

Christ in All The Scriptures

Mark

Introduction

1) Observations

a) The carefulness of the tenses Mark uses

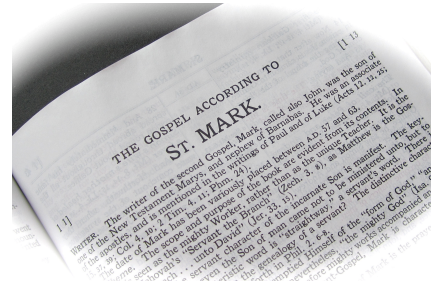
- i) One of the observations which indicates the Lord as God's Servant is Mark's carefulness with the tenses, indicating the ongoing conveying of truth.
 1. While this is not clear in the KJV, yet in Greek Mark uses the "historic present tense" which indicates an action going on and not yet finished. Therefore, rather than "said" as in the KJV, it is better translated "says" in (ch. 2:5, 8, 17; 3:4, 34; 8:29; 9:5, 15; 10:23, 27, 42). That which makes this remarkable is this occurs 151 times in Mark, 93 times in Matthew, 9-11 times in Luke and 162 times in John.
 2. He also uses the "imperfect tense" indicting activity, not only of the Lord but of others and events. This is in contrast to the other gospel writers where they use the aorist. For instance, Mark will write: "the heavens opening" (ch. 1:10); "they went on bringing to Him" (ch. 1:32); "the sick of the palsy was lying" (ch. 2:4); "they kept watching Him" (ch. 3:2); "He went on teaching them" (ch. 4:2); "carest thou not that we are perishing" (ch. 4:38).

b) Only in Mark do we read of:

- i) The response of the Lord to the young man, "beholding him loved him" (ch. 10:21).
- ii) The Lord taking a child in His arms (ch. 9:36), and later taking them "up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them" (ch. 10:16). It is almost impossible to read this without thinking of God's tender care for Israel in Isaiah: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isa. 40:11); "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." (Isa. 46:4).

2) The Presentation of The Lord

- a) It has been an accepted fact that Mark presents our Lord as the Servant of God, but in my understanding while this is perfectly true, it is based on a faulty foundation on two levels. I believe it is also a curtailing perspective, in that it hinders other avenues of truth coming into focus. The faulty foundation is:
 - i) Ascribing to the word "eutheos", translated "immediately", "anon", "forthwith", and is used 40 times, a significance it does not have. This word does not always refer to the activity of the Lord's immediate response to the will of God. The word is used to describe the immediacy of His going to the synagogue on the Sabbath (ch. 1:21); the spread of His fame by the people (ch. 1:28); of them telling the Lord of Peter's mother in law (ch. 1:30); of the healings (ch. 1:31, 42; 2:12; 10:52). It also is used to describe when the Spirit drove him into the wilderness (ch. 1:12); the response of the seed in the stoney earth (ch. 4:5); the response of the satanic hordes when the gospel is preached (ch. 4:15); the demonic who lived in the tombs (ch. 5:2). Therefore, to my mind, to build a teaching on a distortion of the evidence is error.
 - ii) Furthermore, it is also based on the words of the Lord: "the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (ch. 10:45). These words are also recorded in the gospel where the Lord is presented as the King: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matt. 20:28). Therefore, this verse cannot be presented as proof that the Lord is presented as the Servant.
 - iii) As I view this, to use this word and this verse as a proof of the Lord as the servant is to be on slippery ground.



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- b) Add to this the emphasis on Him as “Lord” (ch. 1:3; 2:28; 5:19; 7:28; 9:24; 10:51; 11:9, 10; 16:19, 20). Furthermore, observe that the Lord refers to Himself as Lord (ch. 5:19; 11:3). The same truth applies to the Lord being called “Christ” (ch. 1:1; 8:29; 9:41; 12:35; 14:61; 15:32). On two of these occasions there is an extension which is not found in the other gospels. He is called: “Christ, the Son of the Blessed” (ch. 14:61) and “Christ the King of Israel” (ch. 15:32). It is strange to speak of Lordship and Christship so much in a book which emphasizes Servanthood.
- c) Another consideration is Christ is the Prophet of God in fulfillment of the words of Moses (Deut. 18:15). Being such He announced the gospel of God. This word appears eight times in Mark (ch. 1:1, 14, 15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15); four times in Matthew and not at all in Luke (except for the Greek verb “evangelize”), and neither in John. Only in Mark does the Lord say: “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.” (ch. 1:38)
- d) The Lord is referred to as the Son of God on three occasions (ch. 1:1; 3:11; 15:39), and Son of man (ch. 2:10, 28; 8:31, 38; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 13:26, 34; 14:21, 41, 62). Precious truth that He who is eternally the Son of God entered this world and became the Son of man.

2) The Designations of The Lord

- a) Mark gives the Lord some eighteen designations or descriptive terms and four others are intimated. He is called, “Jesus Christ the Son of God” (ch. 1:1); “The Lord”, that is Jehovah (ch. 1:3); “My beloved Son” (ch. 1:11); “Jesus of Nazareth” (ch. 1:24; 10:47); “The Holy One of God” (ch. 1:24); “Bridegroom” (ch. 2:19-20); “Lord of the sabbath” (ch. 2:28); “Son of man” (ch. 2:10); “Master (Teacher)” (ch. 4:38); “Jesus, Thou Son of the most high God” (ch. 5:7); “The Carpenter, the Son of Mary” (ch. 6:3); “the Christ” (ch. 8:29); “Good Master” (ch. 10:17); “Son of David” (ch. 10:47); “The stone” (ch. 12:10); “The Son of the Blessed” (ch. 14:61); “The Son of God” (ch. 15:39); “King of Israel (ch. 15:32); “King of the Jews” (ch. 15:2); the “Lord” (ch. 16:19).
- b) Intimated titles are “Baptizer with the Holy Spirit” (ch. 1:8); “Forgiver of sins” (ch. 2:5); the “Sower” (ch. 4:3); “The substituting Sacrifice” (ch. 10:45).
- c) It is interesting that Matthew speaks of the Lord as “My Servant”, but Mark never does (Matt. 12:18). He is also called: “Jesus, Thou Son of the most high God” (ch. 5:7). To this there is the intimated designation of: “The Mighty One” (ch. 1:7); “The Baptizer in the Holy Spirit” (ch. 1:8).
- d) There can be no incarnation here, for He is “the Son of God” (ch. 3:11); “Prepare ye the way of the LORD” (ch. 1:3). Note that the word “Lord” is all capitals as in Isaiah 40:3, which is the word “Jehovah”, therefore, the Holy Spirit is informing Mark’s readers the Lord Jesus is Jehovah and He is on earth, not working through third parties of failing men, but He Himself working on earth since the work of God throughout the Old Testament and history was to prepare the people of Israel and the world for the coming of Messiah. It would be contrary to God’s character to be on this earth and not work to release and redeem man.
- e) The theme of Mark is Christ the Son and Servant of God, working as the perfect prophet of God proclaiming the gospel, and as such serves His own and the Father’s purposes by delivering those who are under Satan’s power. In Mark the Lord, at least eight times, delivers those under Satanic power, (ch. 1:23-26; 32, 34, 39; 5:1-20; 7:25; 9:17-26; 16:9). Furthermore, He gives power to the disciples to cast out devils (ch. 3:15; 6:13; 16:17), but the latter ones were one of the sign gifts which were temporary. The Lord was fulfilling the work of God for Him among men to “deliver them” from the thralldom of Satan. As the Steward of God bringing all into conformity with God, He is the “Deliverer” (Rom. 11:26) who will deliver the creature (Rom. 8:21) even as He now delivers from: “the world” (Gal. 1:4); “every evil

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work” (2 Tim. 4:18); from the “fear of death” (Heb. 2:15); “from wrath to come” (1 Thess. 1:10); from the “law” (Rom. 7:6); and “the power of darkness (Col. 1:13).

- f) When we remember He is the Lord, that is God, and the first recorded manifestation of God is that He is a Worker. Notice the words in the creation narratives where God is working. The first words of the scriptures are: “In the beginning God created” (Gen. 1:1); He “made” (Gen. 1:7); “Let us make man” (Gen. 1:26); “God formed” (ch. 2:7); and “God ended His work which He had made” (Gen. 2:2). It is not surprising to discover in Mark to have the Lord working. Yet there is a stupendous truth, the One who is working is God, but now is man and not as the Sovereign, but as the Servant! Later during His earthly sojourn He will say: “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work” (Jn. 4:34); again: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (Jn. 5:17); and just before Gethsemane He will, when speaking to God, say: “I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do” (Jn. 17:4). He was a: “Workman that needeth not to be ashamed” (2 Tim. 2:15).
- g) I see the activity of the Lord, of whom there is recorded more miracles than any of the other gospels (19), as the teaching of the Lord in John 5:17: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work”. It is the unrelenting unceasing activity of Jehovah to bring man back from the bondage and damage of sin. Only two are peculiar to him: the deaf and dumb man (ch. 7:31-37), and the blind man at Bethsaida (ch. 8:22-26). It is interesting that with the blind man the healing was in two stages, whereas the man of chapter 7:31-37 had a double affliction.
- h) He always does the works perfectly consequently, in Mark He will not tolerate hypocrisy as seen in his cursing the fig tree which gave the appearance of having fruit (ch. 11:13, 20). He is Jehovah and that which is contrary to His character must be changed, and in so doing show His character. Yet, interestingly in contrast to the other gospels, the Servant is never said to “finish” any work. It is only in Mark we read of Him healing the blind man in two stages (ch. 8:22-25), but He finished the work He had begun. Matthew informs his readers that he finished the parables or sayings (Matt. 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). John will emphasize He finished the “works” (Jn. 17:4; 19:30). At the beginning of John the word “finish” will be used twice of the Lord (Jn. 4:34; 5:36), but at the end of the book he finished (Jn. 17:4; 19:30), but no such comment is found in Mark. Indeed, Mark ends his gospel record with the Lord still working (Mk. 16:20).

His Activity

1) That which would be expected of Mark’s presentation but is left out:

- a) Dr. Luke informs his readers that He will cause His own to sit and He will serve them (Lk. 12:37), and it would be expected that such a truth would be in Mark where He is the Servant, yet such is not the case. One reason is that Mark is presenting the Lord and His activity during the days of His earthly sojourn and not administrative glory rewarding activity done.
- b) Another matter that Mark and John leaves out is the specific temptations of the Servant. (We must recognize that John speaks more of the Lord as a Servant than Mark ever does. Compare the times John uses the word “sent”). The temptations are recorded in Matthew and Luke but Mark simply informs us that He was “tempted of Satan and was with the wild beasts” (Mk. 1:13). This is because in Mark, as the Jehovah and in humanity the Servant of Jehovah, there can be no compromise with the enemy and God cannot be tempted (Jam. 1:13). As the perfect steward He was faithful, but then, what else would be expected?

2) The self effacing character of the Lord’s activity:

- a) When the Lord did miracles it was not to draw attention to His amazing abilities, for He did everything for the glory of God, thus He was able to say: “I have glorified Thee on the earth” (Jn. 17:4; 11:4; 13:31; Mk. 2:12; Lk. 4:15). To my knowledge there are only a few occasions when the attention of the people

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was distracted from the work of God to His own person. They “wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth” (Lk. 4:22); the disciples said: “What manner of man is this!” (Lk. 8:25; Mk. 4:41). He never sought personal exaltation through public acclaim. This is further borne out by the following incidents:

- i) When Simon and those with Him found the Lord they said: “All men seek for Thee”. His response was: “Let us go into the next towns” (ch. 1:36-38).
- ii) Having opened the blind man’s eyes outside the city He told the man: “Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town” (ch. 8:26).
- iii) There was no pretense of above average spirituality, ability, or higher fellowship with God, for He was all these things in genuineness.

3) Mark gives us the manifestation of Christ as Jehovah-Servant, functioning in love and gentleness.

- a) Only in Mark do we read of:
 - i) The response of the Lord to the young man: “beholding him loved him” (ch. 10:21).
 - ii) The Lord taking a child in His arms (ch. 9:36), and later taking them: “up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them” (ch. 10:16).
- b) He is a King and Commander ruling nature, (calming the storm (ch 4:37-41); walking on water (ch. 6:48-51); and withering the fig tree (ch. 11:12-14).
- c) Over disease: Peter's mother-in-law (ch. 1:30-31); the paralyzed man (ch. 2:3-12); the woman with bleeding (ch. 5:25-29); and the deaf mute (ch. 7:31-37).
- d) Over death by raising Jairus's daughter from the dead (ch 5:37-39).

The most important fact in the Gospel of Mark is the evidence that Jesus Christ overcame the power of death through His resurrection from the tomb. He proved that there is no power that can overcome Him, that He is the authority to forgive the sins of people, and that He is the One and only Son of God.

As we review the life of the Lord from the perspective of Mark, may the Holy Spirit help us to be faithful servants to God, ever seeing things from the eternal perspective and revealing God’s graciousness in all we do and say.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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