

COME TO THE FEAST
BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS
ON THE EUCHARIST

St Mark's Gospel

Programme

- ▶ Who were the “Markan” Christians? (Mark 13)
- ▶ Insiders, outsiders and novelty (Mark 2:1-3:6)
- ▶ **Feeding the 5000 (Mark 6:32-7:23)**
- ▶ Feeding the 4000 (Mark 8:1-21)
- ▶ The Lord’s Supper (Mark 14:22-25)
- ▶ Lessons for today’s church



Sequence

- ▶ The pattern
- ▶ Mark
- ▶ Biblical Background
- ▶ Markan community
- ▶ Thus far...
- ▶ Suddenly...
- ▶ And so...



Mark 6:32-8:21

Sequence I 6:32-7:23

5000

6:32-44

Boat

6:45-52

[*Summary*]
6:53-56

Dispute

7:1-23

Tyre

7:24-30

Decapolis

7:31-37

Sequence II 8:1-21

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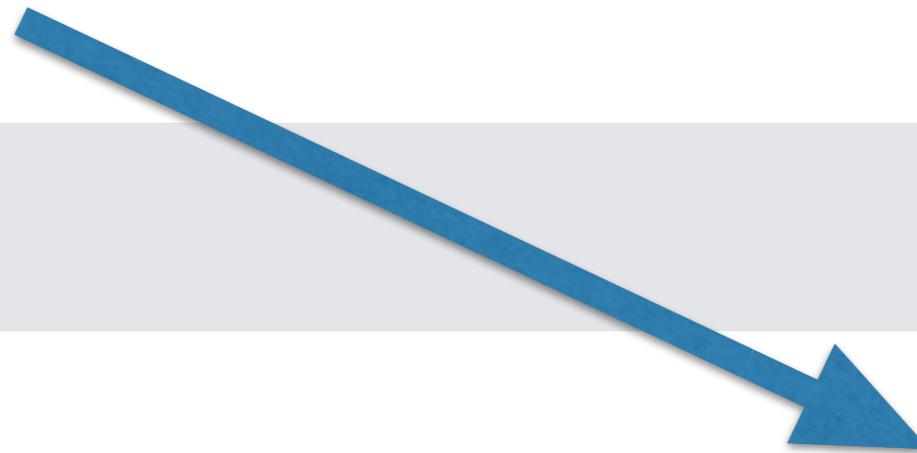
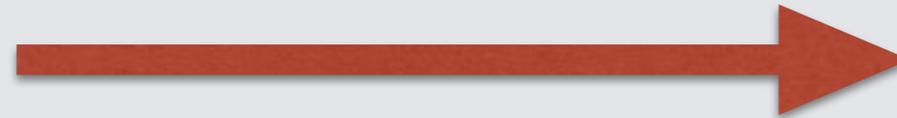
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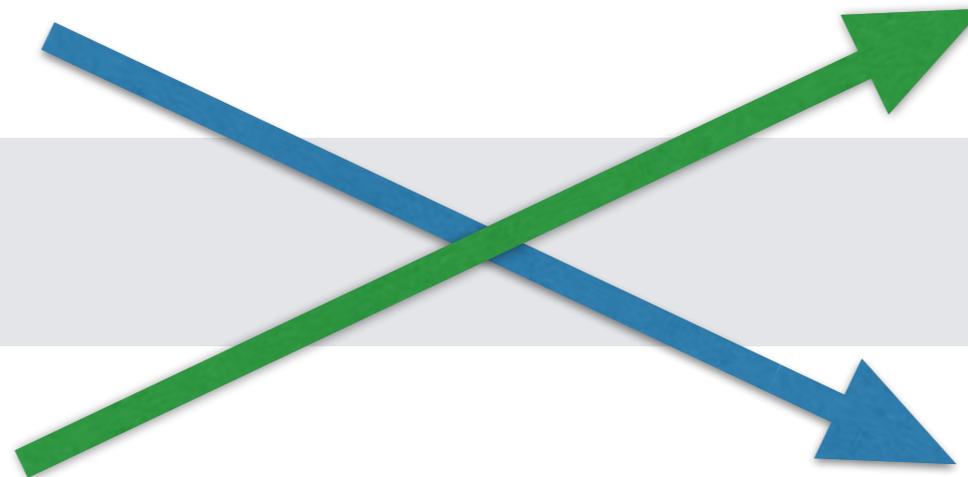
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Mark 6:32-44

Mark 6:32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to some remote place (**desert**). 33 But many saw them leaving and recognised them, and they hurried on foot from all the towns and arrived there ahead of them. 34 As Jesus came ashore he saw the large crowd and he had compassion (**splanchnizomai**) on them, because they were like **sheep** without a **shepherd**. So he taught them many things.

Mark 6:35 When it was already late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is an isolated place (**desert**) and it is already very late. 36 Send them away so that they can go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy something for themselves to eat." 37 But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "Should we go and buy bread for two hundred silver coins and give it to them to eat?"

38 He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five—and two **fish**." 39 Then he directed them all to sit down (**anaklinō**) in **groups** on the green grass. 40 So they reclined in **groups (symposia)** of **hundreds** and **fifties**.

41 He **took** the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he **gave thanks** and **broke** the loaves. He gave them to his disciples to **serve** the people, and he divided the two fish among them all.

42 They all ate and were **satisfied**, 43 and they picked up the **broken** pieces and fish that were left over, **twelve** baskets full.



Biblical Background

- ▶ Then Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like **sheep that have no shepherd**; and the LORD said, 'These have no master; **let each one go home in peace.**'" (1 Kgs 22:17)
- ▶ Num 27:16-17; 1 Kings 22:17; Jdt 11:19; Ezek 34:8; Zech 10:2



Biblical Background

- ▶ He humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with **manna**, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by **bread** alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. (Deut 8:3)
- ▶ Moses chose capable men from all Israel, and he made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of **hundreds**, rulers of **fifties**, and rulers of tens. (Exod 18:25; cf. Ex 18:21; Deut 1:15.)



Biblical Background

Lev 24:7 You shall put on the pile pure frankincense and salt, and they shall be as **loaves for remembrance**, set before the Lord. 8 On the day of the sabbaths he shall set them out before the Lord continually **as an everlasting covenant from the sons of Israel**. 9 And they shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat them in a holy place, for they are holy of holies; this is for him from the things sacrificed to the Lord, a perpetual precept.



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Biblical Background

1 Sam LXX 21:2 (21.1) And Daudid came to Nomba to the priest Abimelech. And Abimelech was astonished to meet him and said to him, "Why is it that you are alone, and no one with you?" 3 (2) And Daudid said to the priest, "The king has charged me with a matter today and said to me, 'Let no one know the matter about which I send you and concerning which I have charged you,' and I have testified solemnly to the lads in the place called Faith of God, Phellani, Alemoni, 4 (3) **and now if there are in your hand five loaves, give into my**

hand what is found." 5 (4) And the priest answered Daudid and said, "There are no permitted **loaves** in my hand, for there are only consecrated loaves; if the lads have kept themselves from a woman, then they shall eat." 6 (5) And Daudid answered the priest and said to him, "Indeed we have kept ourselves from a woman yesterday and the third day; when I go on a journey all the lads have become consecrated, and this journey is profane, wherefore it shall be consecrated today through my implements."



Markan Community

- ▶ **Bread / loaf:** Mark 2:26; 3:20; 6:8, 37-38, 41, 44, 52; 7:2, 5, 27; 8:4-6, 14, 16-17, 19; 14:22.
- ▶ **Fishermen:** Mark 1:16-17
- ▶ **Twelve:** Mark 3:14, 16; 4:10; 5:25, 42; 6:7, 43; 8:19; 9:35; 10:32; 11:11; 14:10, 17, 20, 43.
- ▶ **Basket (kophinos):** a word used especially by Jews in later times. Used appositely in Mark 8:19.



Markan Community

- ▶ **Broken pieces:** Mark 6:43; 8:8, 19-20
- ▶ Did. 9:3 And concerning the **broken bread**: We give you thanks, our Father, for the life and knowledge that you have made known to us through Jesus, your servant; to you be the glory forever.
- ▶ Did. 9:4 Just as this **broken bread** was scattered upon the mountains and then was gathered together and became one, so may your church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom; for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever.



Markan Community

- ▶ Davidic king / messiah.
- ▶ Exodus traditions of feeding in the desert.
- ▶ Anticipating the Lord's Supper.
- ▶ Looking forward, ultimately, to the banquet of the final Kingdom of God.
- ▶ All are God's guests at the banquet of life.



Mark 6:45-52

Mark 6:45 Immediately Jesus **made** his disciples get into the boat and **go on ahead** to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dispersed the crowd. 46 After saying good-bye to them, he went to the **mountain** to pray. 47 When **evening** came, the boat was **in the middle of the sea** and he was alone on the land. 48 He saw them straining at the oars, because the **wind** was against them. As the **night was ending**, he came to them walking on the **sea**, for he wanted **to pass by (parerchomai)** them. 49 When they saw him walking on the water they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, 50 for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them: "Have courage! **It is I. Do not be afraid.**" 51 Then he **went up** with them into the boat, and the wind ceased. They were completely astonished, 52 because they did not **understand** about the **loaves**, but their **hearts** were **hardened**.



Biblical Background

- ▶ **Egō eimi** (it is I)
- ▶ Exod LXX 3:14 And God said to Moses, "**I AM THE ONE WHO IS.**" And he said, "Thus shall you say to the sons of Israel, 'The One Who Is has sent me to you.' "
- ▶ Deut 32:39 LXX See, see that **I AM**, and there is no god except me. I will kill, and I will make alive; I will strike, and I will heal, and there is no one who will deliver from my hands.
- ▶ Isa 43:10 LXX Be my witnesses; I too am a witness, says the Lord God, and the servant whom I have chosen so that you may know and believe and understand that **I AM**. Before me there was no other god, nor shall there be any after me.
- ▶ Isa 41:4 LXX Who has wrought and done these things? The one calling her from the beginning of generations has called her. I, God, am first, and for the things that are coming, **I AM**.
- ▶ Cf. Mark 14:62 "**I am**," said Jesus, "and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven."



Biblical Background

Exod LXX 14:21 But Moses stretched out the hand over the **sea**, and the Lord drew off the sea by a strong south **wind** during the **whole night**, and he made the sea dry, and the water was divided. 22 And the sons of Israel entered **into the midst of the sea** on the dry ground, and the water became a wall for them on the right and a wall on the left. 23 Then the Egyptians pursued, and all the cavalry of Pharaoh and the chariots and the riders went in after them **into the midst of the sea**. 24 And it happened in the **early morning** watch that the **Lord** looked at the camp of the Egyptians in the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw the camp of the Egyptians into disarray. 25 And he bound together the axles of their chariots and led them violently. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from Israel! For the Lord fights the Egyptians for them!"



Biblical Background

Exod LXX 24:15 And **Moyses and lesous went up** into the **mountain**, and the cloud covered the mountain. 16 And God's glory descended upon the **mountain**, Sina, and the cloud covered it for six days, and the Lord called Moyses on the seventh day from the midst of the cloud. 17 Now the appearance of the Lord's glory was like a flaming fire on the top of the **mountain** before the sons of Israel. 18 And Moyses entered into the midst of the cloud and **went up into the mountain**, and he was there on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.



Biblical Background

Ps LXX 76:17 (16) Waters saw you, O God; **waters saw you, and they were afraid**, and the deep was troubled, a great roaring of waters.

Ps LXX 76:20 (19) **In the sea was your way, and your paths in many waters**, and your footprints will not be known.

Job LXX 9:8 ...who alone stretched out the sky and **walks on the sea** as on dry ground...

Exod LXX 33:19 And he said, "I will pass by **(parerchomai)** before you (i.e. Moses) in my glory, and I will call by my name "Lord" before you. And I will have mercy on whomever I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I have compassion."



Biblical Background

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Exod LXX 4:21 And the Lord said to Moyses, "As you go and return to Egypt, see, all the wonders which I put in your hands, you shall perform them before Pharaoh. But I will **harden** his heart, and he will not send the people away. cf. Exod 7:3, 13–14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12, 34–10:1; 10:20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17



Markan Community

Mark 14:62 “**I am,**” said Jesus, “and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

Mark 6:45 Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead **(proagō)** to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dispersed the crowd.

Mark 16:7 But go, tell his disciples, even Peter, that he is going ahead **(proagō)** of you into Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you.”



Markan Community

- ▶ Narrative portrayal of the **community**.
- ▶ Narrative portrayal of the **resurrection**.
- ▶ Link to the **supper** (loaves).
- ▶ The **epiphany** cannot be separated from the **loaves**.
- ▶ Considerable **Moses** references.
- ▶ References to the **trial/death** of Jesus and the **resurrection**.
- ▶ References to the **mission** the community.



Thus far...

- ▶ References to historical Israel
- ▶ References to Moses
- ▶ References to David / Messiah
- ▶ Even a typically Jewish word for basket
- ▶ Israelite symbolism of 5 and 12
- ▶ Location: Jewish territory
- ▶ So: Jesus is manna / bread of life for those of Jewish origin



Suddenly...

- ▶ **Dispute:** 7:1-23 (what makes one unclean?)
- ▶ **Tyre:** 7:24-30 (daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman)
- ▶ **Decapolis:** 7:31-37 (deaf-mute man)



Suddenly...

Mark 7:14 Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand (**suniēmi**). 15 **There is nothing outside of a person that can defile him by going into him.** Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles him."

Mark 7:17 Now when Jesus had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. 18 He said to them, "Are you so foolish (**asunetos**)? **Don't you understand (suniēmi) that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him?** 19 For it does not enter his **heart** but his stomach, and then goes out into the sewer." (**This means all foods are clean.**) 20 He said, "What comes out of a person defiles him. 21 For from within, out of the human **heart**, come evil ideas, sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22 adultery, greed, evil, deceit, debauchery, envy, slander, pride, and folly. 23 All these evils come from within and defile a person."



Not understanding

- ▶ Mark 4:12 "...so that although they look they may look but not see, and although they hear they may hear but not understand **(suniēmi)**, so they may not repent and be forgiven."
- ▶ Mark 6:52 because they did not understand **(suniēmi)** about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.
- ▶ Mark 7:14 Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand **(suniēmi)**."
- ▶ Mark 8:17 When he learned of this, Jesus said to them, "Why are you arguing about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand **(suniēmi)**? Have your hearts been hardened?"
- ▶ Mark 8:21 Then he said to them, "Do you still not understand **(suniēmi)**?"



Suddenly...

Mark 7:24 After Jesus left there, he went to the region of **Tyre**. When he went into a **house**, he did not want anyone to know, but he was not able to escape notice. 25 Instead, a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him and came and fell at his feet. 26 The woman was a **Greek**, of **Syrophoenician** origin. She asked him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 He said to her, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not right to take the children's **bread** and to throw it to the **dogs**." 28 She answered, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table eat the children's **crumbs**." 29 Then he said to her, "Because you said this, you may go. The demon has left your daughter." 30 She went **home (house)** and found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.



Suddenly...

Mark 7:31 **Then Jesus went out again from the region of Tyre and came through Sidon** to the Sea of Galilee in the region of the **Decapolis**. 32 They brought to him a deaf man who had difficulty speaking, and they asked him to place his hands on him. 33 After Jesus took him aside **privately**, away from the crowd, he put his fingers in the man's ears, and after spitting, he touched his tongue. 34 **Then he looked up to heaven and said with a sigh, "Ephphatha"** (that is, "Be opened"). 35 And immediately the man's ears were opened, his tongue loosened, and he spoke plainly. 36 Jesus ordered them not to tell anything. But as much as he ordered them not to do this, **they proclaimed it all the more**. 37 People were completely astounded and said, **"He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."**



Privately

Mark 4:34 He did not speak to them without a parable. But **privately** he explained everything to his own disciples.

Mark 6:31 He said to them, "Come with me **privately** to an isolated place and rest a while" (for many were coming and going, and there was no time to eat).
32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to some remote place.

Mark 7:33 After Jesus took him aside **privately**, away from the crowd, he put his fingers in the man's ears, and after spitting, he touched his tongue.

Mark 9:2 Six days later Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John and led them alone up a high mountain **privately**. And he was transfigured before them,

Mark 9:28 Then, after he went into the house, his disciples asked him **privately**, "Why couldn't we cast it out?"

Mark 13:3 So while he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him **privately**,



Doing everything well

Gen 1:31 And God saw **all the things (panta)** that he had **done (poieō)** and see, they were exceedingly **good (kalos)**. And it came to be evening, and it came to be morning, a sixth day.

Mark 7:37 People were completely astounded and said, "He has **done (poieō) all things (panta) well (kalōs)**. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

For Mark, the story narrates not merely an interesting Hellenistic wonder tales but a portrayal of eschatological salvation, the new creation.

Eugene Boring



And so...

- ▶ Jesus is manna/bread of life for Jews
- ▶ Jewish lines of demarcation no longer count
- ▶ On the basis of their need, he also gives life to Gentiles
- ▶ On the basis of his prayer, he enables Gentiles to hear and to proclaim
- ▶ "He has done all things well" on account of the new creation and inclusion of all humanity



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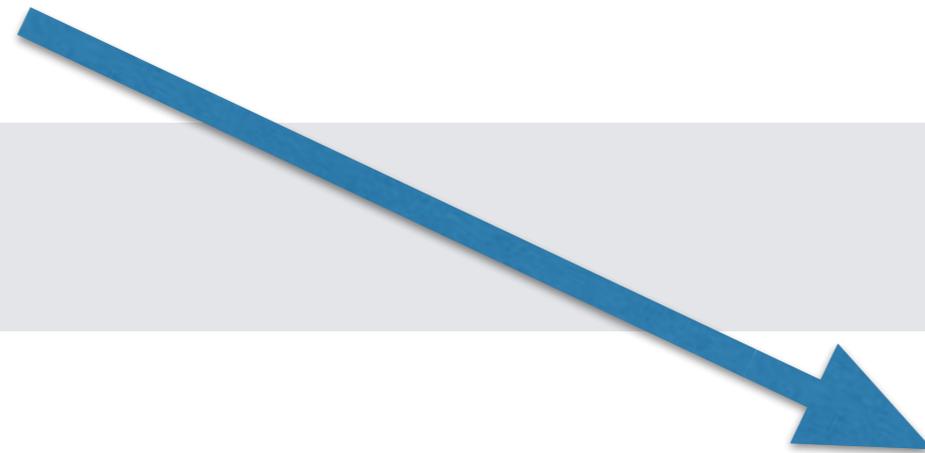
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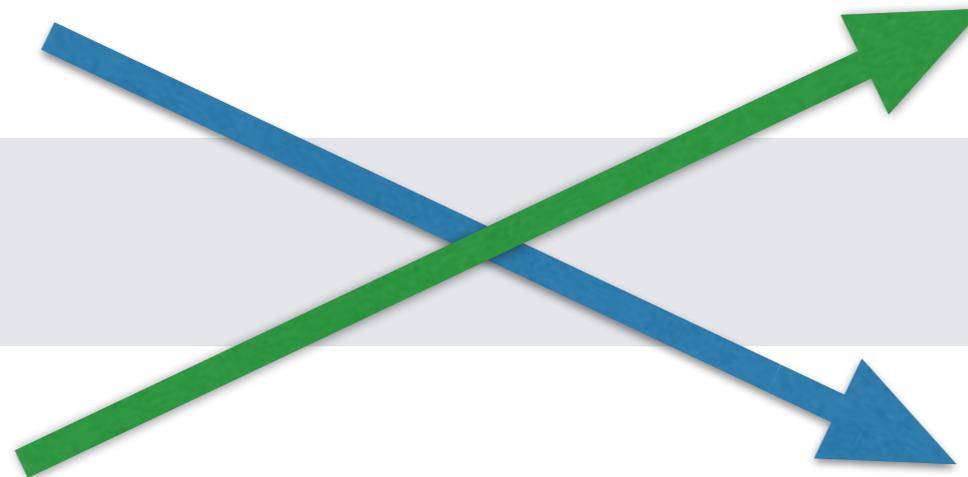
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