

Mark

1:2, 3. Quoted from Mal. 3:1; Isaiah 40:3.

1:4. There is a textual variation in this verse concerning whether or not *John came baptizing* or *John the Baptizer came*. Some versions read, “John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness” (ESV); while others read, “John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness,” (NRSV). The difference depends on the addition or deletion of the single letter for the article *ho*, (#3588 ὁ), meaning “the.” It is most likely, however, that the *ho* is not original and the preferred reading is “John came baptizing.” The reason for this is that John is frequently elsewhere called John the *Baptist*, but never John the *Baptizer*. This leads credence to viewing the participle “Baptizing” as descriptive of John’s action and not a title (Cp. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*).

1:5. “the whole country of Judea, and all Jerusalem.” A good example of oriental hyperbole (exaggeration). Not everyone went to John to be baptized, but a great many did.

1:8. “in holy spirit.” There is no definite article. This holy spirit is the gift of God. (cp. Matt 3:10).

1:13. “were ministering.” The Greek verb is *diakoneō* (#1247 διακονέω), and it is in the imperfect tense, thus indicating an action in the past which occurred over a period of time. Although a number of commentators state that they believe that Satan had already left Jesus’ presence when the angels came, that does not seem to be the sense of the Greek text or a simple reading of the verse itself. The flow of the verse clearly seems to indicate that the angels were with him at times while he was in the desert, just as the wild animals were. If we read the verse as it stands, the wild animals were certainly with Jesus during his time in the desert, and the verse simply continues on and says that the angels were ministering to him, as if they also were there at times during his temptation in the desert. Jesus’ desert experience would have been like life: the hardships of life (the desert), the presence of physical enemies (the wild animals), the hoards of Satan (including Satan himself), and God’s angels, all around one man who needed to resist temptation and walk in wisdom and power. There is no reason to believe that the presence of angels somehow meant that Jesus was not really tempted. For one thing, it is unlikely that the angels were there all the time, any more than he was constantly surrounded by wild animals. They would likely come and go. Also, the angles did not keep Jesus from being tempted, but their presence helped remind Jesus how much was at stake in his living a sinless life.

The Word specifically says that it was the Spirit, God, who led Jesus into the desert (Matt. 4:1; Luke 4:1). The Gospel of Mark is even more forceful, saying that the Spirit “drove” Jesus into the desert (Mark 1:12). But why? Why the need to be in the desert? It surely makes a parallel between Jesus in the desert and Moses and Israel in the desert. Jesus was 40 days in the desert fasting just as Moses was 40 days fasting on Mt. Sinai (Moses was there twice: Ex. 24:18; 34:28), and Israel was 40 years in the desert. There was an angel of the Lord in the desert who helped Israel in its wanderings (Ex. 14:19; 23:20, 23; 32:34; 33:2) and so too Jesus had angelic support. It was Moses’ and Israel’s disobedience in the desert that led to the death of a generation of Israelites, the death of Israel’s great leaders, and by dividing the Twelve Tribes to both sides of the Jordan River, put an end to the vision of a united Israel in the Promised Land. In contrast,

Jesus' obedience in the wilderness, and his resisting physical, mental, and spiritual temptation, contributed to his being able to restore and give life to the nation of Israel once again.

1:14. "Good News of God." The words "of the kingdom" were added by copyists, to conform this verse with many others that appear in the Four Gospels. This is the only use of "Good News of God" in the Gospels, and from the context it is clear that it does indeed refer to the Good News of the Kingdom.

1:24. "What do we have in common with you." See note, Matt. 8:29.

1:41. "touched." The Greek verb is *haptō* (#681 ἅπτω), a word that has two distinct meanings. It properly means "to fasten to, make adhere to; hence, specifically to fasten fire to a thing, to kindle, set on fire, (often so in Attic Greek); cp. Luke 8:16; 11:33; 15:8. However, when it is used in the middle voice (*haptomai*; #680 ἅπτομαι) it means "to make close contact with," and has a very wide range of applications. It can mean, touch, take hold of, hold; cling to; to have contact with, or partake of something with cultic implications, (often used of touching as a means of conveying a blessing or "touching" or partaking of an unclean thing, including eating, almost like we would say, "you have not touched your food"); it can be used almost idiomatically for intimate touch, sexual contact (1 Cor. 7:1; we use "touch" the same way today); and it can be used for contact with someone with a view to causing harm, i.e., injure (Job 5:19 LXX, "no evil shall touch you.") (BDAG; Thayer).

In this verse, there is little doubt that Jesus did more than just make a light physical contact with the leper. He would have at the very least placed his hands on him as any priest or healer would do to convey a blessing. He may have even gone so far as to hug the leper, but that is less probable, especially given the culture and cultural expectations of both the leper and the people.

On a lexical note, there is some confusion that can occur when studying *hapto* because most lexicographers recognize it as one Greek verb that has different definitions in different voices, something not uncommon. Nevertheless, James Strong, author of Strong's concordance, assigned a different Strong's number to *haptomai*, the middle voice of the verb. Thus there appears to be two words in Strong's Concordance and The Englishman's Greek Concordance, but only one word in Thayer and most other Greek lexicons.

1:44. "See *that* you say nothing to anyone." Jesus often said this when he healed people. (cp. Matt. 9:30, blind men; Mark 7:36, a deaf person; Luke 8:56, a dead girl). On the other hand, he told some of the people he healed to spread the news (cp. Mark 5:19). The reason Jesus told people to not talk about their healing is never explicitly stated, and there are likely various reasons for it. One reason would be the often infectious doubt and unbelief that comes from scoffers who hear of the deliverance which could adversely affect the person who was healed. Another reason would be the personal privacy of the individual, who would often be immediately elevated to "movie star status" in their community, as happened to Lazarus. Still another reason would be likely especially in cases such as this healing, the need for Jesus to not be thought of as "unclean" or worse, as "contagious," in his culture. Touching a leper made the person unclean (Lev. 15:7), and since the cause of leprosy was unknown, not only were people with leprosy scrupulously avoided, but no doubt sometimes people who touched lepers were looked upon with suspicion and avoided.

2:1. “at home.” The people of Nazareth tried to kill Jesus, so he moved to Capernaum (Luke 4:16-31), which became his home, his “own city” (Matt. 9:1). Jesus apparently either rented or bought a house in Capernaum, because John 2:12 indicates he moved his family there (although after relocating he and his disciples did not stay long, presumably because of the Passover mentioned in 2:13). Mark 2:1 says that he was “at home” when the people crowded the place to such a degree that men had to let a paralyzed man down through the roof (Mark 2:1-12; the Greek *en oikos* does not mean “in the house,” for one thing there is no “the.” Rather, it means “at home”).

2:7. “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” See Matthew 9:8 note on “authority given to men.”

2:16. “and drinks,” which appears in many versions, was added by copyists, prob. to harmonize with Luke 5:30. There is strong evidence that it is not original.

3:3. Christ told the man to stand up in the middle of the crowd. The healing would be performed by a word, not by a touch. He did not ask the man to come up front, but healed him in the middle of the crowd, right where he was.

3:9. “crush.” The Greek *thlibō* (#2346 θλίβω) is *to press* (as grapes), *press hard upon* (Thayer, *Lexicon*). The versions are split between “press upon” and “crush,” but the people were already pressing upon him (v. 10). He wanted to be sure they did not crush him.

3:16. Jesus continues the tradition of God and other ancient rulers by changing the names of those whom he rules. Historically, changing someone’s name might be done to prove your power over someone, but Jesus would not have done it if Peter, James and John were not sold out to him. Notice that he does not change Judas’ name. Cp. Gen. 17:5 and 15; 32:28; 2 Sam. 12:24 and 25; Jer. 20:3; Gen. 41:45; 2 Chron. 36:4; 2 Kings 24:17; Dan. 1:7).

3:21. “those who were close to him.” The Greek is *para* (#3844 παρά), a preposition usually meaning “beside.” Thus the book of Mark is vague here, saying only that these people were those who were beside him. This is a case when we have to rely on other parallel records to give the details, and we learn what happened from the scope of Scripture. Matthew 12:46 and Luke 8:19 let us know that this group of people is his mother and brothers. This verse is a clear indication that Jesus’ step-father, Joseph, was dead, otherwise he would have been leading the group. That means Joseph died between the time Jesus was 12 (Luke 2:42) and the time he started his ministry. He had worked with his father, the carpenter, and had become a carpenter himself (Mark 6:3). This group “set out” to take him. They arrive in verse 31.

3:22. The versions differ as to whether this is one statement by the scribes, or two statements. The context seems to support two statements, because the “were saying...”.

3:28. “blasphemies...blaspheme.” This is the figure of speech *polyptoten*. See Bullinger’s *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*.

What is blasphemy, biblically? Blasphemy is speaking a reviling, defaming word against someone—either God, angels, humans, or things. The Greek verb is *blasphemeo* (#987 βλασφημέω), which the Louw-Nida lexicon defines as “to speak against someone in such a way as to harm or injure his or her reputation (occurring in relation to persons as well as to divine beings)—‘to revile, to defame, to blaspheme, reviling.’”

In English we use the word almost exclusively in the context of speaking deridingly towards God or religious institutions. But the term has more flexibility in

Greek. To be sure, it is used in the Bible of blasphemous speech towards God (e.g., Rom. 2:24; Rev. 13:6), but also of any disrespectful speech that “demeans, denigrates, [or] maligns” (BDAG). Thus it is often used of people; for instance, in Acts 13:45 certain Jews blaspheme against Paul: “They were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling [blaspheming] him” (ESV). In Titus 3:2, we are commanded not to speak in this way towards anyone. Other examples of blasphemy against humans can be found in Acts 18:6; Rom. 3:8; 1 Pet. 4:4; and Rev. 2:9.

Besides humans, the Bible also refers to “blasphemous” speech towards angelic beings (2 Pet. 2:10-12; Jude 8-10; Rev. 13:6). From these verses we see that God does not want us to use reviling speech against spiritual beings.

Lastly, it is also possible to blaspheme against impersonal things, such as the Word of God (Titus 2:5), or the Way of Truth (2 Pet. 2:2).

The Biblical understanding of “blasphemy,” then, is broader than the term’s usage in English. In the Bible it refers to reviling, demeaning, or defaming speech—whether it be in the form of irreverence towards God, or reviling expressions towards men, angels, or even concepts. Rather than participate in such behavior, Christians are called to keep our speech gracious, seasoned with salt (Col. 4:6).

3:31. “Arrive.” They started out in verse 21.

4:1. “facing the sea.” (See Lenski).

4:12. Quoted from Isaiah 6:9, 10. Some texts such as the Byzantine Text from which the KJV was translated, read “of sins” at the end of the verse, but scholars are now aware that this is an explanatory gloss that worked its way into the text.

“so that...” For this quotation from Isaiah and the purpose of parables, see commentary on Matthew 13:13. The “so that” is a *hina* + subjunctive purpose-result clause: see entry on Matt. 2:15, “resulting in...what was spoken being fulfilled.” To fully understand this passage, we must see how Matthew’s record portrays the human side of the events, John’s the spiritual side, and Mark and Luke’s records combine the two into one.

4:36. Just as he was = tired, hungry, etc. That is why he went right to sleep in the boat.

4:39. In verse 38 he was awakened, the verb in v. 39 is stronger. He was not “sleepy” or “just coming to his senses” as so many do when they are awakened. He became fully awake.

“Hush!” The Greek *siopao* (#4623). “To refrain from speaking or making a sound, keep silent, say nothing, make no sound” (BDAG). Although this word gets translated “Peace” in many versions, it is not the standard word for peace.

5:6. “bowed before him.” See note on Matthew 2:2.

5:7. “What do I have in common with you.” See note, Matt. 8:29.

5:12. “Let us enter into them.” This is a command clause composed of *hina* + subjunctive mood in Greek. See commentary on John 9:3, “let the works of God be revealed in him.”

5:23. “Having come.” Lenski points out that in certain cases the Greek word *hina* [untranslated] simply introduces an imperative, not a purpose clause. Here, it is the imperative of prayer, which is why some versions, fill in the “ellipsis” with “I pray.”

5:28. “was saying.” She talked to herself (cp. Matt. 9:21) over and over.

5:34. “made you whole.” The Greek *sozo*, in the context of sickness, is to be made whole or to be healed. In the context of everlasting life, it is to be “rescued, saved.”

“affliction.” The Greek *mastix* (#3148 μάστιξ) is literally a whip, and was used metaphorically of a whipping, affliction, disease, etc.

5:42. “amazed...with a great amazement.” This is the figure of speech polyptoton, the repetition of both noun and verb forms together (Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*). It highlights the degree of astonishment, they were greatly amazed.

6:2. “being done.” Present tense. Astonishingly, the people of Nazareth, without faith themselves, were able to admit that Jesus was doing miracles.

6:14. “from among the dead.” See note on Romans 4:24.

6:16. The Greek is more emphatic than just, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.” The way it is written, Herod had no doubt that John was both dead (because he had killed John) and raised. Wuest says: “raised out from among those who were dead.”

6:21. “military commanders.” The Greek word designates a Chiliarch. See commentary on John 18:12.

6:49. An apparition. The word *phantasma* means “something that appears,” from *phaino*, to appear. Thus an apparition. The only other appearance of the word is in Matthew 14:26, where it is used in a sentence and translated “ghost.”

6:20. “feared.” Better than “was afraid of” here because there is an element of holy awe with the fear.

6:33. “knew *where they were going*.” (Cp. Brown and Comfort Interlinear, and Lenski). It is not that the people “recognized them.” Jesus had just been with them. They knew both Jesus and the apostles well. And, had they been sensitive at all, they also would have known why he was leaving—to get some privacy. But they were selfish, and knowing where he would go to be alone, got there before he did.

“went before them.” This, and the start of verse 34, which is translated in many versions as “came ashore” or something similar, creates a contradiction with John 6:3-5. The crowd was not waiting on the shore for Jesus. If it were, he would have seen the people long before he came ashore. John makes it clear that the crowd, even if it was ahead of Jesus and the group with him for a little while, eventually lagged behind. Thus, Jesus arrived with his disciples on the shore and spent some time with them before the crowd assembled. Jesus “came out” of his retreat and saw the multitude assembled, and had compassion on them.

7:1. Mark can be read to mean that only the scribes came from Jerusalem, but Matthew 15:1 is clear that the entire delegation came from there.

7:3. “to the wrist.” The Greek literally reads “with the fist.” This is a good example of a custom being so obscure that translating it into the text would only confuse the reader. Edersheim gives the best explanation we have seen, and Young’s Literal Translation renders according to his explanation. “The water was poured on both hands.... The hands were lifted up, so as to make the water run to the wrist, in order to ensure that the whole hand was washed, and the water polluted by the hand did not again run down the fingers. ...But there was one point on which special stress was laid. In the ‘first affusion,’ which was all that originally was required when the hands were Levitically ‘defiled,’ the water had to run down to the wrist. Fn. “The language of the Mishnah...can only refer to the wrist. Fn. The rendering ‘wash diligently’ gives no meaning; that ‘with the fist’ is not in accordance with Jewish Law; while “up to the elbow’ is not only contrary to Jewish Law, but apparently based on a wrong rendering of [the Hebrew]” (Life and Times). The general uncertainty among commentators, however, about what “with the fist” means,

explains the huge number of variations in the translations: “oft” (KJV), “carefully” (NASB), “ceremonial washing” (NIV), “thoroughly” (NRSV), “to the wrist” (YLT), etc. “wash.” Greek = *nipto*, to wash.

7:4. “they bathe themselves.” The Greek is *baptizo* (#907 βαπτίζω), which means “...Properly, 1. *to dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge.* 2. *to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water;* in the middle and the 1 aorist passive *to wash oneself, bathe;* so Mark 7:4...metaphorically, *to overwhelm, as ... to be overwhelmed with calamities,* of those who must bear them, Matt. 20:22f Rec.; Mark 10:38 f; Luke 12:50 (Thayer). Many commentators have had problems with this verse, believing that even the religious Jews did not bathe themselves each time they came from the marketplace, but the text seems clear, and we must assume that some people did that, because his audience did not charge him with an absurdity.

Some versions have “and couches” (YLT) or “and tables” (KJV) after “copper vessels,” Metzger (*Textual Commentary*) writes, “It is difficult to decide whether the words...were added by copyists who were influenced by the legislation of Leviticus 15, or whether the words were omitted (a) accidentally because of homoeoteleuton or (b) deliberately because the idea of washing or sprinkling beds seemed to be quite incongruous. In view of the balance of probabilities, as well as the strong witnesses that support each reading, a majority of the Committee preferred to retain the words, but to enclose them within square brackets.” We decided to leave them out, following the original translation of the ASV.

7:6. Quoted from Isaiah 29:13.

7:9. “tradition.” The Greek word is *paradosis* (#3862 παράδοσις), and it means something that is handed over, or something that is handed down. Thus it can mean surrender or arrest, or it can refer to a “tradition.” Traditions can be a great help to people. God established traditions in the OT, such as keeping the Passover feast every year. Jesus himself started the tradition of “the Lord’s Supper.” However, there are Christians who believe that any tradition created by man is an offense to God and should not be practiced or condoned. How should Christians view traditions? It seems clear that we should view traditions the same way Jesus did. There were hundreds of traditions in the Judaism of the time of Jesus (cp. Mark 7:4), but the ones he spoke against fall into several categories.

One category that Jesus spoke against was traditions of men that had, in the minds of the religious leaders, become equal to the commands of God. No matter how helpful they are or holy they seem, and no matter how many years they have been observed, traditions are only traditions, they are not commandments, and should not be treated as such. When traditions are treated like commandments, first, the words of man become elevated to the status of the word of God, and second, someone who is unable or unwilling to keep the tradition is almost always treated badly by those who do.

Another category of tradition that Jesus spoke against was traditions that could not be kept without ignoring or rejecting the commandments of God (Mark 7:8, 9). These traditions, by their very nature, are harmful. Jesus cited the tradition of giving “to God” the support that elderly parents needed (Mark 7:10-13). Of course, the support that was supposedly given “to God” ended up enriching and empowering the religious leaders, and the honor that God commanded that children give to parents was ignored.

A third category of tradition that is harmful is a tradition that has become a burden to a Christian’s life and walk, instead of being a blessing. The religious leaders

had many burdensome traditions that they enforced (Matt. 23:4). A godly tradition is to be a blessing and bring people closer to God. A tradition that makes living a godly life into a burden should not be kept.

There are many traditions in the Church, and very few are kept by all Christian denominations. Most are not harmful, and can be helpful. For example, dressing up for Sunday church is a tradition in some denominations, and is not harmful unless it takes on the force of a command and someone who comes not dressed up is scorned or rejected. It can be helpful in that it helps some people take their worship time more seriously. On the other hand, the tradition of praying to “the saints” is practiced in some denominations, but is against the command of God and therefore harmful.

Christians should view traditions like Christ did. Even if a tradition is not “in the Bible,” it can still bring people closer to God in a very meaningful way. However, if a tradition begins to take on the force of a commandment, or if it makes godly living a burden, or especially if it contradicts the Bible or can only be kept at the expense of ignoring a biblical command, then the words spoken by Isaiah more than 2500 years ago still apply: “in vain do they worship me” (Mark 7:7; cp. Isa. 29:13).

7:10. Quoted from Exod. 20:12 and Exod. 21:17.

7:27. “dog,” see note on Matthew 15:26.

7:30. “having gone out.” Greek = *exerchomai* (ἐξέρχομαι 1. to move out of or away from an area. a. of animate entities *go out, come out, go away, retire*). Demons can inhabit the mind or body, and thus when they leave they are “gone out.”

8:9. This is the shorter reading represented in NA 27.

8:18. Quoted from Jer. 5:21.

8:33. “Get behind me, Satan.” See note on Matthew 16:23.

“have in mind” The Greek *phronein* means to have in mind something that sways the thinking (Cp. Lenski).

9:2. For an explanation of the Transfiguration, see Matthew 17:2.

9:9. “out from among the dead.” See note Romans 4:24. Wuest: “out from amongst the dead.”

9:11. John the Baptist was “Elijah.” See notes on Matthew 17:10 and 11.

9:12. “and yet” (Cp. Lenski, NASB).

9:18. “strong enough.” The Greek is *ischuō* (#2480 ἰσχύω), which means strength. This verse gives us a glimpse into the spiritual battle that can wage when demons live inside a body. It takes spiritual strength to cast them out. That strength comes from faith (Matt. 17:20), which is connected to one’s prayer life (Mark 9:29). Another example of strength in the spiritual battle is Revelation 12:8. The Devil and his demons wanted to remain in heaven, but they were not strong enough to fight against Michael and the angels. To say the apostles “could not” cast out the demon is correct, but not helpful, because then we have no idea why. The Greek is more helpful, saying that the spirit did not come out because the apostles were not spiritually strong enough. Spiritual power in the life of a believer is usually not a matter of either having it or not, it is usually a matter of how much power one has, and do we have enough to get the job at hand done for the Lord.

9:42. “lake” from the context. He was teaching in Capernaum, right beside the Sea of Galilee, which is actually a lake.

9:43. Gehenna: see note on Matt. 5:22.

9:44. This entire verse was an addition to the text, and so is omitted in the REV as it is omitted in many other versions as well. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*.

9:45. Gehenna: see note on Matt. 5:22.

9:46. This entire verse was an addition to the text, and so is omitted in the REV as it is omitted in many other versions as well. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*.

9:47. Gehenna: see note on Matt. 5:22.

9:48. Quoted from Isaiah 66:24.

10:4. Quoted from Deut. 24:1.

10:6-8. Quoted from Gen. 1:27; 2:24.

10:7. Quoted from Gen. 2:24, occurs also in Matthew 19:5.

“be glued to.” The Greek is *proskollaō* (#4347 προσκολλάω), and it literally means to glue to or to glue upon. Thus it was used to join oneself to someone, or to cleave or stick to that person. We still use the idiom of glue today to express extreme attachment, and say things such as “He stuck to his coach like glue,” or “He is glued to the TV set.” In this verse the meaning of “glue” becomes very important. When a man and woman marry, they become “one flesh.” That is a spiritual reality and has important physical implications as well, so it is important to bring the meaning of the Greek text fully into the English.

10:19. Quoted from Exod. 20:12-16.

11:9. Quoted from Ps. 118:25, 26.

11:17. Quoted from Isaiah 56:7 and Jer. 7:11.

11:23. “sea” in this context. Jesus is teaching in Jerusalem, and the Mediterranean Sea and Dead Sea were the closest and best known bodies of water.

11:24. “believe that you have received them, and you will have them.” This verse contains great truth, and great potential to be misunderstood and wrongly applied. Certain faith teachers have taken it to mean that through faith we instantly receive what we ask for, even though it may clearly seem to not be the case, we must nevertheless believe that we have already received what has been asked for. Often, this can lead to unhealthy situations where Christians must pretend that circumstances are not as they are, or feel that they are not having “faith.”

This comes from a misguided understanding of the verse. The second half of the verse should settle any thought as to whether the requests have been received—it assumes they have not. This is why it says, “and you **will** (future tense) have them.” An understanding of the Greek behind this phrase will further clear things up. To properly understand this verse we must understand the tense of the verb translated “you have received.” It is *not* the present tense, as the KJV can give the impression with their rendering, “believe that ye receive *them*.” Rather, the verb is in the aorist (past) tense. So understood literally, the verse would not be asking us to believe we have presently received anything, but to believe that we have *already in the past* received what we are presently praying for; then, perplexingly, it ends with the promise that if we so believe, we will in the future receive what we believe has already been received before we even asked for it.

How are we to understand this? Why would God put the verb in the aorist tense? The reason is this verse contains an idiom known as the proleptic aorist (under the category of the idiom of the prophetic perfect, see commentary on Eph. 2:6). The proleptic aorist is a form of the figure of speech *heterosis*, where one tense is used instead

of another for emphasis. In this case the aorist tense is used for the future tense, speaking as though a yet future event had already come to pass. Wallace explains the proleptic aorist as follows: “An author sometimes uses the aorist for the future to stress the certainty of the event. It involves a “rhetorical transfer” of a future event as though it were past.” Here in Mark 11:24 the event of receiving what is prayed for is yet future, but it is put in the past tense (“have received”) to emphasize its certainty.

When we understand that this phrase is the idiom of the proleptic aorist, we see that God is not asking us to believe we have already in the past received something we do not really yet have, nor is he asking us to believe we have presently received something we have not yet received; rather, he is asking us to believe we *will* receive our requests in the future. This saves us from the harm of turning biblical belief into make-believe.

11:26. We omit this verse as do most modern versions as being an addition to the text in order to harmonize Matthew and Mark. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*: “Although it might be thought that the sentence was accidentally omitted because of homoeoteleuton, its absence from early witnesses that represent all text-types makes it highly probable that the words were inserted by copyists in imitation of Mt 6.15.”

12:10, 11. Quoted from Ps. 118:22, 23.

12:19. Quoted from Deut. 25:5.

12:24. “Is this not....” This is the figure of speech *Erotesis* (rhetorical question).

12:25. “out from among the dead.” See Romans 4:24. (Cp. Wuest)

12:26. Quoted from Exod. 3:6.

12:29, 30. Quoted from Deut. 6:4, 5.

12:31. Quoted from Lev. 19:18.

12:32, 33. Quoted from Deut. 6:4, 5; Deut. 4:35; Lev. 19:18.

12:36. Quoted from Ps. 110:1.

12:40. “harsher punishment.” We have taken the sense of *krima* (#2917 κρίμα)—along with the KJV, NET, NIV, and HCSB translations—to indicate both the judgment and execution of the sentence (Cp. Lenski). Hence, *krima* becomes “punishment” rather than “condemnation;” and the comparative adjective *perissoteros* (#4055 περισσότερος) becomes “harsher” rather than “greater.”

12:42. Two “leptons.” The Greek says “lepta” which is the plural of “lepton.” The lepton was a small, common, brass coin. Two leptons = one assarion (often abbreviated “as.”) and an assarion was 1/16 of a denarius, which was the day’s wage for a field worker or soldier (compare it to our minimum wage). Thus, if a denarius was worth \$56 (\$7 per hour times 8 hours), an assarion (or two leptons) was worth \$3.50. Coins are one area where it is hard to translate. We feel that “penny” is misleading. For one thing, at the rates we assigned here, a lepton is worth \$1.75. Similarly, while “mite” communicates a small amount, it is unclear, and the reader may think that the Bible is making the point that the woman cast a small amount into the treasury and not realize that it points out exactly how much she cast in. It was a small amount, but it was exactly described in the Biblical text as being 2 leptons, not just “a small amount.”

13:9. “courts.” A good translation of the generic use of “Sanhedrin,” which was not the “great Sanhedrin” that convened in Jerusalem made up of 70 members, but the concept of “lesser Sanhedrin” that were the Jewish courts that met wherever Jews would be tried by other Jews.

13:14. Quoted from Dan. 11:31.

13:24. Quoted from Isaiah 13:10.

13:25. Quoted from Isaiah 34:4.

13:26. Quoted from Dan. 7:13.

13:33. Some Greek texts add prayer to this verse, but it is omitted in some early and important witnesses, and therefore much more likely added to the text than omitted from it.

14:4. This verse is hard to translate, and so the versions differ considerably. A literal rendition would be something like, “There were some being indignant with each other.” Of course, they were not being indignant with each other, they were indignant about what they considered a waste of money, and were commenting to each other about it. Some versions say they were indignant “within themselves,” or “said to themselves,” but that can be misunderstood. The ones who were indignant were saying things among themselves, i.e., among their little disgruntled group, but not within their own minds, as we say, “talking to themselves.” The Gospel of John (12:4) lets us know that this verbal poison started with Judas Iscariot, who was a thief and stole from the money that Jesus and the disciples received (John 12:6). From Judas this discontent spread through the room and infected some of the believers. Jesus cut it off quickly and decisively. “Let her alone...” etc. Christians need to learn from this record. A little evil (leaven) goes through the whole loaf of bread. We need to respond quickly to evil.

14:5. “scolded her harshly.” See note on John 11:33.

14:27. Quoted from Zech. 13:7.

14:49. “let the scriptures be fulfilled.” This is a command clause. In the original language this is composed of *hina* (#2443 ἵνα) and the verb for “fulfilled,” *pleroō* (#4137 πληρόω), in the subjunctive mood. See entry on John 9:3, “let the works of God be revealed in him.” It should not be translated as a purpose clause, “*this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures*” (such as NASB; NET; NAB; ASV), but as a command clause: “Let the scriptures be fulfilled.” Reading it as a purpose clause requires the phrase “this has taken place” to be supplied in order to complete the thought, because it is not in the Greek. The fact that the *hina* + subjunctive clause stands alone makes the command clause a less forced reading.

15:2. “*It is as you say.*” See Matthew 27:11 note on “*It is as you say.*”

15:19. “in homage to.” See note on Matt. 2:2.

15:20. “mocked.” The Greek word translated “mocked” is *empaizō* (#1702 ἐμπαίζω), and means “mock,” “make fun of,” “ridicule.” See note on Matthew 27:29.

15:28. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*: “The earliest and best witnesses of the Alexandrian and the Western types of text lack ver. 28. It is understandable that copyists could have added the sentence in the margin from Lk 22:37...”

15:33. The sixth Roman hour is noon our time.

15:34. The ninth Roman hour is 3 PM our time. This was the start of the Jewish evening, when the Passover Lamb would be slain in the Temple, just a few hundred yards to the west of the Mount of Olives where Christ was crucified.

Quoted from Ps. 22:1.

15:35. Christ was so beaten and swollen, and so dehydrated from loss of blood, that his enunciation was not clear and he was misunderstood by some of the crowd.

15:39. The claims of Jesus to be the Son of God would have been well known, as well as the miracles he did, and the fact that the religious leaders wanted him crucified because they envied him. Thus it is not hard to believe that the centurion, upon seeing the love of

the Christ (Father, forgive them, etc.), his bravery, and all the miracles and signs that accompanied his death, would be convinced that this man was in fact who he claimed to be, and indeed, who the sign over his head said he was.

16:9-20. These verses are in brackets because they are almost certainly not the original ending of Mark. “The last twelve verses of the commonly received text of Mark are absent from the two oldest Greek manuscripts (Ⲛ and B), from the Old Latin codex Bobiensis (it^k), the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, about one hundred Armenian manuscripts, and the two oldest Georgian manuscripts (written A.D. 897 and A.D. 913). Clement of Alexandria and Origen show no knowledge of the existence of these verses; furthermore Eusebius and Jerome attest that the passage was absent from almost all Greek copies of Mark known to them. The original form of the Eusebian sections (drawn up by Ammonius) makes no provision for numbering sections of the text after 16:8. Not a few manuscripts that contain the passage have scribal notes stating that older Greek copies lack it, and in other witnesses the passage is marked with asterisks or obeli, the conventional signs used by copyists to indicate a spurious addition to a document.” (Metzger; Textual Commentary). Metzger has more to say about this ending of Mark, and comments about it are made by many scholars, such as Bart Ehrman (*Misquoting Jesus*, p. 67). Not only is the commonly known ending of Mark missing in many manuscripts, other endings exist in other manuscripts. Also, the vocabulary and style in Greek are not consistent with the rest of Mark.

16:14. This verse seems to contradict Luke 24:34, because when Jesus appeared to the disciples behind closed doors, they were already saying he had been raised, so why would he reprove them? The key is the phrase, “after he was risen.” It was the women who saw him “after he was risen,” first Mary Magdalene (John 20:10-18) then the other women (Matt. 28:8-10), but when they reported what they had seen, the apostles and other disciples did not believe them (Luke 24:11). However, later, when the Lord appeared to Simon Peter, they believed him, which is clear from Luke 24:34. It is important that we notice that Luke 24:34 does not say, “The Lord has appeared to the women and Simon Peter.” Only Simon’s testimony was relevant to them. Jesus’ appearance to Peter is not directly recorded in the Bible, but likely happened when Peter went alone to the tomb (Luke 24:12), and Peter must have recounted what happened with such power and clarity that they believed. If this verse in Mark is original, then it is very important, because in the biblical culture of the first century, a woman’s testimony was not considered believable, which is why the disciples ignored it. For Jesus to reprove them for ignoring the women is clear evidence that Jesus elevated the position of women in the Congregation, and is a precursor to the fact that there is neither male nor female in Christ. The other possibility is that this verse in Mark is not original, and Jesus did not reprove the disciples. Reproof certainly does not seem to be the tone of Jesus’ communication with the disciples according to Luke 24:36-49 and John 20:19-23.