

Mark 16
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Overview

Mark's emphasis on prophecy and fulfilment to show that God is in control during Jesus' apparent defeat:

1. 14:17-31 has detailed predictions fulfilled in 37-72
2. In broader strokes, 14-16 fulfill the triple prophecy of 8:31, 9:31, 10:33-34
 - a) Betrayal (ch. 9, 10) --> 14a
 - b) Condemned by Jewish leaders (8, 10) --> 14b
 - c) Humiliated by Gentiles (10) --> 15a
 - d) Executed (8, 9, 10) --> 15b
 - e) Raised from the dead (10) 16a
3. Thus the first eight verses of ch. 16 finish off this broad cycle of prophecy and fulfilment that began in ch. 8. Mark's presentation emphasizes the attitude of the women:
 - a) 1-3, Preoccupied with pragmatic matters
 - b) 4-5, Affrighted *ekqambew*. Only Mk: 9:15; 14:33 (the Lord in the garden); 16:5,6.
 - c) 6-8, Trembling (*tromos*, frequent in OT with *fobos* "fear and trembling"), Amazed *ekstasis* (cf. Mark 5:42, on resuscitation of Jairus' daughter; to be beside oneself), Afraid *fobew* (standard word)

A. 1-3, Preoccupied with the Lord's Death

1. Who? The three women we saw at 15:40, the only members of the Lord's company (from Mark's perspective) that stuck with him.
2. Two actions at two different times:
 - a) "When the Sabbath was past," Sat. evening after sundown. All the stores open and everyone has a blast.
 - b) "Very early in the morning," setting out as soon as there was enough pre-dawn light to find their way.
3. Their concerns are pragmatic:
 - a) Buy the spices for the body
 - b) Roll the stone from the tomb. (Pictures next week.) Why have they not brought men with them to help? The disciples are still in hiding. Only the women love the Lord enough to be associated with him in this way.
 - c) In spite of their spiritual advance over the men, they appear to have no recollection of the Lord's three-fold

prophecy of his coming resurrection.

- d) *Application*: Pragmatic concern for the things of God is not the response he desires from us.

B. 4-5, Terror at the Open Door and the Angel

1. They "look," lit. "look up" to see the stone rolled away. Suggests they have been walking with their eyes cast down. In the light of their conversation, must have been quite a surprise.
2. Next, within the tomb, a white-clothed young man announces the Lord's resurrection.
 - a) *The phrase "on the right side" _en tois dexiois_ is puzzling. It is not Mark's usual phrase _ek dexiwn_ (e.g., 10:37, 40), nor is it the ecclesiastical formula describing Christ at the right hand of God, which is always _en dexiai_ (singular).*
 - b) Recall the linen-clad young man who fled in the garden (14:51-52). There, the angelic bodyguard forsook the Lord; here, it returns.
3. Their response: Affrighted *ekqambew*. Only Mk: 9:15 (the people seeing the Lord's descent from transfiguration); 14:33 (the Lord in the garden); 16:5,6. Fear of the numinous realm from which the young man comes. *Application*: a sense of spiritual awe is not what the Lord wants from us.

C. 6-8, Fear at the Resurrection

1. 6-7, The Angel's Speech
 - a) 6, Announces the Lord's resurrection.
 - b) 7, Instructs them to go to Galilee, as the Lord had instructed them originally (14:28). Note the special reference to Peter; he must not think that he is to be left out of this reunion.
2. 8, The women's response
 - a) Fled from the tomb
 - b) Didn't tell anyone
 - c) Reason for these two actions: their fear
 - 1) "trembling," usually linked in OT with "fear."
 - d) *Application*: They can't even tell the disciples, much less unbelievers, about the Lord's resurrection. Overcome with fear. Far from being the "fishers of men" to which the Lord

had originally called the twelve (1:17).

e) NB: When they recovered from their fear, they were able to speak to others, as the other gospels show. But that will require something more than just the resurrection.

D. Summary: Two prominent observations.

1. The final fulfilment. All the prophecies have now fallen into place.
2. The incapacity of the women, the most faithful of his disciples, to grasp what has happened. Instead of joy, we find them dominated by fear.
3. What the Lord wants from us, we see in the final section (next week): joyful representation to the world around us.