

# The Gospel according to Mark: Section-by-Section Outlines

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For a brief outline of the whole Gospel, [click here](#). For webpages on related topics, click the words hyperlinked below.

## The Structure and Contents of the Gospel's Beginning (Mark 1:1-45)

### Introduction of the Gospel of [Jesus Christ](#) (1:1-15):

- *Evangelist's Literary Introduction* - "The beginning of the *good news* (gospel; *euangelion*) of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." (v. 1)
  - As written by the prophet Isaiah (and Malachi), John the Baptist preaches repentance in the wilderness (vv. 2-6)
    - John *speaks about Jesus* coming after him: "I baptize with water; he will baptize with holy Spirit" (vv. 7-8)
      - Jesus comes from Nazareth and is baptized by John in the Jordan river; heavens open; the Spirit descends (vv. 9-10)
    - A voice from heaven *speaks to Jesus*: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (v. 11)
  - The Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness, where he remains for forty days, tested by Satan (vv. 12-13)
- *Jesus' Initial Preaching* - "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the *good news*." (vv. 14-15)
- [The first words of Jesus in Mark's Gospel proclaim the urgency of his message, his focus on God, and the response expected from the listeners.]

### Some Typical Events in Jesus' Ministry (1:16-45):

- **The first Vocation story:** Jesus calls four fishermen, who follow him as his disciples (vv. 16-20)
- **The first [Exorcism](#):** Jesus exorcises an unclean spirit in Capernaum (vv. 21-28)
- **The first [Healing narrative](#):** Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law of a fever (vv. 29-31)
- **The first [Healing summary](#):** Jesus heals many sick people and drives out many demons (vv. 32-34)

- **The first Prayer:** Jesus goes off by himself early in the morning to pray (v. 35)
- **The first Journey: Jesus expands his preaching beyond Capernaum** (vv. 36-39)
- **The first Restoration story:** Jesus cleanses a leper, restoring him to health and to society (vv. 40-45)

## A Comparison of Mark 1 and Parallel Episodes in the other Gospels:

Pericope	Mark	Matthe w	Luke	John
Literary Introduction	v. 1	1:1	1:1-4	1:1-18
[ <i>Infancy Narratives</i> ]	—	[ <i>ch. 1-2</i> ]	[ <i>ch. 1-2</i> ]	—
John the Baptist preaches in the wilderness	vv. 2-8	3:1-6, 7-12	3:1-6, 7-20	1:19-23, 24-28
Jesus is baptized by John in the Jordan river	vv. 9-11	3:13-17	3:21-22, 23-38	[1:29-34]
Jesus is tested by Satan in the wilderness	vv. 12-13	4:1-2, 3-11	4:1-2, 3-13	—
Jesus preaches the Good News in Galilee	vv. 14-15	4:12-17	4:14-15, 16-30	—
Jesus calls his first four disciples	vv. 16-20	4:18-22	[5:1-11]	[1:35-51]
Jesus exorcizes an unclean spirit at Capernaum	vv. 21-28	—	4:31-37	—
[ <i>Sermon on the Mount</i> ]	—	[ <i>ch. 5-7</i> ]	[ <i>cf. 6:17-49</i> ]	—
Jesus heals Simon's Mother-in-law	vv. 29-31	[8:14-15]	4:38-39	—
Jesus heals and exorcizes many others	vv. 32-34	[8:16-17]	4:40-41	—
Jesus prays; then preaches beyond Capernaum	vv. 35-39	4:23-25	4:42-44	—
Jesus cleanses a leper	vv. 40-45	[8:1-4]	5:12-16	—

## A Cycle of Five "Conflict Stories" (Mark 2:1—3:6)

Mark seems to have intentionally grouped these five conflict stories together near the beginning of his Gospel. Note how each story ends with one or two brief sayings of Jesus, which seem to express the main point of the story. Note also how the conflict builds from one story to the next, culminating in the plot to kill Jesus in 3:6.

<b>M ar k</b>	<b>Pericope Title</b>	<b>Who Objects?</b>	<b>Against Whom?</b>	<b>About What?</b>
2:1-12	<b>Healing a Paralytic</b>	scribes	among themselves	forgiving/ blaspheming
Jesus' Saying: <i>"the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"</i> (2:10).				
2:1 3-1 7	<b>Calling Levi, a Tax Collector</b>	scribes of the Pharisees	Jesus' disciples	eating with tax collectors and sinners
Jesus' Sayings: <i>"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick"</i> (2:17a); <i>"I have come to call not the righteous but sinners"</i> (2:17b).				
2:1 8-2 2	<b>About Fasting</b>	people	Jesus	disciples not fasting
Jesus' Sayings: <i>"The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them."</i> (2:19-20); <i>"No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak."</i> (2:21-22).				
2:2 3-2 8	<b>Plucking Grain on the Sabbath</b>	Pharisees	Jesus	breaking the sabbath
Jesus' Sayings: <i>"The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath"</i> (2:27); <i>"so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath"</i> (2:28).				
3:1-6	<b>Restoring a Man's Withered Hand</b>	Jesus	"them" (Pharisees & Herodians)	healing on the sabbath
Jesus' Question: <i>"Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?"</i> (3:4).				

## **Jesus' Early Ministry: Training the Twelve Disciples (Mark 3:7—6:6a)**

### **Jesus Interacts with Crowds and Opponents, Disciples and Family (3:7-35)**

- Crowds from Galilee and beyond come to Jesus, who heals them (3:7-12)
  - Jesus chooses twelve followers "to be with him and to be sent out" (3:13-19)
- Scribes from Jerusalem challenge Jesus: the Beelzebul controversy (3:20-30)
  - Jesus speaks of his family and true disciples, who do the will of God (3:31-35)

### **Jesus Teaches the Crowds and the Disciples with Enigmatic Parables (4:1-34)**

- *The Evangelist introduces Jesus' teaching in parables* (4:1-2)
  - **The Parable of the Sower & the Seed** (4:3-8)
    - Why Jesus Uses Parables (4:10-12)
  - **Jesus explains the Sower & the Seed to his disciples** (4:13-20)
    - The Lamp on a Stand & various short sayings about Jesus' parables (4:21-25)
  - **Two Parables about the Kingdom of God:**
    - The Seed Growing Secretly (4:26-29)
    - The Mustard Seed (4:30-32)
- *The Evangelist summarizes Jesus' use of parables* (4:33-34)

### **Jesus Shows His Power in Words and Mighty Deeds (4:35—6:6a)**

- Jesus calms a storm on the Sea of Galilee by "rebuking" the wind (4:35-41)
  - Jesus expels a "Legion" of unclean spirits from the Gerasene demoniac (5:1-20)
- Jesus heals a bleeding woman and restores Jairus' daughter to life (5:21-43)
  - Jesus teaches in Nazareth, his hometown, but is rejected by the people (6:1-6a)

## **Jesus' Expanded Ministry: Sending Out the Twelve Apostles (Mark 6:6b—8:21)**

- Jesus sends the Twelve on a mission to preach, heal, perform exorcisms (6:6b-13)
  - The death of John the Baptist is recounted (6:14-29)
    - **Jesus Feeds 5000 People** in rural Galilee with five loaves and two fish (6:30-44)
      - Jesus walks on water; the disciples are afraid (6:45-52)
    - Jesus heals many people from around Gennesaret (6:53-56)
      - Jesus argues with some Pharisees about purity laws and ritual traditions (7:1-23)
    - Jesus exorcizes the Syrophenician woman's daughter (7:24-30)
      - Jesus enables a deaf-mute to hear and speak (7:31-37)
    - **Jesus Feeds 4000 People** in Gentile territory with seven loaves and a few fish (8:1-10)
  - The Pharisees ask for a sign from Jesus (8:11-13)
- Jesus' disciples fail to understand the significance of the yeast and bread (8:14-21)

## **Mark's Central Section: "On the Way" to Jerusalem (Mark 8:22—10:52)**

**Jesus Journeys from Bethsaida and Caesarea Philippi to Jericho and Jerusalem** (built around three Passion predictions, each of which is followed by the misunderstanding of one or more of the disciples, and further teaching by Jesus about the requirements of true discipleship):

[Transition/preface: 8:14-21 - The "blindness" of the disciples!]

8:22-26 - *The Two-Stage Restoration of Sight to a Blind Person at Bethsaida, north of the Sea of Galilee*

8:27-30 - Peter's Confession near Caesarea Philippi: "You are the Christ"; but Jesus orders them "not to tell anyone about him"

**8:31 - First Passion Prediction** (Son of Man must suffer, be rejected, be killed, and rise after three days)

8:32-33 - *Peter misunderstands* and "rebukes" Jesus, who "rebukes" Peter in return

8:34–9:1 - *Jesus teaches: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me. 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."

9:2-30 - Transfiguration; Coming of Elijah; Exorcism of an Epileptic Spirit

**9:31-32 - Second Passion Prediction** (Son of Man will be betrayed, be killed, but rise after three days)

9:33-34 - *All the disciples misunderstand*, arguing who among them was the greatest

9:35-50 - *Jesus teaches*: "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all."

10:1-31 - Teaching on Divorce; Blessing of Children; the Rich Man

**10:32-34 - Third Passion Prediction** (Son of Man will be handed over, condemned to death, mocked, spat upon, scourged, put to death, but will rise after three days)

10:35-40 - *James and John misunderstand*, asking for the seats of honor when Jesus is in "glory"

10:41-45 - *Jesus teaches*: "Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

10:46-52 - *The Immediate Restoration of Sight to [Blind Bartimaeus](#) outside of Jericho, on the way to Jerusalem*

### Contrasting Mark's Two Stories of Jesus Healing Blind People:

Mark 8:22-26	Mark 10:46-52
22 – Intro: Blind man at Bethsaida, Request to touch	46 – Intro: Jesus leaving Jericho, Blind beggar Bartimaeus
23 – Jesus touches the man's eyes ( <i>with spittle</i> )	47 – Bartimaeus cries out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy"
24 – The man can see unclearly ( <i>trees walking?</i> )	48a – People rebuke and try to silence him
25a – Jesus touches the man's eyes again	48b – Bartimaeus cries again, "Son of David, have mercy"
25b – The man's sight is restored; he sees clearly	49-50 – Jesus stops & calls him; Bartimaeus approaches Jesus
26 – Jesus sends the man home ( <i>not into the village</i> )	51 – Dialogue: "What do you want?" – "Lord, I want to see!"

## **Jesus' Final Week in Jerusalem (Mark 11:1—13:37)**

### **The Entry into Jerusalem and the Cleansing of the Temple (11:1-33)**

- Jesus and the disciples enter Jerusalem in a triumphant procession (11:1-10)
  - They enter the Temple briefly, but soon go out to Bethany since it is evening (11:11)
- The *next morning*, **Jesus curses a fruitless fig tree** (11:12-14)
  - They enter the Temple; Jesus casts out the sellers, buyers, and money changers (11:15-19)
- The *next morning*, **the disciples see the fig tree withered** (11:20-25)
  - They enter the Temple again; officials approach and challenge his authority (11:27-33)

### **Further Controversies with the Jerusalem Authorities (12:1-44)**

- The Parable of the Wicked Tenants, directed against the temple authorities (12:1-12)
  - Pharisees and Herodians question Jesus about paying taxes (12:13-17)
  - Some Sadducees question Jesus about the resurrection of the dead (12:18-27)
  - A "Good Scribe" questions Jesus about the greatest commandment (12:28-34)
  - Jesus questions the scribes about the "Son of David" (12:35-40)
- Jesus commends a poor widow for her offering given to the temple treasury (12:41-44)

### **The Eschatological Discourse (13:1-37)**

- **Double Introduction (13:1-4):**
  - A) Jesus and a disciple dialogue about the present grandeur and the future destruction of the Temple (13:1-2)
  - B) Jesus' closest disciples ask him privately: **When?** And what will be the **signs** of the end? (13:3-4)
- **Jesus' Warnings about Trials and Tribulations on Earth (13:5-23):**
  - *Take heed:* let no one lead you astray (13:5-6)

- Wars, earthquakes and famines will come, but the end is not yet (13:7-8)
  - *Take heed*: you will be arrested and put on trial, so you can bear testimony (13:9-11)
    - You will be hated and put to death, even by family members; but *whoever endures will be saved* (13:12-13)
  - *Let the reader understand*: When you see the desolating sacrilege, everyone must flee (13:14-18)
    - Tribulations will be greater than ever before, but God has shortened those days for the sake of the elect (13:19-20)
  - *Take heed*: Don't be led astray by false messiahs and false prophets; Jesus has forewarned us (13:21-23)
- **Jesus' Teachings about the Coming of the Son of Man (13:24-31):**
  - After the foregoing tribulations, there will be signs in the heavens (13:24-25)
    - The Son of Man will come with great power, *to gather the elect* (13:26-27)
  - Learn a lesson from the fig tree, so you know when the Son of Man is near (13:28-29)
    - This generation will not pass until all has taken place (13:30-31)
- **Double Conclusion (13:32-37):**
  - B') Jesus' answer to the disciples' question, **When?**: "Amen, this generation won't pass away; but **no one knows** the day nor hour" (13:32-33)
  - A') Jesus' final call for all: *Take heed; watch*, since **you do not know when**; illustrated by the Parable of the Doorkeeper; "stay awake!" (13:34-37)

## **The Passion, Death, and Burial of Jesus (Mark 14:1—15:47)**

- **Two Days before the Passover (14:1-11)**
  - The chief priests and scribes plan to arrest and kill Jesus (14:1-2)
  - Jesus is anointed at Bethany by an anonymous woman (14:3-9)
  - Judas arranges to betray Jesus to the chief priests (14:10-11)
- **The Passover Feast / Last Supper (14:12-25)**
  - *On the day before*, Jesus sends two disciples to prepare for the Passover meal (14:12-16)

- *In the evening*, during the Passover meal, Jesus foretells his betrayal (14:17-21)
- While at supper, Jesus blesses bread & wine, saying it is his body & blood (14:22-25)
- After the meal, on their way to the Mount of Olives, Jesus foretells Peter's denial (14:26-31)
- **Jesus' Prayer and Arrest at Gethsemane (14:32-52)**
  - Jesus prays to his Father, and three times speaks to his disciples (14:32-42)
  - Judas arrives with an armed mob and greets Jesus with a kiss; Jesus is arrested (14:43-50)
  - A young man wearing only a linen cloth is almost captured, but runs off naked (14:51-52)
- **The Initial Interrogation of Jesus, and the Denials of Peter (14:53-72)**
  - During the night, Jesus is led away to the high priest's house (14:53)
  - Peter enters the courtyard of the high priest's house (14:54)
  - Jesus is interrogated by the high priest and condemned for blasphemy (14:55-65)
  - Peter three times denies knowing Jesus, before the cock crows (14:66-72)
- **Jesus' Trials before the Sanhedrin and before Pilate (15:1-15)**
  - *In the morning*, the whole Sanhedrin condemns Jesus and delivers him to Pilate (15:1)
  - Jesus is questioned by Pilate ("Are you the King of the Jews?") and accused by the chief priests (15:2-5)
  - Pilate asks the crowds about releasing Jesus or Barabbas, a rebel/murderer (15:6-14)
  - Pilate orders Barabbas to be released, and Jesus to be crucified (15:15)
- **Events before the Crucifixion (15:16-23)**
  - Jesus is mocked and mistreated by the Roman soldiers as "King of the Jews" (15:16-20a)
  - Jesus is led out to Golgotha; Simon of Cyrene is compelled to carry the cross (15:20b-22)
  - Jesus is offered drugged wine, but refuses to drink it (15:23)
- **The Crucifixion of Jesus (15:24-32)**

- *At nine o'clock in the morning*, Jesus is crucified, and the soldiers divide his garments (15:24-25)
- The inscription of the charge reads, "The King of the Jews" (15:26)
- Two criminals are crucified along with Jesus (15:27[+28])
- Jesus is derided by passersby, by the chief priests and scribes, even by the criminals (15:29-32)
- **The Death of Jesus (15:33-37)**
  - *From noon until three o'clock* in the afternoon, darkness covers the land (15:33)
  - *At three o'clock*, Jesus cries out: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (15:34)
  - Bystanders think he is calling for Elijah; someone offers Jesus a sponge with vinegar (15:35-36)
  - Jesus cries aloud and breathes his last (15:37)
- **Three witnesses to the Crucifixion (15:38-41)**
  - The temple curtain is torn in two (15:38)
  - The centurion asserts, "Truly this man was God's Son!" (15:39)
  - Some women from Galilee witness the crucifixion from afar (15:40-41)
- **The Burial of Jesus (15:42-47)**
  - *In the evening*, Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for Jesus' body (15:42-45)
  - Joseph buries Jesus in a tomb hewn out of rock; some women witness the burial (15:46-47)
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- See also a webpage analyzing [The Passion Narrative in the Four Gospels](#)

## **The Resurrection of Jesus (Mark 16:1-8; and 16:9-20, added later)**

- **The Empty Tomb Narrative (16:1-8)**
  - Three women (Mary Magdalene & two others) go to the tomb early on the first day of the week (16:1-4)
  - A young man appears to tell them, "He has been raised... Go, tell his disciples..." (16:5-7)
  - They flee from the tomb and say nothing to anyone, because they were afraid (16:8)
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- **Later Endings Added to Mark's Gospel [16:9-20]**

- Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene [Mark 16:9-11; cf. Matt 28:9-10; John 20:11-18; Luke 8:2; Luke 24:9-11]
- Jesus appears to two disciples walking [Mark 16:12-13; cf. Luke 24:13-35]
- Jesus appears to the eleven and commissions them to go preach [Mark 16:14-18; cf. Luke 24:36-43; Acts 10:41; Matt 28:19; etc.]
- Jesus ascends to heaven, and the disciples go out to preach [Mark 16:19-20; cf. Luke 24:51; Acts 1:2-11]