

## Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 192 – Mark 13:24-14:21

### Day 956: Mark 13:24-31

#### Verses 24-27

Cranfield says that these verses speak of "Cosmic signs immediately heralding the Parousia. The ideas and language are derived from the OT." France disagrees. He writes, "It is especially in these verses that the interpretation of the discourse adopted in this commentary differs from the majority view... The disciples' question (vv 3-4) concerned the destruction of the temple which Jesus predicted in v. 2. They wanted to know when it would be and what sign would herald it... So far everything has fallen short of the full answer, but ἀλλά at the beginning of v. 24 alerts us to a new stage of fulfilment. The setting remains ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις, but now we are moving beyond the θλίψις of v. 19 to what must immediately follow it. And so we reach at last the destruction of the temple, described not in the prosaic terms of v.2 but in the richly coloured and evocative language of OT prophecy. Almost every word of vv 24b-27 is drawn from the prophets, and we shall examine the specific echoes in the notes below. The passages cited in vv 24b-25 use the language of cosmic disintegration to denote, as often in prophecy, climactic (*not* climatic!) changes to the existing world order. The lights are going out in the centres of power, and the way is being prepared for a new world order. As in vv. 26-27 it comes: Daniel's vision of the enthronement of the Son of Man will be seen to be fulfilled, and that Son of Man will send out his angels from his heavenly throne to collect into his kingdom the ἐκλεκτοί not now of Israel only but of all nations.

"With that, the question is answered. The word 'temple' has not appeared but the imagery has powerfully conveyed to those who are familiar with OT prophecy the fundamental 'change of government' which is symbolised by the destruction of that now discredited building in Jerusalem and all that it represented. From now on it will not be the national shrine which will be the focus of the people of God, but the Son of Man to whom has now been given, as Dn 7:14 predicted, an everlasting and universal dominion which embraces all nations and languages.

"And yet the question is still not fully answered. The disciples wanted to know about the time and the sign, and so vv. 28-31 finally sum up the implications of what Jesus has said from this point of view. The little parable of the fig tree reinforces the need for readiness when the disciples see ταῦτα taking place... And in v. 30 the time is finally and emphatically (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) spelled out not now in prophetic symbolism but in plain words: it will all take place within 'this generation'. And lest there be any room left for uncertainty, Jesus caps the whole predictive oracle with the assurance that his words are as sure and eternal as the word of God himself. With that, his answer to the question of v. 4 is complete. What follows in v. 32, introduced by περὶ δέ, will be on another subject."

#### Verse 24

Ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην ὁ ἥλιος σκοτισθήσεται, καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φέγγος αὐτῆς.

ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις is "an OT stereotyped expression with eschatological associations (cf. Jer 3:16, 18; 31:29; 33:15f.; Zech 8:23 etc.)." Cranfield.

θλίψις, εως f trouble, suffering

A "general recapitulation of all the evils of which Christ had previously spoken." Before the occurrence of these celestial signs the Church will have passed through the "whole course of its tribulation". Calvin.

ἥλιος, ου m the sun  
σκοτισθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s  
σκοτιζομαι be or become darkened  
σεληνη, ης f moon  
φεγγος, ους n light

"The language of v. 24b is paralleled at several points in the prophetic literature (Ezk 32:7; Jo 2:10, 31; 3:15; Am 8:9) but is verbally most closely related to Is 13:10, part of the oracle against Babylon, σκοτισθήσεται τοῦ ἡλίου ἀνατέλλοντος, καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φῶς αὐτῆς. In v 25 the closest verbal link is with LXX Is 34:4, part of the oracle against 'all nations' but with special reference to Edom, καὶ τακῆσονται πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν ... καὶ πάντα τὰ ἄστρα πεσεῖται ..., where the 'powers of the heavens' are probably to be understood as a poetic synonym for the stars. In most of these passages the immediate reference is to the imminent downfall of specific nations (Egypt, Babylon, Edom, Israel, and Judah), though in Jo 3:15 there is a more universal perspective (all the nations gathered for judgment before Jerusalem). In the original prophetic context, therefore, such 'cosmic' language conveys a powerful symbolism of political changes within world history, and is not naturally to be understood of a literal collapse of the universe at the end of the world. It is, in the words of Wright, 'typical Jewish imagery for events within the present order that are felt and perceived as "cosmic" or, as we should say, "earth-shattering"! The events so described are catastrophic for the nations concerned, and to use such language adds a heavy ideological loading of divine judgment. God is redrawing the map of world politics, and the familiar structures of international affairs will never be the same again. But the dramatic collapse of the power structures is not the end of world history, but the beginning of a new and better phase, in which God's purpose will be worked out... What is startling about the use of such language by Jesus in this context is not that he uses the same imagery as the prophets, but that he uses it with regard to the fate of *Jerusalem* and its temple." France.

### Verse 25

καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες ἔσονται ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πίπτοντες, καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς σαλευθήσονται.

ἄστηρ, ερος m star

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι

οὐρανός, ου m heaven

πιπτω fall, fall down

οὐρανός, ου m heaven

σαλευθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl

σαλευω shake, disturb

### Verse 26

καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλαις μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης.

"If vv 24b-25 have portrayed the negative side of Jesus' prediction, the end of the old order, in vv 26-27 we turn to the positive, the new order which is to take its place." France.

τοτε then, at that time

ὄψονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl

ὄραω see

"All men, not just disciples, are presumably included in this indefinite plural." Cranfield.

νεβηλη, ης f cloud

πολύς, πολλή, πολυ gen πολλοῦ, ης, ου i)  
much

δοξα, ης f glory, splendour

Cf. Dan 7:13f. "Daniel's vision, as we have seen at 8:38, is one of enthronement, of the 'one like a son of man' coming before the throne of God to be given universal and everlasting dominion. It is the imagery of setting up a new kingdom to replace the failed regimes of previous empires, and it is located not on the earthly scene but in the presence of God in heaven. Here then is the ultimate divinely sanctioned authority, to which 'all peoples, nations and languages' must now be subject... Here is an even more telling counterpart to the irony of vv 24-25. There prophetic visions of the downfall of Israel's enemies were drawn on to depict God's judgment on Israel herself as represented in the temple. Here a vision of Israel's triumph is transferred to a 'Son of Man' whose authority is to supersede that which Jerusalem's temple has hitherto represented. Here, for those who appreciate the nuances of OT language, is a startling statement of the idea that Jesus himself, and derivatively the church, the international body of people who acknowledge his sovereignty, is now to be understood as the true Israel, the people of God through whom God's earthly agenda, hitherto focused on Jerusalem and its temple, is now to be carried forward... This is what Daniel's vision is all about, the transcendent power of God which has put an end to usurping human 'powers' and has established the final, universal sovereignty of the Son of Man. So also when the temple is destroyed the existing δυνάμεις σαλευθήσονται (v. 25), while by contrast the newly established 'power and glory' of the Son of Man will be there for all to see." France.

**Verse 27**

καὶ τότε ἀποστελεῖ τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ ἐπισυνάξει τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς [αὐτοῦ] ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων ἀπ' ἄκρου γῆς ἕως ἄκρου οὐρανοῦ.

ἀποστελεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s

ἀποστελλω send, send out

ἐπισυναγω gather, gather together

ἐκλεκτος, η, ον chosen

The growing community of Jesus' disciples, cf. v.20. "Their 'gathering' (ἐπισυνάξει), echoes OT predictions of the 'gathering' of the Jewish exiles back to their land, primarily Dt 30:4 (LXX συνάξει) and Zc 2:10 (EVV 2:6; LXX συνάξω), both of which also speak of gathering from the ends of the earth (Dt 30:4, ἀπ' ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἕως ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; Zc 2:10, ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ); the main point of v. 27 looks like a combined allusion to these two texts. Cf. also Ps 147:2 (τὰς διασποράς Ἰσραὴλ ἐπισυνάξει). Here again is an ironical reversal of the sense of the OT language used; the gathering of the ἐκλεκτοί of the Son of Man will be from the whole world not by extracting Jewish exiles from their places of captivity, but by including people of all nations in what have been hitherto the Jewish community of the people of God. This is the fulfilment of the vision of v. 10, that the εὐαγγέλιον will be proclaimed to all nations... "In view of the association of angels with the enthroned Son of Man in 8:38, and in the absence of any clear indication that the normal meaning of ἄγγελος is inappropriate here, I ... think it ... likely that angels are here credited with a 'missionary' role in the ingathering of God's people; cf. the description of angels in Heb. 1:14 as λειτουργιχὰ πνεύματα εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοῦς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν." France.

τεσσαρες neut τεσσαρα gen τεσσαρων  
four

ἀνεμος, ου m wind

ἄκρον, ου n boundary, extreme limits

γῆ, γῆς f earth

ἕως to, up to, as far as

Cf. Deut 30:3f; Jer 32:37; Ezek 34:13; 36:24; Zech 2:6.

"Though the Church be now tormented by the malice of men, or even broken by the violence of the billows, and miserably torn in pieces, so as to have no stability in the world, yet we ought always to cherish confident hope, because it will not be by human means, but by heavenly power, which will be far superior to every obstacle, that the Lord will *gather* his Church." Calvin.

**Verse 28**

Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς συκῆς μάθετε τὴν παραβολήν· ὅταν ἤδη ὁ κλάδος αὐτῆς ἀπαλὸς γένηται καὶ ἐκφύη τὰ φύλλα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγύς τὸ θέρος ἐστίν.

συκη, ης f fig tree

μάθετε Verb, 2 aor act imperat, 2 pl

μανθανω learn, find out

ὅταν when, whenever

ἤδη adv now, already

κλαδος, ου m branch

ἀπαλος, η, ον putting out leaves

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

ἐκφυω put out (leaves)

φυλλον, ου n leaf

ἐγγύς adv near

θερος, ους n summer

**Verse 29**

οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα γινόμενα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγύς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύρας.

οὕτως and οὕτω adv. thus, in this way

ἴδητε Verb, aor act subj ὄραω v.26

ταῦτα must refer to the signs mentioned

θύρα, ας f door, gate

France writes of "the quite unjustified tendency of some to translate it as *he* is near" (RV, RSV, NRSV, JB, NJB). ἐγγύς is an adverb, not a masculine adjective, so that the phrase means 'he/she/it is near', leaving the identity of the 'he/she/it' to be determined by the context. And here the context leaves little room for doubt. The disciples had asked when the temple would be destroyed and how they would know the time. Jesus' reply, with the focus shifting emphatically back to the disciples again (καὶ ὑμεῖς ... γινώσκει), now homes in directly on the latter part of their question: *this* is how you will know that it (the destruction of the temple, the subject of the question and of the whole discourse so far) is near; this is the σημεῖον you asked for...

"ταῦτα must therefore refer to the matters set forth in vv. 14-22, after which the destruction of the temple will follow quickly and inevitably; there will be little time to get away. It is therefore quite inappropriate to the flow of the discourse to understand v. 29 as referring to anything subsequent to the destruction of the temple. That would make it useless as a sign in response to the disciples' question, as well as intruding a quite unnecessary tension with the clear temporal limit set in v. 30. Verse 29 thus sums up all that Jesus has just spelled out in vv 14-27, the preliminaries in verses 14-22 (ταῦτα γινόμενα) and the climax itself in vv 24-27 (ἐγγύς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις)."

### Verse 30

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη μέχρις οὗ ταῦτα πάντα γένηται.

οὐ μὴ adds decisiveness.

παρέλθῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s  
 παρερχομαι pass, pass away  
 γενεα, ας f generation, age  
 μέχρι and μέχρις prep with gen until  
 οὗ adv where; μέχρι οὗ until  
 γένηται see v.28

Cranfield lists a variety of interpretations of this verse:

- i) ἡ γενεα ἡ αὕτη means mankind in general;
- ii) means the Jewish people;
- iii) means Christians;
- iv) means 'people of this sort' – meaning, 'there will be unbelievers until the end'.
- v) ταυτα παντα refers to the destruction of the Temple;
- vi) refers to Christ's Passion and Resurrection;
- vii) refers to the signs of the End mentioned in vv.5-23.

Cranfield himself argues that we need to understand that the Incarnation-Crucifixion-Resurrection-Ascension, on the one hand, and the Parousia on the other, belong essentially together and are in a real sense one Event, one divine Act, being held apart only by the mercy of God who desires to give men opportunity for faith and repentance." He says of Jesus' words in this verse, "The meaning then is that the signs of the End which Jesus has described in vv 5-23 will not be confined to a remote future: his hearers must themselves experience them, for they are characteristic of the whole period of the Last Times."

France comments, "There is a clear continuity between the question [in v 4] when μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα γένηται and the answer that this generation will not pass away until πάντα γένηται. If the former phrase referred to the destruction of the temple (and, as we have seen, nothing in its context suggests any other reference), then so must the latter. ταῦτα παντα in this context must therefore refer to the whole complex of events Jesus has just been predicting in vv. 14-27. The answer to the disciples' question is thus comprehensively rounded off by as plain and definite a time scale as they could have wished for."

### Verse 31

ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσονται, οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρελεύσονται.

παρελεύσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl παρερχομαι

"The words are remarkable, in that they echo the declaration of Is 40:7-8, that while grass and flowers may wither, God's word stands forever. The reliability of the word of Jesus is no less than that of the word of God himself... In Mt 5:18; Lk 16:17 the same imagery is used of the permanent validity of the law; Jesus' λόγοι are thus put on a par with the Torah in terms of authority and permanence." France.

**Day 957: Mark 13:32-14:2****Verse 32**

Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας οὐδεὶς οἶδεν, οὐδὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι ἐν οὐρανῷ οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός, εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ.

"Περὶ δέ ... as the opening phrase of a paragraph signals a change of subject. It is used several times in this way in 1 Corinthians as Paul moves from answering one question to the next, and we have seen it used by Mark in this way already in 12:26, where Jesus turns from the specific issue of the place of marriage in the resurrection life to the more general issue of the validity of the resurrection belief itself. Here it naturally suggests a similar shift to a new topic, and the more so because the dependent genitive consists of a pair of phrases (τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας) which are here introduced into the discourse for the first time. While the plural αἱ ἡμέραι (ἐκεῖναι) has been used several times to describe the period of the siege of Jerusalem (vv 17, 19, 20, 24), no singular day has been mentioned which provides a suitable antecedent to ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη in v. 32. Moreover, the statement of ignorance concerning this 'day and hour' contrasts strongly with the resounding certainty (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) of Jesus' pronouncement of the time within which the ταῦτα described in the previous verses will occur (v. 30). We have moved emphatically from the known to the unknown." France.

France argues that the new subject, spoken of here as τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης, is the parousia – the same subject as in Mt 24:36f. He writes, "The phrase ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη has this sense in a number of places in the NT where an explicit antecedent is equally lacking. In Mt 7:22 and Lk 10:12 the context requires that it refer to the day of judgment, but the identity of the 'day' is no more explicit in those passages than here. The same reference to the day of judgment is clearly intended in 2 Tim 1:12, 18; 4:8, though again no antecedent is expressed in these contexts. In 1 Cor 3:13 ἡ ἡμέρα alone suffices to convey the same reference. It seems, then, that in early Christian parlance 'that day' or even 'the day' was in itself a recognised eschatological term where the context allowed it to be so understood. Mark could thus expect his readers to detect in the use of this phrase a shift from the historical events of the Jewish War to a more ultimate perspective, without having to spell this out. Any readers/hearers who managed to miss the idiom would quickly realise the change of subject when they heard in vv. 33-37 what the coming of ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη was to be like."

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο see v.17

ἡ ὥρα

ὥρα, ας f hour, moment

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing

οἶδα know

οὐδε and not; οὐδε ... οὐδε neither ... nor

"The full reality of the Incarnation involved such ignorance on the part of Jesus during his earthly life. Calvin goes to the heart of the matter when he speaks of the Son of God 'enduring' it 'on our account' and connects it with his 'discharging the office of Mediator'. A clearer warning against all speculation about the *when* of the Parousia could hardly be imagined." Cranfield.

"And surely that man must be singularly mad, who would hesitate to submit himself to the ignorance which even the *Son of God* did not hesitate to endure on our account." Calvin.

**Verse 33**

βλέπετε ἀγρυπνεῖτε· οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ καιρός ἐστίν.

βλεπω see, look, beware of

ἀγρυπνεω be alert, watch over

The converse is the danger of being caught asleep (v. 36).

Some MSS add και προσευχεσθε. France comments, "Prayer is more likely to have been added than omitted, as a conventional expression of the exhortation to watch, especially in the light of 14:38 (cf. with ἀγρυπνέω, Lk 21:36; Eph 6:18), but is less appropriate here, especially as it produces an awkward series of three unconnected imperatives."

πότε interrog adv. when?

καιρος, ου m time, appointed time

The disciples' ignorance of the date of the Parousia is not an excuse for being unprepared, but a reason (γαρ) for increasing vigilance." Cranfield.

### Verse 34

ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἀπόδημος ἀφείς τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ δοὺς τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐξουσίαν, ἐκάστω τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ, καὶ τῷ θυρωρῷ ἐνετείλατο ἵνα γρηγορή.

ἀποδημος, ον away from home, on a journey

ἀφείς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἀφιημι leave

οἰκια, ας f house, home, household

δοὺς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s διδωμι

δουλος, ου m slave, servant

ἐξουσια, ας f authority, right, power

ἐκάστος, η, ον each, every

θυρωρος, ου m & f door keeper

ἐνετείλατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἐντελλομαι command, order

γρηγορεω be or keep awake, be alert

"The motif of the absentee householder is familiar in the gospel tradition, not only in Matthew's parousia parables (24:45-51; 25:14-30) and Luke's related parables of the watching slaves (12:35-38; cf. 12:42-48) and the pounds (Lk 19:11-27), but also already in Mark with a different setting in the parable of the tenants of the vineyard (12:1-12)." France.

### Verse 35

γρηγορεῖτε οὖν, οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας ἔρχεται, ἢ ὄψε ἢ μεσονύκτιον ἢ ἀλεκτοροφωνίας ἢ πρωῖ,

ὄψε adv. late in the day, evening

μεσονυκτιον, ου n midnight

ἀλεκτοροφωνια, ας f before dawn (lit cockcrow, the watch from midnight to 3 a.m.)

πρωῖ adv early morning, in the early morning, morning

"The four watches correspond with Roman usage." Cranfield.

### Verse 36

μη ἐλθων ἐξαίφνης εὕρη ὑμᾶς καθεύδοντας.

ἐξαιφνης suddenly, unexpectedly

εὕρη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s εὕρισκω

καθευδω sleep

"The Christian disciple, it seems, is never off duty." France.

### Verse 37

ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω, πᾶσιν λέγω, γρηγορεῖτε.

"... sums up vv.33-6 and also the whole discourse from v.5 onwards. The command to watch is addressed not only to the four, but also to the rest of the Twelve, to Mark's readers in the Church of Rome, and to the whole Church throughout the Last Times. The meaning of this watching for the returning Lord, which may be said to be the whole duty of Christians, is drawn out by the three parables of Mt 25. To watch for him is to make sure that our faith is no counterfeit which at the last crisis will vanish, but that true faith which will enable us to take our place beside him. It is to use the time that remains before his coming in the work of winning others for him. It is to recognise him gratefully in his intermediate comings in the persons of the least of his brethren." Cranfield.

### Verses 1-2

Cf. Mt 26:1-5; Lk 22:1-2. "The time for talking is over, and it is time for the events to unfold which Jesus has insistently predicted since Caesarea Philippi, and which will set in train the scenario so vividly sketched in chapter 13." France.

### Verse 1

Ἦν δὲ τὸ πάσχα καὶ τὰ ἄζυμα μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας. καὶ ἐζήτουν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς πῶς αὐτὸν ἐν δόλῳ κρατήσαντες ἀποκτείνωσιν·

πάσχα n Passover

ἄζυμος, ον without yeast; unleavened; τα ἄζυμα Jewish Feast of Unleavened Bread

"The Passover (τὸ πάσχα) refers to the events of a roughly twelve-hour period which spanned two Jewish days – the Jewish day began at sunset, not at midnight as we (and the Romans) reckon. On Nisan 14, during the afternoon, the lambs for the Passover meal were slaughtered in the temple. After sunset (and therefore on the next Jewish day, Nisan 15) the Passover meal was held. The Passover proper therefore spanned Nisan 14 and 15. The festival of unleavened bread (τὰ ἄζυμα), originally a separate festival, followed on directly from the Passover and lasted seven days, Nisan 15-21 (Nu 28:15-16). In practice the two festivals were treated together as a single period of celebration; either τὸ πάσχα or τὰ ἄζυμα could be used for the whole eight-day period, but the use of the two together here is more precise." France.

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

The imperfect indicates "a purpose entertained for some time." Taylor.

ἀρχιερευς, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family

γραμματευς, εως m scribe, expert in Jewish law, scholar

δολος, ου m deceit

κρατήσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl

κρατεω hold, seize

ἀποκτεινω and ἀποκτενω, -νυω kill, put to death

## Verse 2

ἔλεγον γάρ, Μὴ ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ, μήποτε ἔσται θόρυβος τοῦ λαοῦ.

ἑορτη, ης f festival, feast

ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ here probably "in the presence of the festival crowd" rather than "during the festival" – so Jeremias – cf. Lk 22:6.

μηποτε conj. lest, otherwise

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

θορυβος, ου m disturbance, riot

λαος, ου m people

Cranfield says that "The narrative in Jn 12:1-8 is parallel to this and, though the two accounts are not easily harmonised, probably refers to the same incident... Lk 7:36ff records a different incident." For more detailed argument concerning the relationship between the various Gospel accounts, see John Wenham, *Easter Enigma*, pp. 22,23. In particular, Wenham argues:

- i) There were two anointings. The incident related by Luke is different from that recorded in the other Gospels.
- ii) The same woman performed both anointings.
- iii) The second anointing can be explained as a re-enactment and completion of the first.

France, having listed the similarities and differences between the various gospel accounts, similarly concludes, "This complex pattern of relationships probably indicates a separate tradition in Luke, perhaps of a different incident, though there is likely to have been some assimilation of the different stories in transmission."

Of Mark's account of this incident, France writes, "The woman's καλὸν ἔργον provides a telling contrast with the limited outlook of the other guests in Simon's house. Their concern for the routine responsibility of providing for the poor, worthy as it is in itself, betrays a lack of an appropriate sense of occasion. This is Jesus' hour, the time when his predictions about his own destiny are coming to fulfilment, and his ministry is reaching its tragic yet essential climax. The poor can wait; something more vital is taking place, and the woman has proved more sensitive to it than even Jesus' closest companions. And that is why, when the story of these pivotal days comes to be told, she will have an honoured place in it. Anonymous as she is, she will be part of the good news which will soon be spread around the world, and her καλὸν ἔργον, even if not her name, will be remembered."

## Day 958: Mark 14:3-9

### Verses 3-9

Cf. Mt 26:6-13; Jn 12:1-8 and also Lk 7:36-50.

**Verse 3**

Καὶ ὄντος αὐτοῦ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ Σίμωνος τοῦ λεπροῦ κατακειμένου αὐτοῦ ἦλθεν γυνὴ ἔχουσα ἀλάβαστρον μύρου νάρδου πιστικῆς πολυτελοῦς· συντρίψασα τὴν ἀλάβαστρον κατέχευεν αὐτοῦ τῆς κεφαλῆς.

"The host, Simon, is otherwise unknown, presumably a local supporter of Jesus like Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. The fact that he could host a meal in his house indicates that his title, ὁ λεπρός did not literally denote his present condition. He may have been a former leper, now cured (by Jesus?), or he may have acquired his nickname by some other association which we cannot now know; the name Simon was so common a name that some distinguishing title was needed." France.

κατακειμαι recline at table, dine  
ἀλαβαστρον, ου η alabaster jar  
μυρον, ου η ointment, perfume, oil  
ναρδος, ου η oil of nard (an aromatic plant)

"νάρδος specifies that this is the highly prized perfume made from spikenard, whose oil was imported from India and therefore expensive." France.

πιστικος, η, ον perhaps pure, genuine

"Various explained: e.g. as = πιστης (= 'genuine') or πιστης (= 'liquid'), or as a scribal corruption of σπικατου (the name of an unguent: cf. *vg nardi spicati*); more probably, as a transliteration of Aramaic *pistaka* which denotes the ben or pistachio nut (cf. *πιστακιον*), the oil of which was used as a base for perfumes." Cranfield.

πολυτελοῦς Adjective, gen s πολυτελης,  
εξ expensive, costly; of great value  
συντρίψασα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s  
συντριβω break in pieces, shatter

"Gundry ..., following Cranfield, believes ... that by breaking the flask she 'makes it henceforth unusable', thus demonstrating the completeness of the sacrifice, but this is perhaps too cerebral an account of a rash and instinctive action. It was a dramatic and impulsive gesture rather than a planned visual aid." France.

κατέχευεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s καταχεω  
pour out  
κεφαλη, ης f head

Cf. Ex 29:7; 1 Sam 10:1; 2 Kings 9:3,6; Ps 133:2.

"It is not likely that the woman thought of herself as anointing the Messiah, but Mark doubtless intended his readers to recognise the messianic significance of his action – though another significance of it is indicated by Jesus in v.8. He who had been anointed by the Spirit at his baptism is now fittingly anointed with oil." Cranfield.

**Verse 4**

ἦσαν δέ τινες ἀγανακτοῦντες πρὸς ἑαυτούς, εἰς τί ἡ ἀπωλεια αὕτη τοῦ μύρου γέγονεν;

ἀγανακτεω be indignant, be angry

"The phrase ἀγανακτοῦντες πρὸς ἑαυτούς suggests not so much silent (internalised) indignation as the expression of that indignation to one another within the group; cf. the other uses of πρὸς ἑαυτούς for shared emotions or deliberative consultations in 1:27; 10:26; 11:31; 12:7; 16:3." France.  
Cf. Mt who makes it clear that those angered by this event included the disciples.

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

The addition of και λεγοντες before or after προς ἑαυτους appears to be a scribal 'improvement'.

ἀπωλεια, ας f destruction, waste  
γέγονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s γινομαι

**Verse 5**

ἠδύνατο γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ μύρον πραθῆναι ἐπάνω δηναρίων τριακοσίων καὶ δοθῆναι τοῖς πτωχοῖς· καὶ ἐνεβριμῶντο αὐτῇ.

ἠδύνατο Verb, imperf midd/pass indic, 3 s  
δυναμαι can

πραθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin πιπρασκω  
sell

ἐπάνω prep and adv. over, more than

Cranfield considers ἐπάνω here an adverb and δηναρων τριακοσιων a genitive of price. "The omission of ἐπάνω in a few texts assimilates to the specific figure given in Jn 12:5; it may also be due to dislike of Mark's idiom (BDF, 185[4], describe ἐπάνω as 'a vulgar substitute for πλείων')." France.

δηναριον, ου η denarius

τριακοσιοι, αι, α three hundred

δοθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin διδομι

πτωχος, η, ον poor, pitiful

ἐμβριμασμαι speak harshly to; criticize  
harshly

"The dative following ἐνεβριμῶντο indicates (as in 1:43) that there hostility was openly directed against the woman." France.

**Verse 6**

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Ἄφετε αὐτήν· τί αὐτῇ κόπους παρέχετε; καλὸν ἔργον ἠργάσατο ἐν ἐμοί.

ἀφιημι leave

Here, 'leave her alone', 'don't give her a hard time'.

κοπος, ου m labour, trouble  
παρεχω act & midd cause, bring about

For this idiom, cf. Lk 11:7; 18:5; Gal 6:17.

καλος, η, ον good, right, beautiful  
ἠργάσατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s  
ἐργαζομαι work, do, perform

**Verse 7**

πάντοτε γὰρ τοὺς πτωχοὺς ἔχετε μεθ' ἑαυτῶν, καὶ ὅταν θέλητε δύνασθε αὐτοῖς εὖ ποιῆσαι, ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε.

παντοτε always

ὅταν when, whenever

θελω wish, will

εὖ adv well

ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω

ἐμὲ Pronoun, acc s ἐγω

Cranfield says that this verse provides important evidence against the view of some "that Jesus did not envisage any significant interval between his death and his Parousia; for it implied that there will be a time during which the disciples will be in a position to do good to the poor, but not to Jesus." France comments, "The concern for the poor expressed in Dt 15:1-11 (which includes the recognition, echoed here by Jesus, that 'the poor will never cease out of the land') had become the basis of an extensive and carefully regulated system of donation to poor relief, which included the mandatory 'tithes for the poor' as well as numerous opportunities for personal charity. The point is not that you may neglect the needs of the poor, but that they can be catered for at any time: the opportunity will not go away."

**Verse 8**

ὃ ἔσχεν ἐποίησεν· προέλαβεν μυρίσαι τὸ σῶμά μου εἰς τὸν ἐνταφιασμόν.

ἔσχεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἔχω

"ὃ ἔσχεν ἐποίησεν is a compressed expression, with ἔχω used probably in the sense of 'be able'... The use of ἔχω rather than δύναμαι may be due to the thought of the perfume which the woman already possessed, and therefore was now able to put to this special use." France.

προέλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

προλαμβάνω do (something) ahead of time

μυρίζω pour perfume on

σωμα, τος η body

ἐνταφιασμος, ου m preparation for burial, burial

"The phrase indicates not her conscious intention, but the purpose which her action will actually serve." Cranfield.

**Verse 9**

ἀμὴν δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, ὅπου ἔαν κηρυχθῇ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ὃ ἐποίησεν αὕτη λαληθήσεται εἰς μνημόσυνον αὐτῆς.

ὅπου adv. where; ὅπου ἂν οἱ ὅπου ἔαν wherever, whenever

κηρυχθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s κηρυσσω preach, proclaim

"As in 13:10, the εὐαγγέλιον, which earlier in the gospel denoted the message preached by Jesus, has now become a message *about* Jesus, and here includes specifically the narrative of his last days... Mark wants us to have no doubt that Jesus knows where he is going, and already views his approaching passion in the framework of God's redemptive purpose, the εὐαγγέλιον." France.

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

κοσμος, ου m world

λαληθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s

λαλεω speak, talk

μνημοσυνον memorial

**Day 959: Mark 14:10-15****Verses 10-11**

Mt 26:14-16; Lk 22:3-6. France comments, "Why did the priests need Judas? After several days of public exposure in the temple area there could hardly have been any problem in identifying Jesus even in a crowd (though apparently the men sent to arrest Jesus in the garden at night did need such identification, v. 44). A more likely reason has been indicated in vv. 1-2: in order to avoid popular resistance they needed to secure Jesus in a less public location than the temple area, and for that they needed someone who could inform them of his movements, in particular of where he might be found at night. Only a member of the group who lived with Jesus could provide such information, hence the delight of the priests at Judas' offer. It is as a guide to the arresting party that he will reappear in 14:43-44."

"When Jesus is brought to trial in 14:53-65, we shall find the High Priest well informed about the supposed claims of Jesus (14:61). According to Mark's record Jesus has not publicly claimed to be the Messiah (indeed, he has specifically prohibited public use of such language, 8:30), though his actions have at several points implied such a claim; and his one public statement implying that he is the Son of God takes the veiled form of a character in a parable (12:6-8). It is within the disciple group that such language has been more openly used, and another part of Judas' service to the priests may have been to fill out a dossier of Jesus' words and actions which could be used against him at his trial, to prove that the incautious words of his followers (11:9-10) had not been unfounded."

### Verse 10

Καὶ Ἰούδας Ἰσκαριωθ ὁ εἷς τῶν δωδεκα ἀπῆλθεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς ἵνα αὐτὸν παραδοῖ αὐτοῖς.

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one  
 δωδεκα twelve  
 παραδοῖ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s  
 παραδιδωμι hand, deliver up

### Verse 11

οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες ἐχάρησαν καὶ ἐπηγγείλαντο αὐτῷ ἀργύριον δοῦναι. καὶ ἐζήτηει πῶς αὐτὸν εὐκαιρῶς παραδοῖ.

χαίρω rejoice, be glad  
 ἐπηγγείλαντο Verb, aor midd/pass dep  
 indic, 3 pl ἐπαγγέλλομαι promise  
 ἀργύριον, ου n silver coin, money  
 δοῦναι verb, aor act infin διδωμι  
 ζητεω seek, search for, look for  
 πῶς how(?)  
 εὐκαιρῶς when the time is right

### Verses 12-16

Cf. Mt 26:17-19; Lk 22:7-13.

### Verse 12

Καὶ τῇ πρωτῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν ἄζυμων, ὅτε τὸ πάσχα ἔθουον, λέγουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, Ποῦ θέλεις ἀπελθόντες ἐτοιμάσωμεν ἵνα φάγης τὸ πάσχα;

πρωτος, η, ον first  
 ἄζυμος, ον see v.1  
 ὅτε conj when, at which time  
 πάσχα n Passover, Passover meal,  
 Passover lamb  
 θυω slaughter, sacrifice, kill  
 ποῦ interrogative adverb where  
 θελω wish, will

ἀπελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl  
 ἀπερχομαι  
 ἐτοιμάσωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl  
 ἐτοιμαζω prepare, make ready  
 φάγησ Verb, aor act subj, 2 s ἐσθιω eat

A problem arises over dates since τῇ πρωτῇ τῶν ἄζυμων properly denotes Nisan 15<sup>th</sup> and ὅτε το πάσχα ἔθουον clearly denotes 14<sup>th</sup>. Cranfield argues that it is best to understand the first phrase as ambiguous, "its meaning being more exactly defined by the second." He thinks that the imperfect ἔθουον means "it was customary to kill"; the phrase need not imply that the killing had already begun when the disciples spoke." He concludes, "This verse clearly implies that the Last Supper was a Passover meal and that the day (reckoned from sundown to sundown) on which Jesus was arrested, condemned and crucified was Nisan 15<sup>th</sup>."

Cranfield draws attention to the problem raised by the suggestion in Jn 18:28 that Jesus died at the time that the lambs were being killed. He considers unsatisfactory the suggestion that some Jews were eating the Passover meal on the Thursday evening rather than the Friday. France, however, believes that there is evidence outside the gospel accounts that favours the 'Johannine' dating. He writes, "Astronomical evidence strongly suggests that whereas Nisan 14 probably fell on a Friday (as the Johannine chronology requires) in AD 30 and 33, there was no date between 27 and 34 when Nisan 15 was a Friday." He concludes, "It therefore seems most likely that Jesus deliberately anticipated the official date in his anxiety to hold a Passover with his disciples while it was still possible (cf. Lk 22:15), aware that by the official date he would not be there to do so." Concerning Mark's account he writes, "When Mk 14:12, which is the key text for the supposed 'synoptic chronology', sets the time of preparation for the supper on the 'day' when the lambs were sacrificed, this would, on the normal Jewish method of reckoning days, only be on the evening *following* the sacrifice if the preparations were made before sunset. If, however, the meal was prepared (as it was certainly eaten) *after* sunset, it would be on the same 'day' as the sacrifice if it took place on the *previous* evening. On that understanding, Mark's careful note of the time in fact places the last supper, as John does, on the evening which began Nisan 14, not on that which followed it. In other words, he was as clearly aware as John was that Jesus held his Passover meal not on the official day, but deliberately one day early."

**Verse 13**

καὶ ἀποστέλλει δύο τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ  
καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ὑπάγετε εἰς τὴν πόλιν,  
καὶ ἀπαντήσῃ ὑμῖν ἄνθρωπος κεράμιον  
ὑδατος βαστάζων· ἀκολουθήσατε αὐτῷ,

ἀποστελλῶ send, send out

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυοιν two

ὑπάγω go, go one's way

πολις, εως f city, town

ἀπαντῶ meet

κεραμιον, ου n jar (made of clay)

ὑδωρ, ὑδατος n water

βαστάζω carry, bear

ἀκολουθεῶ follow, accompany

"More probably a pre-arranged sign than an instance of supernatural foresight. A man carrying a pitcher would be conspicuous, since normally only women carried water in pitchers: a man would carry it in a wineskin." Cranfield.

**Verse 14**

καὶ ὅπου ἂν εἰσέλθῃ εἶπατε τῷ  
οἰκοδεσπότη ὅτι Ὁ διδάσκαλος λέγει, Ποῦ  
ἔστιν τὸ κατάλυμά μου ὅπου τὸ πάσχα  
μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν μου φάγω;

ὅπου adv. where; ὅπου ἂν οἱ ὅπου ἂν  
wherever

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in

εἶπατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl λεγω

οἰκοδεσποτης, ου m householder

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

ποῦ interrogative adverb where

κατάλυμα, τος n room, guest room

'my guest room' suggests 'the one I have booked.' France adds, "Indeed, it is not very likely, given the pressure of space in Jerusalem at Passover time, that a suitable room could have been made available without prior arrangement."

φάγω Verb, aor act indic/subj, 1 s ἐσθίω

**Verse 15**

καὶ αὐτὸς ὑμῖν δείξει ἀνάγειον μέγα  
ἐστρωμένον ἔτοιμον· καὶ ἐκεῖ ἐτοιμάσατε  
ἡμῖν.

δείξει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s δεικνυμι  
show

ἀναγειον, ου n upstairs room

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large

"The further description of the room as an ἀνάγειον μέγα a 'large upstairs room' indicates a relatively wealthy household rather than a single-story peasant house, but any attempt to guess its location from Mark's text is futile." France.

ἐστρωμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n  
nom/acc s στρωννυμι and στρωννυω  
spread; ἀναγειον ἐστρωμενον  
furnished upstairs room

Cranfield thinks it refers to the "accommodation for reclining at a meal."

ἔτοιμος, η, ον ready, prepared

ἐκεῖ there, in that place

ἐτοιμαζω prepare, make ready

**Day 960: Mark 14:16-21****Verse 16**

καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὴν  
πόλιν καὶ εὔρον καθως εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, καὶ  
ἠτοίμασαν τὸ πάσχα.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι

εὔρον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl

εὔρισκω

καθως as, just as

ἐτοιμαζω prepare, make ready

**Verses 17-21**

Cf. Mt 26:20-25; Lk 22:14, 21-23.

**Verse 17**

Καὶ ὀψίας γενομένης ἔρχεται μετὰ τῶν  
δωδεκα.

ὀψια, ας f evening

"The Passover meal would begin at sunset, when the new Jewish day (Nisan 15<sup>th</sup>) had begun." Cranfield. In France's view, Nisan 14<sup>th</sup> (cf. note against v. 12).

**Verse 18**

καὶ ἀνακειμένων αὐτῶν καὶ ἐσθιόντων ὁ  
Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰς ἕξ  
ἡμῶν παραδώσει με, ὁ ἐσθίων μετ' ἐμοῦ.

ἀνακειμαι be seated at table

ἐσθίω and ἐσθώ eat, consume

The Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν emphasises the enormity of the idea.

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

παραδώσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s

παραδιδωμι hand over, deliver up

On the final phrase, cf. Ps 41:9; Jn 13:18.

**Verse 19**

ἤρξαντο λυπεῖσθαι καὶ λέγειν αὐτῷ εἰς  
κατὰ εἰς, μήτι ἐγω;

ἤρξαντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl ἀρχω  
midd begin

λυπεω pain, grieve; pass be sad,  
sorrowful, grieve

εἰς κατα εἰς **one by one**  
 μητι Negative particle, used in questions  
 expectating a negative answer

**Verse 20**

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Εἰς τῶν δωδεκα, ὁ  
 ἔμβαπτόμενος μετ' ἐμοῦ εἰς τὸ τρύβλιον.

ἔμβαπτω **dip**  
 τρυβλιον, ου n **dish, bowl**

"The τρυβλιον is probably the dish containing the sauce (*haroset*) of dried fruits, spices and wine or vinegar, in which the bitter herbs were dipped at the Passover meal." Cranfield.  
 "Christ, by his reply, neither removes their doubt, nor points out the person of Judas, but only confirms what he said a little before." Calvin.

**Verse 21**

ὅτι ὁ μὲν υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑπάγει  
 καθως γέγραπται περὶ αὐτοῦ, οὐαὶ δὲ τῷ  
 ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκείνῳ δι' οὗ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ  
 ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται· καλὸν αὐτῷ εἰ  
 οὐκ ἐγεννήθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος.

ὑπαγω **go, go one's way, depart**  
 γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω  
**write**

Cf. 8:31; 9:12.

οὐαὶ interj. **woe! how horrible it will be!**  
 ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. **that (one)**

δι' οὗ "suggests the truth that the delivering up of Jesus is not simply an act of Judas, but part of a bigger purpose than his – he is in fact being used for the fulfilment of God's purpose. Nevertheless, it is his act, and he is responsible – hence the οὐαὶ and v 21c. The fact that God turns the wrath of man to his praise does not excuse the wrath of man." Cranfield.

καλος, η, ον **good, right, proper**  
 ἐγεννήθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s γενναω  
**be father of, bear; pass be born**