

Healings, So Much More Than Healings

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[0 : 00] of the book of Mark is essentially, comes out of Mark 10, verse 45. For even the Son of Man, now remember, one of the explanations or understanding of the Son of Man in the Bible is the one who is the Savior King to come. The Son of Man could also refer to angels, it could refer to kings and emperors and so forth. But in this case, in the saving faith case, it means the one who is coming as the Savior King. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mark 10, verse 45. That's the theme of the book of Mark. And he starts off here. Mark is a recording of facts. He doesn't get much into a lot of teaching that Jesus gives. He doesn't give a lot of information about the feelings of Jesus.

He doesn't give a lot of conversation here in the book of Mark. Mark is writing mostly, as we understand it, to speak to those who are in the Romans or the Greeks who understood in their culture the stories in a different way. And nevertheless, he's talking about Jesus, who was a Jewish person.

What does that have to do with Greeks and Romans? Well, he tells us in the book of Mark. It's a gospel of action. What Jesus does proves who he is. It's a gospel of power that not even the mighty Caesar has the kind of power that Jesus has. And that's what he's bringing to bear in the book of Mark.

It was written to demonstrate who Jesus is. Jesus is the model of the true Jew, the true Israelite. Jesus is the Son of Man, the Messiah, Savior, King. Jesus is that new David, the King David, a man of action and a warrior. And when you read the book of Mark again, read it through that lens, meaning that he has come to essentially wage war against Satan and all his cronies. And he is bringing warfare into the spiritual realm that is upsetting everything. And Satan's really, really upset about it. So he's doing everything he can to keep Jesus from being successful. And of course, we know how that goes. They kill Jesus. He comes back to life. You know, what's that about?

Everywhere he goes, he turns things right side up because since the fall, everything is upside down. He's the Son of God. His ministry is God's Word. He comes as the better King, not with the sword of metal yet, but rather the sword of the Word. And he has universal power over everything. And that's the point of the book of Mark. It gives hope to those who are suffering because he rescues his people from oppression, sicknesses and diseases and demons and so forth. And this is the good news, the gospel to validate. Jesus' ministry is to the Jews, but also to those who are not Jewish. It's to all people.

[3 : 23] Jesus has been anointed by God and a few of his disciples. He's called a few of the disciples at this point. And he launches his ministry in Capernaum. And Capernaum means the village of Nahum. But Capernaum had developed, it's in the northern part of the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee. Y'all been there, right? Sea of Galilee. Great place to fish. Yeah. I wonder if they have bass. Did anybody know they have bass? I love bass fishing. He came 20 miles up from where he was over the mountains to Cana.

And this is where the palace of Herod is. It's kind of an international city. It's growing and bustling and becoming big. You know, it's like Colorado Springs used to be, you know, a little tiny town. And now it's, you know, grown into a big city. Capernaum was like that. And it wasn't just a place, a village of Jews. It had attracted, because of the highways that went through it, it became a trades town. It was a bustling place for fishermen. They were building, lots of buildings, a lot of building was going on. And so the expense, you know, was pretty high. Many Romans were coming, even Romans were retiring in that place, because it was a good place to retire. You could buy a wonderful place much cheaper than you could buy a place in Rome or around Rome in Italy. Capernaum was a prosperous village, a fishing village that turned into a city. And in fact, we see evidence even today of a massive building going on where there were tradesmen and carpenters and, you know, stone crafters and cement makers and so forth. You know, it was the place to go. And Jesus, most of his ministry happened not in Jerusalem, but in Capernaum, because we see both Jews and Gentiles, non-Jewish people there.

In Capernaum, we see lots of things happening with Jesus. And he, again, is turning the spiritual realm right side up, because it had been upside down. Demoniak was healed. There he preaches the Sermon on the Mount. He heals one who is paralyzed. It was there where the woman with the issue of blood was healed.

Jairus' daughter was raised from the dead. Two blind men are healed. One who could not speak, who was controlled by a demon, was healed. Lots of other healings. The bread of life sermon was given by Jesus. And the nobleman who was in the house of Herod was also affected because of his child was healed or brought back to life. So Jesus did a lot of activity, a lot of work, and a lot of healings and ministry there in this place called Capernaum. Not insignificant. But what we also see in the book of Mark are three common themes that are woven in and out and come back and forth that were very important to the message of the Old Testament becoming new, but very important to the message of those who are Jews. And that is, Jesus healed the sick, Jesus expelled the demons, and Jesus preached the kingdom. All right, let's look at those three things. Jesus healed the sick. In the previous passage, verses 21 through 28, which I did not read, Jesus was in a synagogue on the Sabbath. And their practice was, is if you are a recognized rabbi and a man over the age of 30, 31, then you had permission to stand up and explain the word that had just been read by the rabbi or the president of the synagogue. And Jesus often did that.

Whether he was invited to do that, we don't know. That was kind of a custom. So you can imagine going to go into a church and you have three or four men standing up and they're explaining the passage that was just read. And he would do that. And out of that, we see in the previous verse, he expels a demon from a man who was a member of the synagogue. He was a good member, a member in good standing of this good, wonderful church, so to speak.

[7 : 53] And he had been demon possessed and he was healed by Jesus. Now, he's in Peter's house. And Peter's mother-in-law is healed. Fevers were very frightening because most of the time, fevers meant death or close to death. What was at stake here is life or death. And notice this is the whole point. And this is what he does with the resurrection. He's in a world of death. And he's so rude that he keeps bringing people back to life. You know, he keeps healing them from death. He does exactly the opposite of what demons and what Satan wants. So he brings this woman who may have been at the precipice of death and he brings her back. This is the only instance where Jesus heals somebody that does not ask. Most everybody else is asked or someone asked Jesus to heal this person.

They just bring her to the attention. And here he is at the beginning of the mystery where Jesus heals. James Montgomery Boyce makes the point that sickness for them was symbolic of sin.

They almost always associated sickness with sin. So if you got the flu, you must have sinned. If you got a cold, you must have sinned. You know, you're in the hospital, you must have sinned. Every time you got sick, you must have sinned. So not only did you have to put up with the flu or the cold or sickness, tuberculosis, whatever it was, you also had to put up with people wondering what it was you did.

You know, the pressure put upon you. Now what have you done? Look at you. You're sick. Mr. Toddler and I'd be in big trouble. But the point is, you know, as Boyce brings out, is we all need a healer, right? And Jesus was that healer. Someone to save us. Someone to bring us back to health and life. And this is what Jesus does. But it also points out the fact that illness and sickness happens in a household of faith. It's where we are this side of heaven. She was healed immediately. She was brought back to full strength. And the first thing she does is she goes to work and serves those in the household. The other thing that we see in verse 32 is that that evening he ends up healing many more people with various diseases. Word gets out pretty quickly. Everybody's on their cell phone, you know, letting everybody else know. And they all come from the village and they run to the house and they're, they want to be healed too. Now what's the point? The point of this section here, one of the points is when disease has overcome you, know that Jesus has the power to heal you. When disease of any kind, spiritual or physical has overcome you, Jesus has the power to heal you. And that's the point that will be repeated again and again and radiated throughout the book of Mark. And it really gives us the hint of the final healing that we get in the resurrection. So Jesus comes to heal. The second thing is Jesus comes to expel demons. Jesus expels the demons. Now I'm going to give you some background. I might put, shed some light on when you read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The various accusations that the

Pharisees and others had about Jesus being a demon possessed or the leader of demons or whatever. Because the Jews at the time and the rabbis at the time had a very interesting theology about demons and demon possession or oppression. They, they had a very detailed theology about Satan and demons. They said that demons could come in any form, even as a man, can appear as a man who eats and drinks. So you might be sitting next to a demon and not even know it. You might be going to McDonald's and the person ordering in front of you is a demon. You might not know it.

[12 : 05] Now don't get, no, don't. What? You're thinking of somebody now? No. I don't think of like, yikes. He goes, no, they can do it. I don't have no one sitting by me.

Yeah. Okay. You're safe. They, they also said that demons can imitate or do anything that a prophet could do. Even good things. Ah, Jesus, the prophet, he must be demon possessed.

One of the views of the rabbis was, was that demons are the souls of the wicked dead. So if you're a wicked, evil person, when you died, you became a demon. Now we know that's not true, but that's what they believed. They believed that they could be anywhere. Watch out for those breadcrumbs because a demon might be in one. You vacuum it up, you better do something with that vacuum cleaner. Day or night, dirt, animals, the lamp oil, shadows, diseases. Demons could be in the disease. When they come in, they bring the disease. So can you imagine living a life like that, not understanding what was going on, so that either it was sin or it was Satan, always causing your illness. Not only are you sick all the time, and we have all these sicknesses, where the average person didn't last, live beyond 40 or 45 years old. That every time you were sick and you had a sniffle, you were paranoid that it was a sin that you had committed, or Satan was there in you.

Talk about being unbalanced. It also could be that you didn't wash your hands, which was very important for them because you had to wash your hands constantly. Do you remember the incident where the rabbis come out and they accuse the disciples of not washing their hands before eating the grain? Yeah. What was that about? It wasn't that they were ceremonially unpure. It was they were claiming that dirt, you know, demons were in dirt, and if you got the dirt on your hands, you just brought demons into your life. And that's what these disciples must have been doing. In fact, the Jews had a checkpoint on the roads. So when people were coming up from Egypt, they had to not only stop at the border checkpoint, but the next checkpoint was a group of rabbis who were checking the hands of people coming from Egypt, especially if the Jewish, and make sure that they had washed their hands because they could very easily be bringing demons from Egypt.

So they would make them wash their hands. And it had to be running water. It couldn't be still water, running water. In fact, the Talmud even says, the Jewish writing says that Jesus learned magic when he and his family were down in Egypt. That's how he became so powerful. And that when he came back, he brought dirty hands with them and didn't wash them. And so he was demon possessed. That's how they explained his miracles and why they refused to believe it was backed up by God. Demons could take possession and control people. This could happen if you walk between two palm trees that were 12 feet apart. Thank God we don't have palm trees. This could happen if you borrowed drinking water.

[15 : 49] This could happen if you walk over water that was poured out unless you spit in it and then cover it over. But if you're barefoot, you know, then you're in trouble.

It could happen in the moon's shadow. It could happen with certain trees and objects. And one way you knew you were possessed was because the demons would cause diseases, leprosy, rabies, heart disease, madness, asthma, lung problems, the flu.

So I don't know about you, but I thank God we're no longer living in a world like that. Constant fear and dread. Now they had their magical cures.

Remember the complaint, you know, about the guy who was, you know, casting demons out in the name of Jesus? Well, he was doing it through probably using Jesus as one of the many names that they often use.

But they would wear an amulet. It was a piece of parchment that had magical words. Some scripture words filled with certain plants or herbs. You could use the amulet to remove a demon.

[17 : 04] If you said the demon's name, you have to know the demon's name. You know, Rumpelstiltskin, right? For demon water, you would recite certain verses that had the word voice in the verses.

You would have incantations and formulas that were used to cast them out. And demons might be chased out of things and places and people, but they often would return.

Now that's what they believed. That was their theology. That was their belief system. Their worldview. The world in which they lived. And Jesus comes on the scene and he turns everything upside down.

He doesn't have an amulet. He doesn't have little magic stones. He doesn't do incantations or chants. He doesn't dance around.

He merely speaks the word. And things happen. And that is what is really confusing because if only... The only one who could have that kind of power had to be either Satan or Satan's crony, his general.

[18 : 11] And so in verse 34, it says, He healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons. They go hand in hand. And he would not permit the demons to speak because they knew him.

And the people would not have necessarily divided the idea of sickness and oppression and demonization. But Jesus cured them.

Later on in Mark and in the other Gospels, Jesus removes demons more often by the power of his own word. Which really confused them. And so here's the message that we see again in Mark.

When the devil has you oppressed, only Jesus can have you released. Everyone else tries, but they never succeed. The third thing that we see is Jesus preached the kingdom.

This is the good news. The part of the good news is not that I believe in Jesus, I get to go to heaven. That is only one little tiny piece of the big puzzle of what this thing is called the gospel, the good news.

[19 : 18] The good news is that Jesus came and lived the perfect life on our behalf. That he died upon the cross on our behalf. Removes the sin and the guilt and opens up the way for us to come to the Father.

Makes us right and righteous in him. He dies on the cross to do that. And then he's buried and he's raised again on the third day. Spends 40 days post-graduate with his disciples.

Teaches them, you know, gives them a quick course in 40 days. They earn their master's degrees. Become the holy reverend doctors, I guess. But he preaches the kingdom.

And this is the message of the kingdom. That Jesus has come to usurp the power and take over the world in a way that turns the world right side up.

That was once upside down. And he finishes it through the resurrection. And when he comes back, he will complete it perfectly. But Jesus had his own power.

[20 : 21] He got up early to spend time communing with God. There's nothing particularly extra special about getting up before sunrise. That's often what they did.

You know, I know there are those who are very disciplined. So the only way and the only time you can pray is when you get up before the sun rises. You know, if the sun rises, the power of prayer is not as effective.

So make sure you have your devotions and prayer before then. There's nothing in scripture that says that. Jesus did that because that was the beginning of his day. The emphasis is more upon the praying.

You see, back then, physicians and healers would spend time studying the ways and methods of medicine. Or they would study new incantations.

Rabbis and scribes, sometimes priests, would study theology. And they memorized special verses to deal with unclean spirits. To speak over those who are sick.

[21 : 22] To bring them back to life. But Jesus did none of that. He prayed. He prayed. And his power was in this communion with God.

Because he was a man who was possessed with God. And of course, we know that he was the man who became God. He was the God who became man.

Sorry. The second thing, he also had his own authority. What set him apart so differently and uniquely was the fact that the Jews always had to quote somebody else.

In order to have special authority, you had to be in a certain group. A certain particular school of belief or theology. There was the school of Hillel that was very popular at the time.

And the school of Gamaliel was very popular. But Jesus had none of that. And in order to prove how well-studied and well-informed and theologically astute and right and perfect you were, you had to say, thus says so-and-so.

[22 : 27] And you would quote a rabbi. And you would quote somebody who's already one of those good old dead theologians from the past. And you'd have to quote them. Thus says so-and-so.

I say this, but it's because so-and-so said it. Jesus never did that. He said, you have heard it said. And you quote from scripture or refer to scripture in the Old Testament.

And then he would say what? Yes. Thus I say to you. I say to you. Which put him in a totally different category.

He had to be an absolute proud and arrogant individual. Because he had written anything. And he had only been new on the scene.

But he doesn't do what they did. He prayed. And he quoted from scripture. And he speaks his own word. And no scribe, no rabbi, no Pharisee, no priest would ever teach without the authority of some previous rabbi's writings.

[23 : 36] But Jesus spoke his own word. That's another reason why they hated him. What an arrogant person you are, Jesus.

Who do you think you are? You're not even quoting from anybody. He didn't do any of that. He would quote from the Old Testament. We know why, but in his day, the only way Jesus would accept, the Jews would accept his teachings, by the authority of God's word and by signs for miracles.

And therefore, Jesus, the authority that backed him up, was not the authority of other rabbis and other teachers, but rather the works that he did.

He would do the works and then preach. Or he would preach and do the works. Both of them went hand in hand. He was not one out to make, you know, a lot of money. He didn't put on a show or anything like that.

He healed to substantiate and give authority to the word that he was preaching about the kingdom, the good news that God has arrived and he is going to make all things right.

[24 : 43] And that was so unique and so different. The only ones in that culture who spoke with that much authority was a king. Interesting because Jesus is the king.

The only ones who taught with that much insight or declared was somebody who was giving news like a prophet. So Jesus conquered demons.

Finally, the third thing is Jesus has his own agenda. His own agenda. Verses 36 and 37. The disciples and the people expected Jesus to continue and show these wonders and signs.

And we can't be hard on them, you know, because they were really excited about the possibility of being cured and healed. You know, relatives brought back from the dead. You know, that's what they were looking at.

There was somebody up in Denver that you heard was doing that. I'm sure if you had someone who's really sick, you'd probably want to bring your relative or, you know, someone that you knew to that man up there in Denver, right?

[25 : 51] So they were very, very focused on the signs and wonders that he did. And oftentimes it escaped them. And so they really didn't hear the word of God like they ought to have.

Now, we're all good, right? We can hear the word of God and we get it right. Just like that. And yet, he had his own agenda. Notice Christ did not merely do good works and miracles for good people.

Not everybody was healed. Not everybody was released. But the point, another third point that we see throughout Mark is that though people expect God to do their will, always know that Jesus has his sovereign will.

People always want, and we always want God to do our will. But it's Jesus who would deal with us through his will. He has his own agenda.

Jesus' power and authority and agenda demonstrated, emphasized, and showed the authenticity of God's message. He was more than a prophet. He was speaking like a king and he was acting soon.

[27 : 01] He would be acting completely like a high priest. And so in verse 15 that we didn't read, in chapter 1, it says, The time now is fulfilled. The kingdom of God is right now.

Turn, repent, and believe in this good news. It wasn't to ask Jesus into your heart so you can go to heaven. It was to embrace Jesus.

It was to embrace Jesus, the prophet, priest, and king who has come to redeem you, to save you, to heal you, to make you right, and to bring you to the Father. And to bring you into his kingdom.

Now I want to leave you with just some characteristics of the promised kingdom. The kind of kingdom that Jesus brought. I'm sure you've heard this before, but it's something else.

Because when God takes hold of us, and we are born again, and we are regenerated, and we are brought into this new life, he makes us new creatures, who brings us into a new world.

[28 : 06] What is this new world that is around us that's very hard for us to see and imagine? Because we don't have the, you know, the blinders on our eyes are still there.

We can't see beyond, you know, what's through the veil, so to speak. What kind of kingdom did Jesus bring? God saves his people with an everlasting salvation.

We will never, ever perish. And that was a promise from the old. He will deliver us out of oppression of sin and evil. What hope there is of that.

I'm sure you know missionaries or heard stories of missionaries who brought the good news of Jesus to places like Thailand or Cambodia or down into the deep recesses of the Amazon, where tribes were always in fear of demons.

And they were freed from these demons. It's a super ordinary reality, this kingdom. The spirit of God comes upon all kinds of people, not just rabbis, but upon men and women, boys and girls.

[29 : 11] Teachers and not teachers. It's a new heaven and earth that he will bring. Death will be annihilated and the dead will be raised. The wicked will be soundly defeated.

I'm so glad for that. You read more and more stories, you think it can't get any worse and it keeps getting worse. You think. But he will defeat them.

The power of the world will be crushed. And those who didn't believe in Jesus will come and turn to God and they will share in Israel's joy. And the Lord will be ultimate king.

Jesus brought a kingdom. We see this in his teachings, in his sermons on the mount, sermon on the mount. The humble have the kingdom. Those who are grieved have comfort.

The meek will have grace and inherit the earth. Those craving to be right with God will be satisfied. God shows mercy and we then show mercy.

[30 : 17] We'll have a united and clean heart and we will see God. And we make peace as reconcilers, as children of God.

And the whole point then is his main agenda was not about signs and wonders. His main agenda was not about signs and wonders. But to preach about his kingdom, this kingdom, and the God of wonder.

Do you believe that? Do you believe in him? Have you trusted in him? Have you heard his voice? Have you accepted and embraced him through faith?

One of the wonderful displays that we have as a church is to be able to participate in the Lord's Supper. And that's a visible sign of the very thing that he did.

That Jesus came as the bread of life to give his life through death in order to give us life. Jesus came as the perfect juice.

[31 : 20] The fruit of the vine, the true wine that was poured out. If God did not like and he was upset with his people, he turned grapes into mush.

And the wine became very sour. It was like vinegar. It was horrible. And Jesus takes the bitterness of our lives and he gives us the sweetness of true life.

Do you trust in that? Do you believe in him? I hope so. Thank you, Father, for your word. And thank you for the message of your word. And thank you for the hope of the kingdom. Thank you for your goodness and your love.

And thank you that we will participate in the display, this visible display of your word. And the Lord's Supper. I pray that should anybody here not know you, that today would be the day that you would give them saving faith.

And for those of us who've known you for a little time or a long time, I pray you would encourage us. Because Jesus is who he said he was. And he is here alive and well today.

[32 : 33] Amen. Amen. Thank you.