

Study of the Gospel of Mark

Chapter 8 (Part 2)

Background

In the first part of this chapter Jesus fed over 4,000 people in the Gentile region of Decapolis (Mark 8:1-10), then returned to Galilee in the district of Dalmanutha for short time, only to be confronted by the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mark 8:11-13). From there Jesus and His disciples head northeast across the Sea of Galilee to the city of Bethsaida. This is most likely Bethsaida Julius which was on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, since it would have been on the way to Caesarea Philippi further to the north (Mark 8:27 - see the Map from Chapter 7 for the location of these cities). It is here in Bethsaida that we pick up Mark's account.

1. Mark is the only Gospel writer to record this unique miracle of Jesus. We are told that some people brought a blind man to Jesus asked Jesus to lay His hands on the man. Notice that the request comes from the people and not from the blind man himself. Compare the healing of Jesus in this section to the healing of the deaf-mute by Jesus in the previous chapter (7:31-36). Note the similarities between the two accounts:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____

2. This was a two-step miracle by Jesus, and in that regard is very different from most of the miracles of Jesus which were immediate. If we take into consideration the fact that this blind man was brought to Jesus, and did not come on his own, why might Jesus have healed him in this way?

3. Once again Jesus takes the person away from the crowds, and then tells him not to return to the city. We have seen Jesus tell people not to say anything about the healing because that message became an impediment to His preaching ministry. What other reason might Jesus have had when He told the man to return to His home and not enter the city?

In the following section we see Jesus leaving the region of Galilee once again to spend time teaching His disciples. Jesus now becomes very specific in explaining to the disciples what He – as the promised Messiah – was about to do in order to fulfill God’s promise of salvation. As we will see, the disciples understood in part, but still had much to learn....

4. In verses 27-30 Jesus discusses with His disciples who He is. Peter’s confession is that Jesus is not just one of the prophets, but “The Christ.” If this answer was true, why would Jesus warn His disciples not to tell others about Him? (Compare Luke 8:18-26)

5. Following this discussion Jesus describes in detail what He has come to do as the Christ. He is very clear: “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again” Mark 8:31.) This was the Christ’s purpose as foretold in the Old Testament. Find some Old Testament passages that indicated that this was the Messiah’s purpose.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

6. What was Peter’s reaction to these words of Jesus? Why did Peter respond in this way? (Jesus words in the following verses help give some context....)

7. Jesus rebuked Peter for his thoughts, and then addressed the disciples and all those who were following. His words are important because Jesus addresses a serious problem of His day. The Jewish people (including Jesus’ own disciples) had been taught to view the Christ as a political deliverer - one who would bring glory to the Jewish nation and people. They could not comprehend a “suffering” Christ. How do Jesus’ words in verses 33-38 address this prevalent misconception?

8. Of course, Jesus’ response also has application for us today. What can we learn from Jesus’ words in the final verses of this chapter?
