** See the notes at **¶1416** Matthew 26:36-46.

◀1143▶ **Mark 14:36.** *Abba* This word denotes “father.” It is a Syriac word, and is used by the Saviour as a word denoting filial affection and tenderness. Compare ▶1145▶ Romans 8:15.

◀1144▶ **Mark 14:40.** *Neither wist they ...* Neither “knew” they. They were so conscious of the impropriety of sleeping at that time, that they could not find any answer to give to the inquiry why they had done it.

◀1144▶ **Mark 14:41.** *It is enough* There has been much difficulty in determining the meaning of this phrase. Campbell translates it, “all is over” — that is, the time when you could have been of service to me is gone by. They MIGHT have aided him by watching for him when they were sleeping, but now the time was past, and he was already, as it were, in the hands of his enemies. It is not improbable, however, that AFTER his agony some time elapsed before Judas came. He had required them to watch — that is, to keep awake during that season of agony. After that they might have been suffered to sleep, while Jesus watched alone. As he saw Judas approach he probably roused them, saying, It is sufficient — as much repose has been taken as is allowable — the enemy is near, and the Son of man is about to be betrayed.

◀1143▶ **Mark 14:43-52.** See the notes at ▶1154▶ Matthew 26:47-57.

◀1145▶ **Mark 14:45.** *Master, Master* As if expressing great joy that he had found him again.

◀1145▶ **Mark 14:51.** *A certain young man* Who this was we have no means of determining, but it seems not improbable that he may have been the owner of the garden, and that he may have had an understanding with Jesus that he should visit it for retirement when he withdrew from the city. That he was not one of the apostles is clear. It is probable that he was roused from sleep by the noise made by the rabble, and came to render any aid in his power in quelling the disturbance. It is not known why this circumstance is recorded by Mark. It is omitted by all the other evangelists. It may have been recorded to show that the conspirators had instructions to take the “apostles” as well as Jesus, and supposing HIM to be one of them, they laid hold of him to take him before the high priest; or it “may” have been recorded in order to place his conduct in strong and honorable contrast with the timidity and fear of the disciples, who had all fled. Compare the notes at ▶1156▶ Matthew 26:56.

*A linen cloth cast about his naked body* He was roused from sleep, and probably threw around him, in his haste, what was most convenient. It was common to sleep in linen bed-clothes, and he seized a part of the clothes and hastily threw it round him.

*The young men* The Roman soldiers. They were called “young men” because they were made up chiefly of youth. This was a Jewish mode of speaking. See <sup><0149></sup>Genesis 14:24; <sup><0024></sup>2 Samuel 2:14; <sup><2338></sup>Isaiah 13:18.

*Laid hold on him* Supposing him to be one of the apostles.

<sup><0163></sup>**Mark 14:53-72.** See this fully explained in the notes at <sup><0167></sup>Matthew 26:57-75.

## NOTES ON MARK 15

See the principal events in this chapter explained in the notes at Matthew 27.

<sup><1156></sup>**Mark 15:16.** *Called Pretorium* The hall of the “praetor,” or Roman governor, where he sat to administer justice.

*Whole band* See the notes at <sup><1277></sup>Matthew 27:27.

<sup><1157></sup>**Mark 15:17.** *With purple* Matthew says scarlet. See the notes at <sup><1278></sup>Matthew 27:28.

*About his head* In the form of a garland or diadem. The whole head was not covered, but it was placed in a circle round the temples.

<sup><1159></sup>**Mark 15:19.** *Worshipped him* Mocked him with the “appearance” of homage. The word “worship” here denotes only the respect and honor shown to princes and kings. It does not refer to any “religious” homage. They regarded him as foolishly and madly claiming to be a king — not as claiming to be divine.

<sup><1153></sup>**Mark 15:23.** *Wine mingled ...* Matthew says “vinegar.” It was probably “wine soured,” so that it might be called either. This was the common drink of the Roman soldiers.

*Myrrh* See the notes at <sup><1274></sup>Matthew 27:34.

<sup><1155></sup>**Mark 15:25.** *And it was the third hour ...* In <sup><3194></sup>John 19:14 it is said, “And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour, etc. Much difficulty has been felt in reconciling these passages, and infidels have usually adduced them to prove that the evangelists have contradicted themselves. In reconciling them the following remarks may perhaps make the matter clear:

(1) The Jews divided both the night and the day into four equal parts of three hours each. See the notes at <sup><1145></sup>Matthew 14:25. The first division of the day commenced at six o’clock in the morning, and ended at nine; the second commenced at nine and ended at twelve, etc. “The third” hour mentioned by Mark would therefore correspond with our nine o’clock; the

“sixth” hour mentioned by John would correspond with our twelve, or noon.

**(2)** Mark professes to give the time accurately; John does not. He says “it was about the sixth hour,” without affirming that this was exactly the time.

**(3)** A mistake in “numbers” is easily made; and if it should be admitted that such an error had crept into the text here, it would be nothing more than has occurred in many ancient writings. It has been proved, moreover, that it was common not to write the “words” indicating numbers at “length,” but to use “letters.” The Greeks designated numbers by the letters of the alphabet, and this mode of computation is found in ancient manuscripts. For example, the Cambridge manuscript of the New Testament has in this very place in Mark, not the word “third” written at length, but the Greek letter gamma (g), the usual notation for third. Now it is well known that it would be easy to mistake this for the Greek letter sigma (s), the mark denoting “six.” An error of this kind in an early manuscript might be extensively propagated, and might have led to the present reading of the text. Such an error is actually known to exist in the “Chronicon” of Paschal, where Otho is said to have reigned ζ (six) months, whereas it is known that he reigned but three, and in this place, therefore, the γ, three, was mistaken for ζ, six.

**(4)** There is some external authority for reading “third” in ~~John~~ John 19:14. The Cambridge manuscript has this reading. Nonnus, who lived in the fifth century, says that this was the true reading (Wetstein). Peter of Alexandria, in a fragment concerning the Passover, as quoted by Usher, says, “It was the preparation of the Passover, and about the “third” hour, as,” he adds, “the most accurate copies of the Bible have it; and this was the handwriting of the evangelist (John), which is kept, by the grace of God, in his most holy church at Ephesus” (Mill). It is to be admitted, however, that no great reliance is to be placed on this account. That a mistake “might” have occurred in the early manuscripts is not improbable. No man can “prove” that it did “not” so occur, and so long as this cannot be proved, the passages should not be adduced as conclusive proof of contradiction.

After all, perhaps, without the supposition that there is any error in the text, the whole difficulty may be removed by the following statements:

**(1)** Calvary was “without” the walls of Jerusalem. It was a considerable distance from the place where Jesus was tried and condemned. Some time,

more or less, would be occupied in going there, and in the preparatory measures for crucifying him.

(2) It is not necessary to understand “Mark” as saying that it was precisely nine o’clock, according to our expression. With the Jews it was six until seven; it was the third hour until the fourth commenced; it was the ninth until it was the tenth. They “included” in the “third” hour the whole time from the third to the fourth. The same mode they adopted in regard to their days. See the notes at <sup><4124></sup>Matthew 12:40.

(3) It is not unduly pressing the matter to suppose that Mark spoke of the time when the process for crucifixion commenced — that is, when he was condemned — when they entered upon it — when they made the preparation. Between that and the time when he was taken “out” of Jerusalem to Mount Calvary, and when he was actually nailed to the tree, there is no improbability in supposing that there might have been an interval of more than an hour. Indeed, the presumption is that considerably more time than that would elapse.

(4) John does not profess, as has been remarked, to be strictly accurate. He says “it was about the sixth hour,” etc.

(5) Now suppose that John meant to indicate the time when he was “actually” suspended on the cross — that he spoke of the “crucifixion” denoting the “act of suspension,” as it struck “him” — and there is no difficulty. Any other two men — any witnesses — might give just such an account now. One man would speak of the time when the process for an execution commenced; another, perhaps, of the very “act” of the execution and would “both” speak of it in general terms, and say that a man was executed at such a time; and the circumstantial variation would “prove” that there was no collusion, no agreement to “impose” on a court — that they were honest witnesses. That is “proved” here.

(6) That this is the true account of the matter is clear from the evangelists themselves, and “especially from Mark.” The three first evangelists concur in stating that there was a remarkable “darkness” over the whole land from the “sixth” to the “ninth” hour, <sup><4276></sup>Matthew 27:45; “<sup><41533></sup>Mark 15:33;” <sup><42344></sup>Luke 23:44. This fact — in which Mark concurs — would seem to indicate that “the actual crucifixion” continued only during that time — that he was, in fact, suspended at about the sixth hour, though the preparations for crucifying him had been going on (Mark) for two hours

before. The fact that Mark (<sup><4153></sup>Mark 15:33) mentions this darkness as commencing at the “sixth” and not at the “third” hour, is one of the circumstances undesignedly occurring that seems to signify that the crucifixion then had “actually” taken place, though the various arrangements for it (<sup><4153></sup>Mark 15:25) had been going on from the “third” hour.

One thing is conclusively proved by this — that the evangelists did not “conspire together” to impose on the world. They are independent witnesses, and they were honest men; and the circumstance adverted to here is one that is allowed to be of great value in testimony in courts of justice — “circumstantial variation with essential agreement.”

<sup><4153></sup>**Mark 15:26.** *The superscription* The writing over his head upon the cross.

*The King of the Jews* See the notes at <sup><4073></sup>Matthew 27:37.

<sup><4153></sup>**Mark 15:28.** *And the scripture was fulfilled ...* This passage of Scripture is found in <sup><2592></sup>Isaiah 53:12. This does not mean that he “was” a transgressor, but simply that in dying he “had a place” with transgressors. Nor does it mean that GOD regarded him as a sinner; but that at his death, in popular estimation, or by the sentence of the judge, he was “regarded as” a transgressor, and was treated in the same manner as the others who were put to death for their transgressions. Jesus died, the “just” for the “unjust,” and in his death, as well as in his life, he was “holy, harmless, undefiled.”

<sup><4152></sup>**Mark 15:42.** *The even* The time after three o’clock in the afternoon.

*The Preparation ...* The following day was to be a day of special solemnity, called the “great day” of the feast. More than ordinary preparation was therefore made for “that” Sabbath on the day before. Hence, the day was known as a day of preparation. This consisted in the preparation of food, etc., to be used on the Sabbath.

<sup><4153></sup>**Mark 15:43.** *Joseph, an honorable counselor* A distinguished man, who probably held a high office among the Jews, as one of their great council, or a Jewish senator. The word “honorable,” here, is not a mere title of “office,” but is given in reference to his personal character, as being a man of integrity and blameless life.

*Waited for the kingdom of God* Waited for, or expected, the coming of the Messiah. But this expression means more than an “indefinite” expectation that the Messiah “would” come, for all the Jews expected that. It implies that he believed “Jesus” to be the Messiah, and that he had “waited” for HIM to build up the kingdom of God; and this agrees with what John says (~~4:18~~ John 19:38), that he was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews. He had retained his “secret” belief, in the hope that Jesus would be proclaimed and treated as the Messiah, and then he probably proposed openly to acknowledge his attachment to him. But God called him to a public profession of attachment in a different manner, and gave this distinguished man grace to evince it. So men often delay a profession of attachment to Christ. They cherish a secret love, they indulge a hope in the mercy of God, but they conceal it for fear of man; whereas God requires that the attachment should be made known.

“Whosoever is ashamed of me,” said the Saviour, “and of my words, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father and with the holy angels,”

~~4:18~~ Mark 8:38.

Those who love the Saviour have no right to hide their light under a bushel. As soon as they have evidence satisfactory to their own mind that they are Christians, or have a “prevalent” belief, after faithful examination, that they truly love God, and that they depend on the Lord Jesus for salvation, so soon are they bound to profess Christ before men. This is the command of God, and this is the way of peace. None have the prospect of “comfort” in religion who do not have respect to ALL of the commandments of God.

*Went in boldly unto Pilate* God had raised up this distinguished counselor and secret disciple for a special and most important occasion. The disciples of Jesus had fled, and if they had not, they had no influence with Pilate. Unless there had been a special application to Pilate in behalf of Jesus, his body would have been buried “that night” in the same grave with the malefactors, for it was a law of the Jews that the body of an executed man should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath. At this critical juncture God called forward this secret disciple — this friend of Jesus, though unknown as such to the world — and gave him confidence. He dared to express sympathy for the Saviour; he went in boldly and begged the body of Jesus. It needed no small measure of courage to do this. Jesus had just

been condemned, mocked, spit on, crucified — the death of a slave or of the most guilty wretch. To avow attachment for him NOW was proof of sincere affection; and the Holy Spirit has thought this worthy of special notice, and has set down this bold attachment of a senator for Jesus for our imitation.

*Craved the body* Begged, or asked.

**Mark 15:44.** *And Pilate marveled if* Wondered if he was dead, or wondered that he was so soon dead. It was not common for persons crucified to expire under two or three days, sometimes not until the sixth or seventh. Joseph had asked for the “body,” implying that he was dead. That he WAS, had been ascertained by the soldiers. See ~~4:33~~ John 19:33.

**Mark 15:45.** *When he knew it of the centurion* Being informed by the centurion of the fact that he was dead. The centurion had charge of the soldiers who watched him, and could therefore give correct information.

**Mark 15:47.** *Beheld where he was laid* The affection of these pious females never forsook them, in all the trials and sufferings of their Lord. With true love they followed him to the cross; they came as near to him as they were permitted to come in his last moments; they followed him when taken down and laid in the tomb. The strong, the mighty, the youthful, had fled; but female love never forsook him, even in his deepest humiliation. This is the nature of true love; it is strongest in such scenes. While “professed” attachment will abound in prosperity and live most in sunshine, it is only genuine love that will go into the dark shades of adversity and flourish there. In scenes of poverty, want, affliction, and death, it shows its genuineness. That which lives there is genuine. That which turns away from such scenes is spurious.

## NOTES ON MARK 16

◀110▶ **Mark 16:1-8.** See this passage explained in the notes at ▶110▶ Matthew 28:1-8.

◀110▶ **Mark 16:1.** *Sweet spices* “Aromatics.” Substances used in embalming. The idea of sweetness is not, however, implied in the original. Many of the substances used for embalming were “bitter” — as, for example, myrrh — and none of them, perhaps, could properly be called “sweet.” The word “spices” expresses all that there is in the original.

*Anoint him* Embalm him, or apply these spices to his body to keep it from putrefaction. This is proof that they did not suppose he would rise again; and the fact that they did not “expect” he would rise, gives more strength to the evidence for his resurrection.

◀110▶ **Mark 16:4.** *It was very great* These words belong to the third verse: “Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?” for, the evangelist adds, it was very great.

◀110▶ **Mark 16:5.** *Sitting on the right side* As they entered. The sepulchre was large enough to admit persons to go into it; not unlike, in that respect, our vaults.

◀110▶ **Mark 16:7.** *Tell his disciples and Peter* It is remarkable that Peter is singled out for special notice. It was proof of the kindness and mercy of the Lord Jesus. Peter, just before the death of Jesus, had denied him. He had brought dishonor on his profession of attachment to him. It would have been right if the Lord Jesus had from that moment cast him off and noticed him no more. But he loved him still. Having loved him once, he loved unto the end, ▶110▶ John 13:1. As a proof that he forgave him and still loved him, he sent him this “special” message — the assurance that though he had denied him, and had done much to aggravate his sufferings, yet he had risen, and was still his Lord and Redeemer. We are not to infer, because the angel said, “Tell his disciples and Peter,” that Peter was not still a disciple. The meaning is, “Tell his disciples, and especially Peter,” sending to him a particular message. Peter was still a disciple. Before his fall, Jesus had prayed for him that his faith should not fail (▶110▶ Luke 22:32); and as the prayer of Jesus was “always” heard (▶110▶ John 11:42), so it follows that

Peter still retained faith sufficient to be a disciple, though he was suffered to fall into sin.

**Mark 16:11.** *Believed not* This is proof that they did not expect his resurrection; proof that they were not easily deceived, and that nothing but the clearest evidence could undeceive them.

**Mark 16:12.** *He appeared in another form* In a form unlike his ordinary appearance so much so that they did not at first know him. See the notes at <sup><2413></sup>Luke 24:13-31. “As they walked and went into the country.” To Emmaus, <sup><2413></sup>Luke 24:13.

**Mark 16:13.** *The residue* The remainder. Those who remained at Jerusalem.

**Mark 16:14.** *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven* Judas was dead, and the apostles were then called “the eleven.” This was done even when one of them was absent, as Thomas was on this occasion. See the “Harmony of the Accounts of the Resurrection, Appearances, and Ascension of Christ,” ii. 5, at the close of the notes on Matthew.

*As they sat at meat* The word meat here means food, or meals. As they were reclining at their meals.

*And upbraided them ...* Rebuked them, or reproached them. This was done because, after all the evidence they had had of his resurrection, still they did not believe. This is a most important circumstance in the history of our Lord’s resurrection. Never were people more difficult to be convinced of anything than they were of that fact. And this shows conclusively that they had not conspired to impose on the world; that they had given up all for lost when he died; that they did not expect his resurrection; and all this is the strongest proof that he truly rose. They were not convinced until it was impossible for them longer to deny it. Had they expected it, they would have caught easily at the slightest evidence, and would have turned every circumstance in favor of such an event. It may be added that it was impossible that eleven men of good natural understanding should have been deceived in so plain a case. They had been with Jesus three years; they perfectly knew his features, voice, manner; and it is not credible that they should have been deceived by anyone who might have pretended to have been the Lord Jesus.

**¶1165** **Mark 16:15.** *Into all the world* To the Gentiles as well as the Jews. It was contrary to the opinions of the Jews that the Gentiles should be admitted to the privileges of the Messiah's kingdom, or that the partition wall between them should be broken down. See **¶4221** Acts 22:21,22. It was long before the disciples could be trained to the belief that the gospel was to be preached to all men; and it was only by special revelation, even after this command, that Peter preached to the Gentile centurion, Acts 10; Jesus has graciously ordered that the preaching of the gospel shall be stopped by no barriers. Wherever there is man, there it is to be proclaimed. To every sinner he offers life, and all the world is included in the message of mercy, and every child of Adam is offered eternal salvation.

*Preach* Proclaim; make known; offer. To do this to every creature is to offer pardon and eternal life to him on the terms of the plan of mercy — through repentance, and faith in the Lord Jesus.

*The gospel* The good news. The tidings of salvation. The assurance that the Messiah has come, and that sin may be forgiven and the soul saved.

*To every creature* That is, to every human being. Man has no right to limit this offer to any class of men. God commands his servants to offer the salvation to "all men." If they reject, it is at their peril. God is not to blame if they do not choose to be saved. His mercy is manifest; his grace is boundless in offering life to a creature so guilty as man.

**¶1166** **Mark 16:16.** *He that believeth* That is, believeth the gospel. "He who credits it to be true, and acts as if it were true." This is the whole of faith. Man is a sinner. He should act on the belief of this truth and repent. There is a God. Man should believe it, and fear and love him, and seek his favor. The Lord Jesus died to save him. To have faith in him is to believe that this is true, and to act accordingly; that is, to trust him, to rely on him, to love him, to feel that we have no merit, and to cast our all upon him. There is a heaven and a hell. To believe this is to credit the account and act as if it were true — to seek the one and avoid the other. We are to die. To believe this is to act as if this were so; to be in readiness for it, and to expect it daily and hourly. In one word, faith is feeling and acting as if there were a God, a Saviour, a heaven, a hell; as if we were sinners and must die; as if we deserved eternal death and were in danger of it; and, in view of all, casting our eternal interests on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. To do this is to be a Christian: not to do it is to be an infidel.

*Is baptized* Is initiated into the church by the application of water, as significant that he is a sinner, and needs the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit. It is worthy of remark that Jesus has made “baptism” of so much importance. He did not say, indeed, that a man could not be saved without baptism, but he has strongly implied that where this is neglected “knowing it to be a command of the Saviour,” it endangers the salvation of the soul. Faith and baptism are the beginnings of a Christian life: the one the beginning of piety in the soul, the other of its manifestation before men or of a profession, of religion. Every man endangers his eternal interest by being ashamed of Christ before men. See <sup><4038></sup>Mark 8:38.

*Shall be saved* Saved from sin (<sup><4021></sup>Matthew 1:21) and from eternal death (<sup><4034></sup>John 5:24; 3:36), and raised to eternal life in heaven, <sup><4038></sup>John 5:28; 17:2,24.

*Shall be damned* That is, condemned by God and cast off from his presence, <sup><3006></sup>2 Thessalonians 1:6-9. It implies that they will be adjudged to be guilty by God in the day of judgment (<sup><4022></sup>Romans 2:12,16; <sup><4054></sup>Matthew 25:41); that they will deserve to die forever (<sup><4016></sup>Romans 2:6,8), and that they will be cast out into a place of woe to all eternity, <sup><4054></sup>Matthew 25:46. It may be asked how it can be just in God to condemn men forever for not believing the gospel? I answer:

1. God has a right to appoint his own terms of mercy.
2. Man has no claim on him for heaven.
3. The sinner rejects the terms of salvation, knowingly, deliberately, and perseveringly.
4. He has a special disregard and contempt for the gospel.
5. His unbelief is produced by the love of sin.
6. He shows by this that he has no love for God, and his law, and for eternity.
7. He slights the objects dearest to God and most like him; and,
8. He must be miserable.

A creature who has no confidence in God; who does not believe that he is true or worthy of his regard, and who never seeks his favor, must be wretched. He rejects God, and he must go into eternity without a Father

and without a God. He has no source of comfort in himself, and must die for ever. There is no being in eternity but God that can make man happy, and without his favor the sinner must be wretched.

**Mark 16:17.** *And these signs* These miracles. These evidences that they are sent from God.

*Them that believe* The apostles, and those in the primitive age who were endowed with like power. This promise was fulfilled if it can be shown that these signs followed in the case of any who believed, and it is not necessary to suppose that they would follow in the case of all. The meaning is, that they would be the result of faith, or of the belief of the gospel. It is true that they were. These signs were shown in the case of the apostles and early Christians. The infidel cannot say that the promise has not been fulfilled unless he can show that this never occurred; the Christian should be satisfied that the promise was fulfilled if these miracles were ever actually wrought, though they do not occur now; and the believer now should not expect a miracle in his case. Miracles were necessary for the establishment of religion in the world; they are not necessary for its continuance now.

*In my name* By my authority, and using the power that I would in such cases, if bodily present. This was done; and in this they differed essentially from the manner in which Jesus himself wrought miracles. He did it in "his own name," and as possessing original, undervived authority. See the account of his stilling the sea (<sup><4036></sup>Matthew 8:26, etc.); of his healing the sick (<sup><4036></sup>Matthew 9:5,6); of his raising Lazarus, John 11. The prophets spoke "in the name of the Lord." The apostles did likewise, <sup><4436></sup>Acts 3:6, etc. There was, therefore, an important difference between Jesus and all the other messengers that God has sent into the world. He acted in his own name; they in the name of another. He wielded his own power; they were the instruments by which God put forth the omnipotence of his arm to save. He was therefore God; they were men of like passions as other men, <sup><4445></sup>Acts 14:15.

*Shall they cast out devils* See the notes at <sup><4024></sup>Matthew 4:24. Compare <sup><4416></sup>Acts 16:16-18.

*Shall speak with new tongues* Shall speak other languages than their native language. This was remarkably fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, <sup><4416></sup>Acts 2:4-11. It existed, also, in other places. See <sup><4520></sup>1 Corinthians 12:10.

**¶168** **Mark 16:18.** *They shall take up serpents* When it is necessary for the sake of establishing religion, they shall handle poisonous reptiles without injury, thus showing that God was with them to keep them from harm. This was literally fulfilled when Paul shook the viper from his hand. See **¶425** Acts 28:5,6.

*Any deadly thing* Any poison usually causing death.

*Shall not hurt them* There is a similar promise in **¶280** Isaiah 43:2.

*They shall lay hands on the sick ...* See instances of this in the Acts of the Apostles, **¶406** Acts 3:6,7; 5:15, etc.

**¶169** **Mark 16:19.** *He was received up into heaven* In a cloud from the Mount of Olives. See **¶400** Acts 1:9.

*The right hand of God* We are not to suppose that God has hands, or that Jesus sits in any particular direction from God. This phrase is taken from the manner of speaking among men, and means that he was exalted to honor and power in the heavens. It was esteemed the place of the highest honor to be seated at the right hand of a prince. So, to be seated at the right hand of God, means that Jesus is exalted to the highest honor of the universe. Compare **¶403** Ephesians 1:20-22.

**¶170** **Mark 16:20.** *They went forth* The apostles.

*Everywhere* In all parts of the world. See the account in the Acts and the Epistles.

*The Lord worked with them* By miracles; by removing obstacles; by supporting them; and by giving the gospel success and making it effectual to saving men.

*Confirming the word* Showing it to be the word of God or a revelation from heaven,

*By signs following* By attending miracles. By raising the dead, healing the sick, etc., as signs that God was with them, and had sent them forth to preach.

*Amen* Truly, verily. So be it. This word here, however, is of no authority. There is no reason to think that it was added by Mark.

Mark is more concise than either of the other evangelists. In most instances he coincides with Matthew, though he has added some circumstances which Matthew had omitted. There is no evidence, however, that he copied from Matthew. The last chapter in Mark contains some things omitted in Matthew. and some things of fearful import. We learn from it that the gospel is to be preached to all mankind. Every person is to be offered eternal life, and he rejects it at his peril. The condition of the person who will not believe is fearfully awful. The Son of God has solemnly declared that he shall be damned. He will judge the world, and there is none that can deliver out of his hand. No excuse will be allowed for not believing. Unless a man has faith he must be lost for ever. This is the solemn assurance of the Bible; and in view of this awful declaration of the merciful Redeemer, how sad is the condition of him who has no confidence in Jesus, and who has never looked to him for eternal life! And how important that without delay he should make his peace with God, and possess that faith which is connected with everlasting salvation!