

The death and resurrection of Jesus in Mark

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The problem of the cross

- Death scenes in ancient biographies
 - death as epitomising life
 - Socrates' death in Plato, *Phaedo*

The problem of the cross

- Death scenes in ancient biographies
- Crucifixion as a slave's death

How Mark tells the death of Jesus

- no focus on Jesus' physical suffering
- Jesus not in control
 - speaks little
 - “I am; and ‘you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,’ and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven.’” 14:62
 - “You say.” 15:2
 - “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” 15:34 (and 37)

How Mark tells the death of Jesus

- no focus on Jesus' physical suffering
- Jesus not in control
 - speaks little
 - others control his body
 - “hand over” παραδίδωμι
- Jesus is rejected

At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice,
“Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My
God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Mark 14:34, quoting Ps 22:1

The pervasiveness of the cross

- early allusions and hints
 - 2:19-20 dispute with scribes about forgiveness
 - 3:22; 7:1 delegates from Jerusalem come to check Jesus' teaching

The pervasiveness of the cross

- early allusions and hints
- the plot against Jesus
 - 3:6 Pharisees and Herodians
 - 11:18 chief priests and scribes
 - 12:12 chief priests, scribes and elders (11:27)

The pervasiveness of the cross

- early allusions and hints
- the plot against Jesus
- passion predictions by Jesus

Passion predictions by Jesus

- “Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” 8:31
- “[Jesus] was teaching his disciples, saying to them, ‘The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.’” 9:31
- “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again.”
10:33-34

Passion predictions by Jesus

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The pervasiveness of the cross

- early allusions and hints
- the plot against Jesus
- passion predictions by Jesus
- John's death prefiguring Jesus?
- passion narrative proper

Jesus' death and his identity

- son of God
 - “Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, ‘Truly this man was God’s Son!’” 15:39
 - “And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’” 1:11
 - “Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, ‘This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!’” 9:7

Jesus' death and his identity

- son of God
- king
 - “Pilate asked him, ‘Are you **the King of the Jews?**’” 15:2
 - “Then [Pilate] answered them, ‘Do you want me to release for you **the King of the Jews?**’” 15:9
 - “Pilate spoke to them again, ‘Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call **the King of the Jews?**’” 15:12
 - “And they clothed him in a **purple cloak**; and after twisting some thorns into a **crown**, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, ‘Hail, **King of the Jews!**’ They struck his head with a **reed**, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him.” 15:17-19

Jesus' death and his identity

- son of God
- king
 - “The inscription of the charge against him read, ‘The King of the Jews.’” 15:26
 - “Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.” 15:32

Jesus' death and his identity

- son of God
- king
- the son of man
 - “Then he began to teach them that **the son of man** must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” 8:31
 - “For **the son of man** goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom **the son of man** is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.” 14:21
 - “For **the son of man** came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” 10:45

Jesus' death and his identity

- son of God
- king
- the son of man
 - “Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them **the son of man** will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” 8:38
 - “Jesus said, ‘I am; and “you will see **the son of man** seated at the right hand of the Power”, and “coming with the clouds of heaven.”’” 14:62

“As I watched in the night visions,
I saw **one like a son of man**
coming with the clouds of heaven.

And he came to the Ancient One
and was presented before him.

To him was given dominion and glory and kingship,
that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass
away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.”

Daniel 7:13-14

The meaning of Jesus' death

- Jesus' death and the purposes of God
 - “it is necessary” δεῖ
 - scriptural prophecy
 - “the son of man goes as it is written of him”
14:21
 - “And Jesus said to them, ‘You will all become deserters; for it is written, “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.”’”
14:27 (Zech 13:7)

The meaning of Jesus' death

- Jesus' death and the purposes of God
- the passion predictions

Passion predictions by Jesus

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The meaning of Jesus' death

- Jesus' death and the purposes of God
- the passion predictions
- 'atonement' language
 - ransom 10:45
 - "poured out for many" 14:24
 - "he saved others" 15:31
 - darkness and Jesus' final words 15:33-34

“...eclipses announce the death of kings and the destruction of cities”

Philo, *On Providence* 2.50

The meaning of Jesus' death

- Jesus' death and the purposes of God
- the passion predictions
- 'atonement' language
- judgement on the old temple

“12 On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. 13 Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see whether perhaps he would find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 He said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard it.

15 Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; 16 and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. 17 He was teaching and saying, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.”

18 And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. 19 And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

20 In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. 21 Then Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.”

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The meaning of Jesus' death

- Jesus' death and the purposes of God
- the passion predictions
- 'atonement' language
- judgement on the old temple
 - the 'cleansing' of the temple 11:12-21
 - handing the vineyard over to others 12:9

“Then Jesus asked him, ‘Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.’” 13:2

“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” 14:58

“You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days...” 15:29

“And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.” 15:38

The meaning of Jesus' death

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 - handing the vineyard over to others 12:9
 - predictions of destruction
 - tearing of temple veil

The meaning of Jesus' death

- Jesus' death and the purposes of God
- the passion predictions
- 'atonement' language
- judgement on the old temple
- universal significance
 - tearing of temple veil 15:38
 - centurion's recognition 15:39

The suffering of Jesus and his community

<i>community</i>		<i>Jesus</i>
13:2	destruction of temple	14:58; 15:38
13:9, 11-12	“delivered up”	14:10-11, 18, passim
13:12-13	betrayal	14:10, 21, 43
13:24	darkness	15:33
13:26	the son of man: tribulation, parousia	14:62
13:32-33	the “hour”	14:32-42 (esp. vv 35, 37, 41)
13:5, 9, 23, 33, 35, 37	eschatological watching	14:34, 37-38
13:25	provides chronology for	14:17–15:1 (at night)
13:36	“come”, “find”, “sleep”	14:37, 40

The suffering of Jesus and his community

- “34 [Jesus] called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. 36 For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? 37 Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? 38 Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” 8:34-38

The resurrection 16:1-8

- “So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” 16:8
- vv 9-20 a pastiche from other Gospels, using vocabulary uncharacteristic of Mark
- “Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons.” 16:9
- best (oldest) manuscripts end at 16:8

Mark's understanding of the resurrection

- passion predictions: death and resurrection of Jesus go together 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34

“1 When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. 2 And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. 3 They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” 4 When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. 5 As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6 But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. 7 But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” 8 So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” 16:1-8

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Galilee is then to be understood in a symbolic... sense. It was the place where Jesus preached the gospel without restriction; he may not always have been well received but at least he was only partially rejected. Jerusalem was the place of total rejection. The disciples are now bidden to continue their pilgrimage with Jesus into a new situation, that of preaching the gospel. When they go forth on the mission of the gospel he is at their head.

Ernest Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story*, 74

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“And **they were filled with great awe** and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’” 4:41

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