



## A Summary Of The Gospel of Mark

### Introduction

It is generally accepted that John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, wrote his Gospel from Rome, either under the direction of the Apostle Peter, or from what he had heard of the many accounts Peter had recounted during the sermons and discussions he had had. As well as serving Paul, Mark was Peter's assistant for several years and it is also accepted that what he wrote was authentic and had apostolic approval.

Most believe that this Gospel was written in the mid to late 50's AD, during or shortly after Peter had been in Rome, but some hold for a date closer to Peter's death in the mid to late 60's.

The ultimate purpose and theme of Mark is to present and defend Jesus' universal call to discipleship. Mark returns often to this theme, and as the narrative unfolds he categorises his main audience as either followers or opponents of Jesus. The outline demonstrates that Mark's central effort in presenting and supporting this call is to narrate the identity and teaching of Jesus. This fact implies that discipleship for Mark is essentially a relationship with Jesus, not merely following a certain code of conduct.

Fellowship with Jesus marks the heart of the disciple's life, and this fellowship includes trusting him, confessing him, taking note of his conduct, following his teaching, and being shaped by a relationship to him. Discipleship also means being prepared to face the kind of rejection that Jesus faced.

The events in the book of Mark take place almost entirely within the vicinity of Palestine, an area extending roughly from Caesarea Philippi in the north to Beersheba in the south. During this time it was ruled by the Roman Empire, although it is clear that Mark was writing primarily for Gentile Christians or those interested in coming to faith, and possibly for Diaspora Jewish Christians as well.

## Chapter One

Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark does not feel the need to discuss Jesus' birth or infancy narrative, or to trace his human ancestry to King David, as foretold in the prophecies. Instead, he starts immediately with the forerunner to Jesus, the last of the OT era prophets John the Baptist, whose role was to prepare the people's hearts and minds in order to receive their long awaited Christ. To do this they needed to repent of their sins and be baptised with water, calling on their heavenly Father to forgive their apostasy and neglect of him.

While John was baptising in the River Jordan, Jesus arrived and was baptised by John. Then God spoke audibly from heaven, giving acclamation and claiming ownership of Jesus as his only Son. The Holy Spirit then descended upon Jesus, giving a unique image of the Trinitarian Godhead working in complete and equal partnership.

Immediately after his baptism, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness, where he was tempted by Satan in his first encounter on earth with his arch enemy; an encounter in which Jesus triumphed, although few details are recorded in Mark's Gospel.

One of Jesus' primary purposes for his ministry was to prepare disciples who would take the Gospel message to the world. He began this process by calling four local Galilæan fishermen into his service. These men would form the inner core of a much wider group of disciples that would follow Jesus during the early days of his ministry.

Jesus was teaching in a Capernaum synagogue, when he encountered a demon possessed man. By driving the demon out of the man, Jesus demonstrated the authority he had in action as well as his words.

From there he went to Simon Peter's home and cured his mother-in-law of a fever. Later that evening many sick and demon possessed people came to him and he cured them all as well.

Early on in his Gospel, Mark records just how important communion with the Father was to Jesus, who rose early in the morning to seek solitude. He then went around to many of the surrounding villages in order to preach the Gospel.

The chapter ends with Jesus curing a man of leprosy, an infectious skin disease that would have kept the man isolated from his community and in a desperate state. After cleansing him, Jesus commanded the man to say nothing of who had healed him but the man ignored Jesus' command. Thus news of Jesus spread quickly, making it difficult for him to avoid the crowds that were continually seeking him, often just for the sake of the miracle.

## Chapter Two

In Capernaum, a paralysed man was lowered through the roof of the house where Jesus was teaching a crowd of people, a crowd so large that it prevented the man's friends from entering the house, so they climbed onto the roof,

made a hole in it and lowered him down to the Lord. Jesus forgave the man his sins and healed him, due to the faith exhibited by his friends.

Jesus added Levi, a tax collector, to his growing band of close disciples. Tax collectors were despised by their fellow Jews as they were seen as collaborating with their Roman oppressors. Jesus had no such concerns in having such a man as a close companion and disciple.

Again, a conflict arose as to why Jesus' disciples did not fast as the other Jews were doing. Jesus stated that there was no need for them to fast all the time he was with them. After his death, they would then need to fast whenever they needed to seek the presence of God.

This section introduces the first of the Sabbath controversies where Jesus' disciples picked some corn on a Sabbath Day, something the Pharisees thought was illegal under the law as it constituted work. Jesus used a Scriptural example to rebuff their claims.

### Chapter Three

This chapter commences with the second Sabbath controversy in which Jesus healed a man with a shrivelled hand in front of everyone in the synagogue, something that set the religious and political leaders against him, even though it was so clearly an act of compassion.

The crowds continued to flock to Jesus to hear him teach and to be healed of their diseases and demonic possession. His fame had spread so far and wide that people were coming from as far south as Idumæa, from east of the Jordan river and from the Mediterranean Sea coastal areas of Tyre and Sidon.

By now Jesus had a large group of disciples following him, who were being taught by Jesus and served the needs of the crowds that flocked to him. From this group, Jesus selected twelve, whom he designated apostles. These would be the main men who would later build his church.

A number of Teachers of the Law travelled down from Jerusalem to hear Jesus speak and see him perform healing miracles. What they saw could not be disputed but they misunderstood and attributed his work to Satan. His mother and her children arrived in the hope of taking Jesus with them back to the family home but Jesus taught that his true family are those who faithfully serve God.

### Chapter Four

The first half of this chapter is given over to the well known Parable of the Sower, an agricultural analogy that indicates the Word of God, in the form of seed, can be sown into four differing soil types, each representing a state of the human heart. Jesus gave his disciples an explanation of this parable, demonstrating that what happens to each person who hears the Word of God will be dependent upon the state of their heart when they hear it.

The second parable is about not hiding the light of a lamp but revealing it. This is what disciples are called to do, to reflect the light of Christ that is in their

hearts through what they do and say to all who are around them. They are not to keep it hidden by remaining silent when they should speak out, or by living a life that better conforms to the world around them.

The agricultural theme is then resumed with the idea that the Kingdom of God is like seed that is planted in well prepared soil. From then onwards, it will grow continually without any intervention by the farmer needed. It will take on a life of its own. Although the farmer may tend his crops he cannot stop the process nor does he fully understand it.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed is a similar analogy to show that the Kingdom of God was introduced with small, humble beginnings, i.e. the smallest of seeds was planted, but it will continue to grow to become the largest of trees in the garden, or the world, so that all the birds of the air, those who come to faith in Christ, can take refuge in its branches. Mark then states that Jesus taught many more parables, the details of which he does not include.

After this, Jesus was being transported across the Sea of Galilee in a fishing boat and fell asleep due to his fatigue, when a violent storm arose, so fierce that even the experienced fishermen feared for their lives. In their fear, they ran to Jesus for help. He got up, calmed the storm instantly with a word and then rebuked his disciples for their lack of faith.

## Chapter Five

This chapter is a series of three stories of compassion and the miraculous. Jesus started by healing a tormented man who was possessed by a multitude of demons. These impure spirits had such a strong hold on the man that he had become a social outcast, had to be frequently chained for his own safety, although the strength given to him by the demons allowed him to always break free, and he lived his life among the tombs, isolated from society. Jesus set him free, gave him back his sanity and his dignity, returning him to his former life in his own community.

Jesus then travelled back over the lake to Galilee, where he was met by the synagogue ruler, whose daughter was seriously ill. The synagogue ruler had genuine faith that Jesus could help and asked him to accompany him to see his child that she might be healed.

On the way, Jesus was being jostled by a large crowd when he became aware that some of his healing power had left him because someone with faith had touched him, becoming instantaneously healed. Despite the crowd, Jesus stopped and demanded to know who it was. A woman, who had suffered from menstrual bleeding for 12 years, stepped forward and told her story, even though she was full of fear. Jesus blessed her and sent her on her way, now both physically and spiritually healed.

Some people came from the synagogue ruler's home to inform him that it was now too late as the little girl had died. Jesus told the father to have faith and he continued to the house, taking just the parents and his inner core group of apostles with him. Jesus expelled a crowd of mourners from within the house,

went to the girl and raised her back to life, telling those present to keep the healing a secret.

## Chapter Six

Jesus and his followers travelled to Nazareth, possibly to see his family members and certainly to teach the people there, many of whom had known Jesus since his childhood. These people could not reconcile the wisdom he displayed in his teaching and his remarkable miracles, with the carpenter's son they knew so well. Therefore, they became hostile and rejected him.

Jesus then extended the training of his apostles by sending them out in pairs on their first mission without him. He gave them the authority to teach, heal and drive out impure spirits, giving them strict instructions as to what they could and could not take along for the journey.

Rumours were spreading about who Jesus might be: the resurrected John the Baptist, the promised Elijah or another prophet sent by God like one of those in the OT in order to rally his people. Mark then gives an account of how and why John had been executed by Herod Antipas.

When the apostles returned from their mission, Jesus took them to an isolated place for rest although the crowds found out about it and got there ahead of them. Having compassion on the people, Jesus taught them. It was an isolated location and the hour was late. There was no food to be had, other than five loaves and two small fish. Jesus performed yet another miracle by feeding five thousand men plus any women and children that were with them from such a small stock. Amazingly, there were twelve basketfuls left over!

Jesus then sent his disciples ahead of him across the lake to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd and went up on a mountain to pray. The sea was stormy and the disciples found it hard going. Very early in the morning Jesus went out to them, walking on the water, which at first terrified his disciples. He then got into the boat with them, calmed the storm, and they completed their crossing.

They did not arrive at Bethsaida as planned. Instead, they landed at Gennesaret, where Jesus drew large crowds from across the whole region, many of whom brought their sick to him to be healed. They were even healed simply by touching his cloak!

## Chapter Seven

This is a chapter that spans many weeks and perhaps months, due to the distances Jesus travelled in the accounts given.

It starts in Galilee, possibly Gennesaret where the foregoing account ended or Jesus may have returned to his main base in nearby Capernaum, when some Pharisees and teachers of the law had travelled down from Jerusalem because of the stories that were spreading about Jesus. They noted that Jesus' disciples did not perform the ritual washing that Jews were required to undergo before meals, which had become part of their tradition, and they challenged Jesus

over it. Jesus responded by stating that, rather than honouring the Word of God they actually nullified it through their traditions, giving examples of how that came about.

Jesus then called a crowd to him, teaching them that it was not what they put into their bodies that made them unclean, thus stating that all foods were no longer prohibited, but that it was what came out of the heart of a man that would make him unclean.

Jesus then travelled to the Syrian coast, where he encountered a Gentile woman with a spirit possessed child. The woman asked Jesus to heal her child, to which he responded that it was to the children of God that he had been called. She responded with an excellent example of humility and faith that resulted in Jesus healing her daughter, something he had probably intended to do anyway but wanted to test her faith first.

Jesus then travelled all the way back through Galilee and on into the Decapolis. There he encountered a man who was both deaf and mute. Jesus healed the man, the first example of such a healing related by Mark.

## Chapter Eight

Jesus had travelled to the region of the Decapolis, a mainly Gentile region, where he attracted a large crowd to him in a remote place. After teaching them for three days, it was decided that he would again feed a multitude from a small provision of natural food, feeding about 4,000 with just seven loaves of bread and a few small fish. This was a different occasion to the time he fed 5,000 men and has a different symbolic meaning.

Jesus travelled from there by boat to the region of Dalmanutha, modern day Migdal, on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. On arriving there, some Pharisees asked Jesus to show them a sign to authenticate his claim to be from God. They were not happy with just seeing him perform multiple miracles over nature, the spirit realm and over diseases; they wanted a sign directly from heaven! Although in reality it was just a ploy to trap Jesus.

Jesus warned his disciples to beware of the yeast or leaven of the Pharisees and Herod, something they took literally, thinking that he was referring to ordinary bread, something they had forgotten to bring for the journey. Jesus reminded them of the two miracles of feeding the two multitudes with small amounts of bread and always having some left over, demonstrating they had missed the point of the miracles, which were not physical but spiritual.

In Bethsaida, Jesus restored the sight of a blind man. He did so away from the crowds and, unusually, the healing was performed in two distinct stages. This was again to aid the disciples' understanding of Kingdom principles.

Jesus reached the farthest point to the north that is recorded in his ministry, Cæsarea Philippi, where he questioned his disciples about the public perception of who he was. They replied that opinion was split between a resurrected John the Baptist, the awaited prophet Elijah, or another prophet, similar to those of the OT. Jesus then asked who the disciples thought he was.

Peter acknowledged for the first time that Jesus was the Christ; something Jesus ordered them to keep to themselves.

Jesus then told his disciples that the Messiah must suffer and die at the hands of the religious leaders; although after three days he would rise again to life. This was something they had failed to understand, for Peter rebuked Jesus for such talk. Jesus, in turn, rebuked Peter for failing to understand the ways of God.

Jesus, speaking to his disciples and a crowd that had gathered, told them of the true cost of being his disciple. Those who would choose not to acknowledge Jesus in this life would be disowned by Christ on the day of his Second Coming, his *Parousia*.

### Chapter Nine

The chapter starts with the conclusion to a passage on teaching about the cost of true discipleship, where Jesus stated that there were disciples with him who would see him in his glory, most likely his imminent transfiguration, although other options were discussed at the end of Mark Chapter Eight.

About a week later, Jesus took three of his apostles with him and went up on a mountain, where he was transfigured in the presence of those with him. He was met by the prophets Moses and Elijah, who were sent by God apparently to discuss Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. A cloud enveloped them all to enable God to speak, giving his divine affirmation to the work of his Son. After it was over, Jesus gave strict instructions for them not to speak of it until after his resurrection.

As they were returning from the mountain, the disciples questioned Jesus on the teaching that Elijah would come first. Jesus explained to them that this was a reference to the work of John the Baptist, who was sent to prepare the way for the Messiah, both of whom were destined to suffer and die, as foretold in the Scriptures.

When they arrived back in Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus and the three apostles encountered a dispute going on between some teachers of the law, a man and the rest of the disciples. The man had brought his spirit possessed son for Jesus to heal him. When he found that Jesus was not there, he had asked the disciples to drive the spirit out, something they had done at other times but, on this occasion, they could not. Jesus rebuked those around him for their lack of faith and healed the boy before a large crowd had time to gather around him.

Afterwards, when he was alone with his disciples, Jesus again predicted his impending death and resurrection. The disciples still failed to understand. From there, they travelled back to Capernaum. On the way, the disciples had been arguing about which of them would be the greatest, so Jesus taught them about the need to serve by putting others, even a lowly child, ahead of themselves in all that they did for the Kingdom.

Jesus then taught that it is alright for anyone to teach the Gospel, providing it is authentic. They do not have to be part of any particular group to do so. For

whoever speaks positively about Jesus as the Son of God cannot subsequently speak ill of him.

Jesus then concludes the chapter with a warning about causing others to stumble and fall away from the faith. He also warned of the real danger that sin posed to disciples. The cost to those who do so without repentance will be catastrophic when judgement finally comes upon them.

## Chapter Ten

Jesus had left Galilee for the last time before his crucifixion and was heading toward Jerusalem. When he arrived in the region of Judæa he was apprehended by some Pharisees who wanted to trap him by posing a question related to divorce and the law. Jesus simply spoke of the reason why Moses had included such a law and that God's original intention was for a man and woman to be together for life. Therefore, once again he thwarted their attempts to trap him into saying something they could hold against him.

People brought their children to be blessed by Jesus but the disciples tried to hinder them. Jesus taught them that children were a key part of the Kingdom. In fact, he stated that the Kingdom actually belonged to such as these, indicating it was their innocence and childlike faith that was required by all disciples, who needed to trust God in the same way that children trust those who care for them.

A rich young man then came to Jesus. He was obviously a devout Jew and wanted to know how he could enter the Kingdom of God. When Jesus told him that he would have to give his wealth away to the poor in order to follow Jesus, he became disillusioned and left without repenting. Jesus then went on to teach his disciples how hard it is for the wealthy to give up some of their privileges in order to help others, for the trappings of his life actually hinders them from doing so.

The disciples were perplexed by this for they considered wealth to be a blessing from God. If the rich, who gave alms and supported the poor, could not get into heaven then who could? Jesus alluded to the fact that it was only through the grace and power of God that anyone could be saved. There were clear eternal blessing for those who became impoverished to the sake of Christ and the Gospel message he proclaimed to them.

When Jesus was alone with the twelve apostles, he took the opportunity to tell them for the third time that he would be taken by the Jewish leaders and then handed over to the Romans, who would mistreat him and then kill him. However, he would rise from death on the third day.

There was a request made that James and John would have the privilege of being seated next to Jesus when he finally came in his glory. They may have meant when he had established himself as king in the new kingdom of Israel, or when he was finally in his true Kingdom. Either way, Jesus pointed out that it was for the Father to decide who would have such a privilege. He showed them that they should have the mind to suffer for him rather than reign with him, although he did acknowledge that they would be worthy of suffering with him.

Their request displeased the other ten apostles so Jesus called them all to him and taught again on the great reversal. Those who wish to lead in the church are to do so from the perspective of a servant, for the last shall be first and the first, last.

When Jesus came to Jericho he encountered at least one blind beggar. When the beggar realised it was Jesus, he called out to the Son of David to help him. The crowd tried to put him off but he cried out all the more. Jesus called the man across to him, asked him what he wanted, and when the man declared he had faith to be healed, Jesus restored his sight. He immediately became a disciple and started to follow Jesus toward Jerusalem.

### Chapter Eleven

It was the start of Passion Week. Jesus was approaching Jerusalem for the final time during his earthly ministry and instructed two of his disciples to go ahead to a village where they would find a donkey's foal. They were to bring it to Jesus so that he could ride on it into Jerusalem, thus fulfilling the ancient prophecy that the Messiah would come to his people in such a manner.

Jesus rode triumphantly into the city to a rapturous welcome from the people, who were laying their cloaks and palm branches in his path, crying out Hosanna, offering a welcome fit for their long awaited king. He went straight to the temple but did not stay there as it was late, so he left the city and went out onto the Mount of Olives, returning to the village of Bethany.

The next morning, as he headed again for Jerusalem, Jesus came to a fig tree in leaf but with no fruit. So he cursed the fig tree within the hearing of his disciples, never to bear fruit again.

In the city, Jesus cleared all the traders and money changers out of the temple courts, accusing them of desecrating his Father's house. Jesus taught that Scripture instructed them that the temple was to be a house of prayer for all nations. When the religious leaders heard what he had done, they were afraid of Jesus and plotted to kill him.

The next morning, Jesus and his disciples were again heading into the city when they came to the fig tree that Jesus had cursed. It had withered. This amazed his disciples, for the fig tree was symbolic of God's people in Scripture, so Jesus taught them on the power of faith and efficacy of prayer, so that God would give them what they needed while forgiving them their sins.

He went again to the Temple courts where he was immediately challenged by the religious leaders as to what authority he had to do and teach the things he was doing and saying. In return he asked them a question concerning John's baptism, which they refused to answer. In turn, Jesus would not answer their questions about him.

### Chapter Twelve

It was still Tuesday of Passover week and Jesus was teaching in Jerusalem, surrounded by his disciples, the religious leaders and ordinary people. He told

them the Parable of the Tenants, which was a cryptic account of the history of Israel: how God, as the landlord, had given the people a rich land, the vineyard. When it was time to reap the harvest, fruit for God, then the landlord sent his servants the prophets, but the Jewish tenants refused to give to God what he was due. They abused, mistreated and even killed those sent to him. Finally, the landlord sent his only Son to them but he too was abused and killed, so the landlord took the land away from the wicked tenants and gave it to others, which would be both Jews and Gentiles who accepted the Gospel message. The religious leaders knew this had been spoken against them and they plotted to kill Jesus.

A different group of leaders, Pharisees and Herodians, then set a trap for Jesus with a question on whether the Jews should pay the imperial tax to Rome or not. If Jesus said they should, he would lose favour with the Jews. If he said they should not then he was in danger of being arrested by the Romans. He produced the response that they should give to Cæsar what was his and to God what belonged to him.

Following this, some Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, tested Jesus with a well crafted story about seven brothers who each married the same woman as each of the men died childless and the next brother then had to marry her under the law of Moses. Jesus corrected their misunderstanding about both relationships in heaven and the power of God.

A teacher, seeing that Jesus had answered well, asked him which of the commandments was the greatest, to which Jesus replied that everyone was to place God at the centre of their lives and to love all others around them. The teacher acknowledged that this was an excellent reply and that it was far more important than the religious ritualistic practices of the Jews. Jesus acknowledged that this man was close to the Kingdom.

Jesus taught that the Messiah, who was expected to be the son of David, was, according to David's own words, going to the Lord of David. Through his earthly genealogy, Jesus was a descendant of David, but the Psalm of David he quoted from showed that he was far greater than any human descendant of David could ever be.

Jesus issued a warning against the religious leaders who took more pride in their appearance and the honour bestowed on them at public gatherings than they did in performing their duty before God. Some would even stoop so low as to defraud widows, probably as they were helping them to settle their estates after their husbands had died.

While in the temple courts, Jesus observed many rich people putting large amounts of money in the offering. He also saw a widow put in a very small amount, but it was all she had, whereas the rich had an abundance of wealth remaining. Jesus stated that the woman had offered far more than all the others put together, for she, out of her poverty, gave all she had.

## Chapter Thirteen

Jesus taught his disciples on two major issues of judgement: the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in AD70 and the Second Coming of the Christ at the end of the age. He spoke of there being a time of tribulation in which the abomination that causes desolation will appear in the temple, probably a figurative description of the antichrist's disruption of the global church.

Jesus gave clear instructions that the end will come when it is least expected, despite all the signs he gave to indicate it is imminent. Therefore, all disciples in all generations are to be prepared to meet Christ at any moment, while continuing to live their daily lives in service to God.

## Chapter Fourteen

It was now the Wednesday of Passion Week, and while the religious leaders were still plotting to arrest and kill him, Jesus took some time out from his demanding schedule to recline with friends in Bethany. He shared a meal at the house of Simon the Leper, where a woman, identified elsewhere as Mary, anointed him with an expensive perfume, pure nard. She was criticised for doing so as some of the disciples believed the money should have been spent on the poor. Jesus rebuked them saying that what Mary had done was an anointing of his body for death and was a beautiful thing. Judas then went and betrayed Jesus to the chief priests for money.

The following day, Jesus sent two of his disciples into Jerusalem to prepare a place for them to eat the Passover meal together. He and the rest of the apostles arrived there after sunset to share in this final meal. During the meal, Jesus announced that one of the Twelve was going to betray him. He then took communion with them, instituting the Lord's Supper, before offering praise to God and then heading out to Gethsemane.

At some point between the end of the supper and arriving in Gethsemane, the Lord informed Peter that he would deny even knowing Jesus on three occasions that very night. Peter vigorously denied it and said he would remain faithful, as did all the others.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus left the main group and took the central core of three apostles a little further, instructing them to keep watch while he prayed. Jesus himself went a little further still to pray alone to his Father, asking if the cup of suffering could pass but accepting to do God's will anyway. On three occasions he found the apostles sleeping rather than watching, rebuking them mildly for doing so.

The betrayer Judas led a group of armed guards to where Jesus was, kissing him as a means of identification. There was a brief confrontation between the two groups before the guards arrested Jesus, while the apostles fled.

Jesus was taken to the high priest's house and was tried before the religious leaders. Witness testimony was unsubstantiated, so the high priest asked Jesus directly if he was the Messiah. Jesus answered in the affirmative, which the

high priest, supported by the others, accepted as blasphemy. Jesus was then taken and abused by the guards.

Peter had followed behind Jesus into the complex of the high priest's house and had sat with the guards and servants. On three occasions he was accused as being a disciple, something he denied on each occasion. Following the third denial, the rooster crowed and Peter, remembering the prophecy of Jesus, broke down and wept.

### Chapter Fifteen

Following their misguided conviction against Jesus of a charge of blasphemy, members of the Sanhedrin took him to Pilate to be tried as an opponent to Cæsar. Pilate found Jesus innocent and wanted to release him. When the crowd bayed for Jesus' blood, Pilate offered to release either Jesus or the murderer Barabbas; the people chose the murderer, calling for the death of Jesus.

The Roman soldiers dressed Jesus as a king in royal robes, with a crown of thorns forced on his head. They mocked and beat him, spat on him and falsely worshipped him, before taking him out to be crucified.

Jesus' Cross was carried for at least part of the way by Simon, a visitor to Jerusalem. When they arrived at Golgotha, Jesus was nailed to the Cross and raised between two criminals. Even on the Cross, the mocking continued.

A divine darkness covered the land for three hours before Jesus cried out in victory and released his Spirit, returning to the Father.

Joseph of Arimathæa, a member of the Sanhedrin and a covert disciple of Jesus, went to Pilate to request the body of Jesus. He dressed it with spices and wrapped it in new linen, before laying it in his own new rock cut tomb.

### Chapter Sixteen

The women go to the tomb on the Sunday morning to find the tomb empty, except for an angel, who told them that Jesus is now the Risen Lord and that they were to return to inform the disciples of this.

The longer ending, vv.9-20, provides essentially a summary statement of other known Scriptures that tell of Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene, to two disciples on the Emmaus Road, and then the eleven apostles. Following some final teaching and rebuking, indications of Spiritual gifts to come, and instructions to go out into the world to spread the Gospel, known as the great commission, Jesus ascended into heaven.