**Mark’s Swift Pace vs. the other Gospels**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mark 1:9-15** | **Matthew 3:13-4:17** |
| In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee  and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove upon him.  And a voice came from the heavens, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” | Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented.  And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him.  And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” |
| And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.  He was in the wilderness forty days, tested by Satan, and he was with the wild beasts,  and the angels waited on him. | Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”  Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up,  so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’ ”  Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’ ” Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him. |
| Now after John was arrested,  Jesus came to Galilee  proclaiming the good news of God and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has  come near; repent, and believe in the good news.” | Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:  “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—  the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death, light has dawned.” From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” |

**Mark’s Disciples Struggle to Understand vs. other Gospels**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **From Mark 8** | **From Matthew 16** | **From Luke 12** |
| “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are you hearts hardened? Do you have eyes and fail to see? Do you have ears and fail to hear…  Then he said to them, “Do you not yet understand? | “How could you fail to perceive that I was not speaking about bread? Beware the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!”  Then they understood that he had not told them to beware of the yeast of bread but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. | Meanwhile, when the crowd had gathered by the thousands, so that they trampled on one another, he began to speak first to his disciples, “Beware the yeast of the Pharisees, that is, their hypocrisy. Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered and nothing secret that will not become known.” |

**Mark is redefining what a Messiah is, moving away from a “Warrior-King” model:**

From Mark 8:29-33:

Jesus asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “**You are the Messiah**.” And he **sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him**. 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**. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are **setting your mind not on divine things but on human things**.”

**Mark’s Gospel shows clear literary crafting – not a haphazard collection:**

Gospel has a clear overall structure:

* + - Jesus’ Ministry in Galilee – Mark 1:14 to 8:21
    - Jesus’ Self-Revelation to the Disciples – Mark 8:22 to 10:52
    - Jesus Enters Jerusalem (The Passion Narrative) – Mark 11:1 to 16:8

Identifiable structures in how stories are laid out:

* Chiastic structure in Mark 2:1 to 3:6
  + A, B, C, B’, A’ narrative to frame central thesis in “new wineskins”
* Bookend structure of blind men being healed during Mark 8:22 to 10:52
  + Mark 8:24 – *The man looked up and said, “I can see people, but they look like trees walking.”* -- right before Peter’s recognition of Jesus as Messiah, but being incorrect about what that means
  + Mark 10:51 – *The blind man said to him, “My teacher, let me see again.”* -- Jesus heals the man when he stops calling him “Son of David”

**Matthew’s Deep Interest in the Hebrew Bible**

* Number code that would only be of interest to Hebrew/Aramaic speakers
  + Jesus’ ancestors grouped into eras of 14 generations
  + Numbers connect to alphabet: aleph = 1, bet = 2, gimel = 3, dalet = 4, hey = 5, vav = 6, etc.
  + David’s name in Hebrew – *dalet, vav, dalet* – would be 4+6+4 = 14
* Matthew directly quotes the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament 53 times
  + “To fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet…”

**Matthew ratchets up attacks on religious leaders**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mark 1:5-8** | **Matthew 3:4-9, 11** |
| And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.  He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me”. | Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.  Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?  Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham…  “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. |

**Matthew emphasizes Peter + Disciples’ Growing Understanding**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mark 6:49-52** | **Matthew 14:26-33** |
| When they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and cried out, for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart, I AM; do not be afraid.”  Then he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded,for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened. | when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, “Take heart, I AM; do not be afraid.”  Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.” |

**Matthew emphasizes Peter as future leader**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mark 8:29-30** | **Matthew 16:15-20** |
| He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.”  And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. | He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?”  Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven.  And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.  I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”  Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah. |

**Matthew emphasizes Jesus reframing the Law**

* Narrative structure around 5 carefully shaped discourses:
  + Matthew 5:1 to 7:27 – the famous “Sermon on the Mount”
  + Matthew 10:5 to 10:42
  + Matthew 13:1 to 13:52
  + Matthew 18:1 to 18:35
  + Matthew 24:3 to 25:46
* Similar phrasing: “Truly I tell you”, “When Jesus finished saying these things”
* Meant to represent the 5 books of the Pentateuch / Torah?

**Matthew reframes the Law around the Greatest Commandments**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Matthew 22:34-40** | **Mark 12:28-31** | **Luke 10:25-28** |
| When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered, and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” | One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” | An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.” |