

## Mark 1:1-26 Who is this Man? The King worth waiting for

### 1. Announcing Arrivals...

In the next couple of weeks, we'll be announcing the arrival of our #4....  
Nowadays, Facebook, skype and sms's announce the news

But it got me thinking – how do world leaders announce their arrival?

Announcing the arrivals

- The President of U.S.A – simply – “President of the United States, Mr. President” /First lady
- Our Prime Minister – “The Honorable Tony Abbott, MP Prime Minister of Australia”
- The first lady – but then the first ‘bloke’....
- The introductory title of the Queen – “Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her other realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.”

So, in Mark's gospel the title of Jesus is given in the very first verse. << v. 1 >>

And Mark doesn't muck around when it comes to his task.

He states his purpose of writing in verse 1.

This is the beginning of the good news,

And not just your garden variety good new – like a baby's arrival, or Australia winning at sport.

No. This is the specific good news of global and epic proportions.

This is the good news that pertains to God's chosen ruler over the whole universe.

## 2. The Herald in the Wilderness (1:1-8)

Without taking a breath, Mark introduces Jesus' advance party.

The king's herald bursts onto the stage,  
Backed by the authority of Isaiah,  
Given the task of preparing Israel for the messiah,  
The Elijah-like figure, the person of John the Baptist stands in the spotlight

### a. The authority

Now, John the Baptist's authority is deeply rooted in the O.T. << vv. 2-3 >>

Mark packs three Old Testament references into one quote.

Exodus 23:20, Isaiah 40:1 and Malachi 3:1.

And in these three quotes we have the breadth of the O.T

Moses, author of the first five books, particularly Exodus.

Isaiah, one of the greatest prophets during the History of Israel,

And Malachi, the last prophet in the O.T.

The whole of Israel's prophetic witnesses testify to this herald in the wilderness.

That is, John the Baptist is claiming to stand upon the shoulders of all the O.T prophets

John the Baptist stands as the final herald before the arrival of God's king!

### b. The task

Consequentially,

The task of John the Baptist will be to prepare God's people for the arrival of the king. << vv. 4-5 >>

The herald declares to Israel that they need to undergo a baptism - a symbolic washing

- not of rebirth by the Holy Spirit – like we symbolize today
- But a much more simple baptism of humiliation before God.
- This baptism – was to be a national day of mourning for Israel
- A nation-wide reflection, and admission of how far Israel had wandered away from God.

### c. The person

And it is precisely for this reason that John was the prophet in the wilderness. << vv. 6-8 >>

The physical deeply connects to the spiritual.

The physically wild man calls Israel out of the spiritual wilderness to turn back to God,

### **3. The Lord in the Wilderness (1:9-13)**

Then, just as quickly as John the Baptist appears on the stage,  
The star of the show appears in a bright flash. << vv. 9-11 >>

#### **a. The person**

Now, Mark doesn't give us much background information about Jesus.

But what we do know is that

Jesus identified himself with the people of God

Jesus identified himself with Israel through John's baptism.

#### **b. The authority**

And yet, he is radically different to the people because of this authoritative voice.

The authority that stands behind Jesus is the very voice of God. << Aside – the readers insight >>

So as we read through Mark's gospel, there is the tension b/w the characters and the readers

In understanding the identity of Jesus.

#### **c. The testing (1:12-13)**

But before we have a chance to ponder upon the identity of Jesus,

Mark's narrative thrusts forward, with Jesus in the wilderness. << vv. 12-13>>

The purpose of this temptation is not for Hollywood to create dramatic depictions of Jesus struggling.

The purpose of this temptation is to show that Jesus is tested, exactly the same way Israel was.

With one stark contrast, Jesus didn't succumb. Jesus passed the test.

Israel failed for 40 years in the wilderness, but Jesus obeyed, tested in the devil's crucible.

Jesus was tested in his obedience to God – and yet remained faithful not faith-less.

#### 4. The King's Entrance (1:14-15)

And yet, before we have more time to reflect, Mark's action pace continues.  
The king enters into Galilee, proclaiming the good news. << vv. 14-15>>

In the Roman world, announcing a gospel meant bringing "joyful tidings"  
Particularly, it meant bringing the joyful tidings of something the emperor had done.  
Like, have a birthday, accede to power, or celebrate some cultic festival.  
For example there was a gospel for the Emperor Octavian that announced  
"the birthday of the god was for the world the gospel  
which has been proclaimed on his account."

And so, the gospel of Jesus is the good news, the glad tidings, the joyful announcement,  
"The Kingdom of God is near"

But notice, the difference between the Roman gospel, and the Christian Gospel.  
The Roman gospel looks back into history to celebrate a past event.  
Whereas the gospel of Christ boldly makes an advanced declaration.

The announcement looks forward to the establishment of God's king.  
As we journey through Mark, in the coming weeks, we anticipate the establishment of Jesus.  
We anticipate Jesus' march to power and Israel's restoration.

## 5. The King's authority over (vv. 16-28)

And so, the first kingly action that Jesus takes is to call his loyal subjects. As was read earlier, The King demonstrates his authority over those he calls in vv. 16-20

### a) Those he calls (vv. 16-20)

Notice, the connection between v. 14, and v. 16.

Jesus' preaching in Galilee, v. 14.

and Jesus' calling Simon and Andrew occurred around Galilee, v. 16

Mark is inferring the connectedness of the two events.

The proclamation "the kingdom of God is near"

Results in the natural response "follow the king".

Jesus proclaimed the gospel, and Simon and Andrew demonstrate the natural response.

### b) Evil (vv.21-28)

And yet, it is not all plain sailing for Jesus. The path of God's king is marked by opposition.

***The next demonstration of the king's power, is his authority over evil.*** vv. 21-28.

The world of spiritual opposition to Jesus know his identity.

The spiritual realm who oppose God himself, can only agree with the voice from heaven,

The unclean spirit, declares - "You are the Holy one of God".

The spiritual world knows exactly the identity of Jesus.

But, by contrast, it is humanity that is confused about Jesus' identity.

Again, and again, people will ask "Who is this man?"

Or v. 27 - "What is this? A new teaching with authority!"

And yet, Jesus authority is not simply for show, a superhero demonstrating superpowers.

No. Jesus speaks with absolute authority over evil.

Jesus speaks, and the unclean spirit leaps out of that poor man.

## 6. Announcing Arrivals, The King & Us

The kingdom of God is near, because the King of God is here.

Mark's gospel proceeds at breakneck pace,

From the regal announcement to the herald in the wilderness to testing in wilderness,  
To the king demonstrating his authority.

And so as we pause from Mark's action, and reflect –

This king's message stands today – “The Kingdom of God is near”

- Even more so – for Jesus has walked the earth, Jesus has died on the cross
- Jesus has risen for the dead, and will return to judge.

And so the question for us is – what should we do, as servants of the king, as we await his return.

Three words.

Pray. Connect. Extend.

We need to pray – as we seek to reach out to the local community, as the local church.

We need to pray that God would be drawing people into his kingdom.

We need to Connect – great opportunities on so many levels.

We need to Extend – extend ourselves, and extend the invitation to those around us.

Move outside our comfort zones, extend the invite to church, to bible study group, ...

Let's pray.